PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

SIXTH SERIES—VOLUME 446 (Part 2)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND
FIFTY-FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

SESSION 2005-2006

COMPRISING PERIOD
8 May—25 May 2006

£105
(Two parts not sold separately)

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 8 May 2006

DEFENCE

Project/Allenby/Connaught

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Tom Watson): I am very pleased to announce to the House that the Ministry of Defence has awarded the Project Allenby/Connaught contract to Aspire Defence Ltd. for the redevelopment and provision of services to Aldershot garrison and garrisons in the Salisbury plain area. This private finance initiative (PFI) project will provide modernised and fully serviced accommodation to the Army for 35 years and is worth approximately £8 billion through the life of the contract.

This is the largest accommodation PFI project the MOD has ever undertaken. In all, this project will deliver modern living and working accommodation for 18,000 military and civilian personnel, including the provision of some 11,000 en-suite bedspaces. The total new build for the project will cover an area twice the size of Hyde Park, and there will be more than 200 individual construction sites across the project footprint. In all more than 350 new buildings will be constructed and a further 140 will be refurbished. The project will also involve the demolition of more than 400 buildings, many of which are either empty or uneconomical to maintain.

The agreement we have reached with Aspire Defence Ltd. is a highly significant one, especially given the scale of the project, and the number of people who will benefit from it—not just within the Army, but in the garrison areas as well. The project will generate many new jobs in the local areas, but will also provide benefits to the wider UK economy through extensive contracting and sub-contracting of work. Furthermore, the implementation of this project will create a large area of land in Aldershot, which will be disposed of. The availability of this land is key to the plans for the urban regeneration of the area, and this too will create many employment opportunities.

Work on the new barracks has already started in Tidworth garrison with other garrisons soon to follow; it is anticipated that all the major construction work will take place during the first nine years of the project. The project also includes the provision of a wide range of services, including catering, cleaning, vehicle management and utilities. Some of these services are currently provided within the public sector, and approximately 380 civil service posts will transfer to the new service providers. These transfers will be handled in accordance with existing legislation and the Ministry of Defence's TUPE code of practice. There will not be any redundancies arising out of this transfer. The trade unions have been involved throughout the process, and a formal consultation period is currently under way. In addition around 1,800 existing contractors staff will transfer, in accordance with TUPE legislation, to the Aspire supply chain.

This project delivers on the Government's pledge to provide our armed forces with modern and appropriately provisioned facilities. Furthermore, it demonstrates the Government's continuing commitment to private finance initiatives as a procurement option, where they are proven to offer a sensible and cost-effective way forward.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Industry Forum Adaptor Programme

The Minister for Industry and the Regions (Margaret Hodge): Today the Department is placing copies of a report on "The Industry Forum Adaptor Programme" in the Libraries of both Houses.

The report is published by the DTI in collaboration with the Industry Forum Network, and details the activities and achievements of the 15 industry forums throughout the UK. They have been instrumental in introducing global best practice into the production activities of a number of important UK industrial sectors, enabling participating firms to make significant productivity gains and to achieve marked improvements to their overall competitiveness. The 15 industry forums are listed below, with the date they started work. The report details the activities and achievements of each forum. It presents case studies which underline the success of the programme's practical, hands-on approach to the transfer of best practice, including process improvement "master classes", in which expert engineers help workforces to tackle issues of productivity and quality on the shop floor through the application of "lean" and other best practice techniques.

Forum	Date
Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders	October 1996
Society of British Aerospace Companies	April 1998
Leading Oil and Gas Industry Competitiveness	September 1999
Metals Industry Competitive Enterprise	February 2000
Ceramic Industry Forum	October 2000
Process Industries Centre for Manufacturing Excellence	October 2000
Fashion Industry Forum	October 2000
The Construction Equipment Association	March 2001
Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure	July 2001
Shipbuilders and Shiprepairers Association	October 2001
Red Meat Industry Forum	June 2001
Construction Lean Improvement Programme	April 2003
Print Industry Forum	April 2003
Furniture Industry Forum	October 2003
Cereals Industry Forum	June 2004

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) has today announced its phase 16 programme of work.

The authorities that will be inspected are: Caradon district council, Dumfries and Galloway council, Herefordshire council, North Lanarkshire council, Renfrewshire council and Southampton city council.

I am pleased to announce that the planned inspection of Slough borough council will not go ahead because the council has shown significant improvements in their performance.

BFI is an independent unit within the Department for Work and Pensions that inspects and reports directly to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on the standard of benefit administration and counter fraud activity in local authorities and the Department itself.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 9 May 2006

DEFENCE

Defence Storage and Distribution Agency

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Key targets have been set for the chief executive of the Defence Storage and Distribution Agency for financial year 2006-07. Key targets are as follows:

KEY TARGET 1

To meet the customers' requirements as negotiated and agreed in business agreements (BAs). This key target is broken down into the following sub-targets:

1a. For explosive materiel; to supply 95 per cent. of available maintained munitions within demand timescales.

1b. For non-explosive materiel; to supply 95 per cent. of issues to consumers, as forecast and agreed in BAs, to meet that element of the supply chain pipeline time (SCPT) for which DSDA has responsibility.

1c. To process within limits agreed with each individual customer, 98 per cent. of all receipts that conform to the specifications laid down in the contract and/or materiel regulations.

KEY TARGET 2

KT2 is an efficiency measure for continuous performance improvement to achieve a 2.5 per cent. (net of 2.5 per cent. inflation factor) reduction in the unit cost of output (UCO) in financial year 2005-06 (based on financial year 2004-05) while maintaining an effective level of services to the customers in accordance with the business agreements (BAs).

KEY TARGET 3

The value of inventory written off as a result of DSDA's actions to be less than the levels agreed within each business agreement (BA). This key target is broken down into the following sub-targets:

3a. The value of explosive materiel written off as a result of DSD A's action to be less than 0.02 per cent. of the explosives inventory. This includes associated weapons build components that are integral to the weapon system or munitions (including non-explosive components), tools, test equipment and materials that belong to the integrated project teams (IPTs), which are in the custody of DSDA.

3b. The value of non-explosive materiel written off as a result of DSDAs action to be less than levels agreed within each BA.

DTMA

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Key targets have been set for the chief executive of DTMA for financial year 2006-07. The targets are as follows:

KEY TARGET 1

To achieve at least a "Satisfactory" rating in the provision of planning and delivery of transport and movements support to emerging operations, an increase in the tempo of existing operations or other requirements.

KEY TARGET 2

To achieve at least a "Satisfactory" rating in the planning and delivery of transport and movements support to enduring operations.

KEY TARGET 3

To provide roll-on/roll-off (ro-ro) vessel capability at the readiness states required.

KEY TARGET 4

To meet customers' requirements as negotiated and agreed in customer supplier agreements (CSAs) to deliver:

(1) Some 98 per cent. or more of agency transactions and services, however provided, to be within agreed time, quantity, quality and cost (TQQC) criteria.

(2) At least 96 per cent. (previously 94 per cent.) of transactions against each service to be within agreed TQQC criteria.

KEY TARGET 5

To reduce the average unit cost of output by 1 per cent. on the actual unit cost achieved in 2005-06, in real terms.

Defence Aviation Repair Agency

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Key targets have been set for the chief executive of the Defence Aviation Repair Agency for the financial year 2006-07. The targets are as follows:

KEY TARGET 1—*Quality*: Achieve less than 15 attributable major customer concerns annually, on average FY 04-05—06-07.

KEY TARGET 2—*Financial Performance*: Achieve an annual return on capital employed of at least 3.5 per cent. (excluding DARA's fast jet and engines businesses).

KEY TARGET 3—*Business Transformation*: Carry out the actions by April 2007 that are required to effectively drawdown DARA's fast jet and engines businesses.

KEY TARGET 4—*Efficiency*: Improve overall efficiency by at least 6 per cent. (excluding DARA's fast jet and engines businesses).

Disposal Services Agency

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Key targets have been set for the chief executive of DSA for financial year 2006-07. The targets are as follows:

KEY TARGET 1

To achieve a disposal sales income of £63 million from sales of surplus Government-owned equipment and repayment business.

KEY TARGET 2

To meet the key performance standards agreed with DSA's customers and specified in internal business agreements and in customer supplier agreements with other public bodies.

KEY TARGET 3

To ensure that the agency is at, or above the standard of the public sector Benchmarking report for overall customer satisfaction. The agency should achieve a level of current satisfied customers of at least 90 per cent. and very satisfied customers of at least 25 per cent.

KEY TARGET 4

To demonstrate value recovery from 70 per cent. of surplus arisings handled by DSA through resale, recycling, composting or energy generation (or any other accepted method of landfill avoidance).

KEY TARGET 5

To keep within an agency administration cost of £6 million for financial year 2006-07.

British Forces Post Office

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): The key targets have been set for the chief executive of BFPO for the financial year 2006-07. The targets are as follows:

a. KEY TARGET 1. To provide a 100 per cent. secure defence courier service (DCS) for the carriage of protectively marked material (PMM). This target is broken down into the following sub targets:

PI 1: 100 per cent. of packages to reach the required destination.

PI 2: 100 per cent. availability of the DCS capability.

b. KEY TARGET 2. To provide a secure defence courier service for the carriage of Protectively Marked Material (PMM) operating within timescales for scheduled and special items, at not less than 98.7 per cent. of that agreed with customers.

c. KEY TARGET 3. To provide a resilient and dependable service for the controlled and specialised handling of Defence Official Mails by operating at least 96 per cent. of deliveries within scheduled timings, agreed with customers.

d. KEY TARGET 4. To meet 96 per cent. of the requirements negotiated and agreed with customers for the transit times for delivery and collection at defence mail centres (DMCs). This target is broken down into the following sub targets:

PI 1: Some 96 per cent. of mail delivered to DMC by defence mail service (DMS)/Parcelforce (PF)/ Royal Mail (RM) to be sorted and ready for delivery within one hour and 10 minutes of receipt.

PI 2: Some 96 per cent. of mail delivered to DMCs by DMS/PF/RM to be delivered to local customers the same day.

PI 3: Some 98 per cent. of mail delivered/collected into DMCs from local customers before 1500 hours to be sorted within one hour and ten minutes of receipt.

e. KEY TARGET 5. To meet 95 per cent. of the agreed customer requirement for the movement of private and official mails from BFPO London to authorised overseas destinations within agreed timescales. This target is broken down into the following sub targets:

PI 1: Some 95.5 per cent. or more of deliveries of private and official mail to static locations world-wide (less British Forces Germany) within agreed timescales.

PI 2. Some 98 per cent. or more of deliveries of private and official mail to British Forces Germany within agreed timescales.

PI 3. Some 93.5 per cent. or more of deliveries of private and official mail to operational and exercise locations within agreed timescales.

PI 4. Some 95.5 per cent. or more of deliveries of private and official mail to HM ships within agreed timescales.

f. KEY TARGET 6. Total year-on-year direct RDEL cost growth to be no more than defence inflation less 1 per cent. This is an efficiency measure for continuous improvement while maintaining an effective level of service to our customers in accordance with the service level agreements.

Defence Analytical Services Agency

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Key targets have been set for the chief executive of the Defence Analytical Services Agency (DASA) for the financial year 2006-07. The targets, which build on the already high standards of service provided by the agency since its formation in 1992, are as follows:

KEY TARGET 1: Support our MOD policy and decision making customers by meeting at least 95 per cent. of the timeliness and quality targets in our service level and project agreements, and by scoring at least 90 per cent. in our customer satisfaction survey.

KEY TARGET 2: Increase DASA's support for policy and decision making within MOD by delivering five key new products and/or services.

KEY TARGET 3: Support the Department's accountability by publishing the five key national statistics on time, with no major errors and in accordance with national statistics guidelines and protocols, by meeting at least 95 per cent. of the timeliness and quality targets for other defence national statistics, and by meeting timeliness targets for answering parliamentary questions.

KEY TARGET 4: Develop and agree, by end July 2006, a DASA information strategy; implement actions planned under that strategy for 2006-07

KEY TARGET 5: Make sufficient efficiency gains to ensure DASA can implement and manage the new DASA JPA personnel data system

Defence Communication Services Agency

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Key targets have been set for the chief executive of the DCSA for financial year 2006-07 as follow:

DCSA Key Targets for FY 2006-07

Title	*Details*	*Target*
KT 1 - SERVICE ASSURANCE	The single Agency measure of performance against Customer Supplier Agreements (CSAs).	To meet an average of 98% for measured services against the performance targets agreed in Agency CSAs
KT 2 - SERVICE AVAILABILITY	The measurement of the availability of operational services to customers.	To achieve an average service availability of 98% for operational and business critical services.
KT 3 - SERVICE RESTORATION	The measurement of the Agency's service restoration performance.	To restore an average 95% of interrupted services within negotiated timelines agreed to in CSAs.
KT 4 - EFFICIENCY MEASUREMENT	The measurement of the reduction in the average unit cost of output.	To achieve an improvement in efficiency by reducing the average unit cost of output by 2.5% over 2005-06 costs.
KT5 - PROJECT DELIVERY	The measurement of the Agency's effectiveness in introducing major complex projects	More than 92% of new projects will meet their time, cost and performance targets.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Ben Bradshaw): My right hon. Friend the then Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs represented the United Kingdom at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council meeting in Brussels on 25 April 2006.

The Council adopted a proposal to broaden the scope of the current provision for exceptional measures in the poultry meat and eggs sectors to help them through a drop in sales caused by consumer fears about avian influenza. I supported the proposals but stressed that the measures should be limited in time and in budget. The Commission tabled a declaration saying that measures already adopted by member states would be considered for co-financing on a case-by-case basis, and that serious market disturbance would be defined at EU, not member state level.

The Council held an exchange of views on a Commission Communication on improving the economic situation in the fishing industry which proposed a range of short and long term measures. I led calls from several member states that measures should deliver a profitable industry which can pay for its own investments and which was characterised by fleet capacity to match available resources.

The Council also held an exchange of views on the Commission's action plan for simplifying the Common Fisheries Policy. The action plan focuses on efforts including process changes to improve the quality of the annual quota decision.

The Council held a policy debate on Commission proposals for a management plan for plaice and sole in the North sea, on the basis of a questionnaire drawn up by the presidency. The proposal aims to manage the fisheries exploiting the stocks of North sea plaice and sole so that they are rebuilt to—and then maintained—within safe biological limits. UK Government views have been submitted to the Commission in writing.

Under any other business, in the absence the Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection the Council took note of a written update on avian influenza H5N1 in the European Union and third countries.

The Agriculture Commissioner updated the Council on progress in the WTO agricultural negotiations. She said that the 30 April deadline agreed in Hong Kong for modalities would not be met but stressed that the EU offer from last October still remained on the table.

Rural Payments Agency

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. David Miliband): On 19 April, *Official Report* column 13WS my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, South (Margaret Beckett) reported on progress in making full payments under the 2005 Single Payment Scheme (SPS) in England and announced that partial payments under the scheme would start as soon as operationally possible.

By close on 4 May, over 58,000 claimants, representing 48.5 per cent. of the customer population, had been paid a total of £552 million in full payments. A test run of partial payments to 1,000 claimants was undertaken, successfully, at the end of last week. The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) then moved immediately to process the remaining partial payments. As a result, RPA has now made transfers to the BAGS system, and drawn up payable orders, for £730 million in partial payments. This means the money should reach farmers over the coming week. In total, 85 per cent. of the £1,500 million worth of expected payments for the 2005 SPS scheme year will have been distributed.

The task now is to ensure that the residual element of payments are made as soon as possible to those who have received a partial payment, and that a plan is in place to deal with those who to date have not yet received either a full or a partial payment under the 2005 scheme. 31,000 claimants were not included in the partial payments system, 26,000 because their claim amounted to less than €1,000 and 5,000 because of a diverse range of other factors which made their cases particularly complex. Making full payments to this group of 5,000 will now be given the highest priority by the Rural Payments Agency. Increased priority will also be given to making outstanding payments under the

Hill Farm Allowance (HFA) scheme in recognition of the importance of HFA payments to those concerned. I will make a further statement in due course on the 26,000 small claimants and those with HFA claims.

I am acutely conscious of the difficulties endured so far, and the magnitude of the challenge that still lies ahead to complete delivery of the 2005 SPS scheme year. The fact that previous estimates of payment timetables were missed, and the problems this has caused for farmers up and down the country, are a matter of deep regret. I am determined that the right lessons are learned from our experience this year, first to prepare for the undoubted challenges that will exist in the delivery of the 2006 scheme, and second to move to a more stable position for the 2007 scheme year. This will require a concentrated and sustained effort from both RPA and DEFRA, and I hope that industry stakeholders will also continue to work closely with us to that end.

At a practical level, it is important for farmers to aim to submit their applications by the 15 May deadline wherever possible for the 2006 year. However, in recognition of the real problems this year with the distribution of application forms, my noble friend Lord Bach announced last week that late claim penalties will not be applied to claims received between 16 and 31 May.

In order to progress matters in this crucial next phase of SPS delivery I am pleased to announce that Tony Cooper will join the RPA on 15 May as interim chief executive in succession to Mark Addison. Mr. Addison accepted the post at short notice in March in order to address the immediate challenges facing the RPA and has, I know, made a real impression over the last couple of months. However, his was always intended to be a short term appointment and he will leave the RPA at the end of the month.

Mr. Cooper joins the RPA with 15 years experience of business and IT change within the public sector and a proven track record in successful programmes and business change. My permanent secretary recruited him on the basis that he has the skills and experiences needed by the Agency at this stage of their recovery programme. Arrangements for a permanent appointment to the RPA chief executive post will be put in hand at the end of the year once the fundamental review referred to in the written statement made by my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, South on 16 March, *Official Report*, column 104WS has been completed.

HEALTH

National Blood Authority and UK Transplant

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Caroline Flint): The annual accounts of the National Blood Authority and UK Transplant for 1 April 2005 to 30 September 2005 and any accompanying Comptroller and Auditor General reports have today been laid before Parliament pursuant to section 98(1C) of the National Health Service Act 1977.

Copies have been placed in the Library.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Security Industry Annual Report 2004-05

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Vernon Coaker): I am pleased to announce that the annual report 2004-05 and accounts of the Security Industry Authority (SIA) will be laid before Parliament on 9 May 2006 and published on that day.

Copies of the report will be available in the Libraries of both Houses.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DFID Departmental Report

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): I am today laying before Parliament the Department for International Development's departmental report 2006.

PRIME MINISTER

Reappointment of the House of Lords Appointments Commission

The Prime Minister (Mr. Tony Blair): I am pleased to announce the reappointment of the House of Lords Appointments Commission until the end of the year, pending further discussions on House of Lords reform.

The Chairman is Lord Stevenson of Coddenham CBE, a Cross-Bench Peer in the House of Lords and the Chairman of HBOS plc.

The independent Members are: Mrs. Angela Sarkis CBE, Governor of the BBC and an independent management consultant; and Mrs. Felicity Huston, Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland and a tax consultant.

In addition, there are also three party political Members who are each nominated by one of the three main political parties: the Labour Party Member is the right hon. the Baroness Dean of Thornton-le-Fylde; the Conservative Party Member is the right hon. the Lord Hurd of Westwell CH CBE; the Liberal Democrat Member is the Lord Dholakia OBE DL.

TRANSPORT

Helicopter Search and Rescue

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Dr. Stephen Ladyman): I am pleased to announce, together with the Minister for Defence Procurement (Lord Drayson), that the Department for Transport and the Ministry of Defence have agreed that the joint Search and Rescue Helicopter Project should go to its next stage. It will now go forward to a competition under the Private Finance Initiative. The service will still retain a high proportion of military aircrew alongside civilian aircrew trained to the same high standards.

We are committed to maintaining the effectiveness and high standards of the United Kingdom Search and Rescue Helicopter Service, currently provided by the Ministry of Defence and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, when the existing Ministry of Defence helicopters come to the end of their service life and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency service contract comes up for renewal, in the next decade.

The decision to proceed to this next stage provides an opportunity to bring together the current search and rescue helicopter providers into one harmonised service under a single contract providing the taxpayer with value for money. The service will continue to be managed jointly by the Ministry of Defence and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 10 May 2006

DEFENCE

Regimental Headquarters Review

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): In my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence's written statement of 24 November, *Official Report*, column 130-133WS he informed the House of work which, as part of the future infantry structure (FIS), would examine the supporting infrastructure of infantry regimental headquarters (RHQs) to ensure that they can effectively support the infantry in the future. This work has now concluded and the new arrangements are set out in the tables below.

The assistant chief of the general staff has concluded a review of RHQs and I have endorsed the finding that a single RHQ will be established for each infantry regiment, supported as necessary by a network of outstations to maintain the traditional regimental footprint. This format closely mirrors that already adopted by a number of existing multi-battalion regiments, such as the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers and the Royal Anglian Regiment. In line with the overall reduction in regiments post-FIS implementation, in the region of 15 RHQs of antecedent regiments will reorganise to become outstations or home headquarters of the new regiments created in FIS. One antecedent RHQ and four outstations will close between now and 2011. One new RHQ, for the Royal Regiment of Scotland, will be created. The colonel commandants of regiments have endorsed the principles for restructuring, the details of which have been subject to wide-ranging consultation. The resultant organisation is considered to be the most efficient method of delivering the functions of our RHQs in order to support the future infantry structure. They will continue to give maximum support to our soldiers while making the most effective use of taxpayers' money.

The RHQs will also continue to fulfil their remit of supporting former members of the infantry, and it is also important not to lose sight of the role they play in preserving the illustrious history and traditions of their antecedent regiments. No regimental museums will close as a result of this review.

Subject to trade union consultation, the new RHQ structure will lead in time to a small reduction in the overall number of staff required and it is hoped that this can be achieved through natural wastage and relocation, although a very small number of redundancies may be necessary.

SUMMARY OF INFANTRY RHQS[1] AND ASSOCIATED OUTSTATIONS

FOOT GUARDS

Regiment	*Location*	*New Designation*	*Remarks*
Grenadier Guards	London[2]	No change	
Coldstream Guards	London	No change	
Scots Guards	London	No change	
Scots Guards	Edinburgh	No change	Outstation
Irish Guards	London	No change	
Welsh Guards	London	No change	
Welsh Guards	Cardiff	No change	Outstation

THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND

Old RHQ	*Location*	*New Designation*	*Remarks*
	Edinburgh	Main RHQ The Royal Regiment of Scotland Edinburgh Castle.	Regiment newly formed under FIS
The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)	Edinburgh	Home HQ The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)	
The Royal Highland Fusiliers (Princess Margaret's Own Glasgow and Ayrshire Regiment)	Glasgow	Home HQ The Royal Highland Fusiliers (Princess Margaret's Own Glasgow and Ayrshire Regiment)	
The King's Own Scottish Borderers	Berwick Upon Tweed	Home HQ The King's Own Scottish Borderers	
The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment)	Perth	Home HQ The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment)	
The Highlanders (Seaforth, Gordons and Camerons)	Inverness	Home HQ The Highlanders (Seaforth, Gordons and Camerons)	
The Highlanders (Seaforth, Gordons and Camerons)	Aberdeen	Outstation closes in 2011	Museum of the Gordon Highlanders remains

THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND

Old RHQ	*Location*	*New Designation*	*Remarks*
The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's)	Stirling	Home HQ The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's)	

QUEEN'S DIVISION

Old RHQ	*Location*	*New Designation*	*Remarks*
The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's and Royal Hampshires)	Canterbury	Main RHQ The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's and Royal Hampshires)	
The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	London (Tower of London)	Main RHQ The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	
The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	London	Outstation in Tower of London Merges into the Main RHQ	
The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	Newcastle	The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers Newcastle Outstation.	
The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	Warwick	The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers Warwick Outstation.	
The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	Bury	The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers Bury Outstation.	
The Royal Anglian Regiment	BurySt Edmunds	No Change. Remains Main RHQ The Royal Anglian Regiment	
The Royal Anglian Regiment	Norwich	Outstation closes 2008	
The Royal Anglian Regiment	Warley	The Royal Anglian Regiment Warley Outstation.	
The Royal Anglian Regiment	Northampton	The Royal Anglian Regiment Northampton Outstation.	
The Royal Anglian Regiment	Lincoln	Closed	

KING'S DIVISION

Old RHQ	*Location*	*New Designation*	*Remarks*
The King's Own Royal Border Regiment	Carlisle	The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment (King's, Lancashire and Border) Carlisle Outstation	
The King's Regiment	Liverpool	The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment (King's, Lancashire and Border) Liverpool Outstation	
The King's Regiment	Manchester	The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment (King's, Lancashire and Border) Manchester Outstation	
The Queen's Lancashire Regiment	Preston	Main RHQ The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment (King's, Lancashire and Border)	
The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire	York	Main RHQ The Yorkshire Regiment (14th/15th,19th and 33rd/76th Foot)	
The Green Howards (Alexandra, Princess of Wales's Own Yorkshire Regiment)	Richmond	The Yorkshire Regiment (14th/15th,19th and 33rd/76th Foot) Richmond Outstation.	
The Duke Of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding)	Halifax	The Yorkshire Regiment (14th/15th,19th and 33rd/76th Foot) Halifax Outstation	

PRINCE OF WALES'S DIVISION

Old RHQ	*Location*	*New Designation*	*Remarks*
The Cheshire Regiment	Chester	The Mercian Regiment Chester Outstation	
The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment (26th/45th Foot)	Worcester	Closes in 2010	
The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment (26th/45th Foot)	Nottingham	The Mercian Regiment Nottingham Outstation	
The Staffordshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's)	Lichfield	Main RHQ The Mercian Regiment	
The Royal Welch Fusiliers	Wrexham	The Royal Welsh Wrexham Outstation	
The Royal Regiment of Wales	Cardiff	Main RHQ The Royal Welsh	

THE RIFLES

Old RHQ	*Location*	*New Designation*	Remarks
The Light Infantry	Winchester	Main RHQ The Rifles	The new Regiment's RHQ forms in Winchester
The Royal Green Jackets	Winchester		
The Light Infantry	Bodmin	The Rifles Bodmin Outstation.	Subject to Lt Div Council endorsement
The Light Infantry	Taunton	The Rifles Taunton Outstation.	Subject to Lt Div Council endorsement
The Light Infantry	Durham	The Rifles Durham Outstation	Subject to Lt Div Council endorsement
The Light Infantry	Pontefract	The Rifles Pontefract Outstation	Subject to Lt Div Council endorsement
The Light Infantry	Shrewsbury	The Rifles Shrewsbury Outstation	Subject to Lt Div Council endorsement
The Royal Green Jackets	Oxford	The Rifles Oxford Outstation	Subject to Lt Div Council endorsement
Devonshire and Dorset Light Infantry	Exeter	The Rifles Exeter Outstation	Subject to Lt Div Council endorsement
The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Light Infantry	Gloucester	The Rifles Gloucester Outstation	Subject to Lt Div Council endorsement
The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Light Infantry	Salisbury	The Rifles Salisbury Outstation	Subject to Lt Div Council endorsement
	London	The Rifles London Outstation	Subject to Lt Div Council endorsement

THE PARACHUTE REGIMENT

Old RHQ	*Location*	*New Designation*	*Remarks*
RHQ The Parachute Regiment	Colchester	No change	
The Parachute Regiment Museum	Aldershot	Close under Allenby-Connaught (Museum to move to Duxford)	Move in 2008

[1]Not included are HQ of the Brigade of Gurkhas or RHQ of the Royal Irish Regiment who remain unaffected by this review.

[2] All Foot Guards RHQs while separate, are located within Wellington Barracks, London.

Northern Ireland (Future Garrison Structure)

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): On 30 January this year, the then Secretary of State for Defence announced to the House that 19 Brigade, currently stationed at Catterick, would be re-roling to a light brigade and relocating to Scotland and Northern Ireland. I announced on 28 March the structured plan for the phased reduction of troops in Northern Ireland to peacetime levels, assuming the continued maintenance of an enabling environment. We have since been considering the future requirement for defence estate and for civilian support staff in Northern Ireland for the new peacetime garrison which will reflect the Government's global defence commitments.

The updated "Security Annex to the Joint Declaration", published by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on 1 August last year, envisaged a peacetime garrison of no more than 5,000 service personnel in no more than 14 core sites. Now that the composition of the peacetime garrison has been defined, we have concluded that we can meet its needs in the most effective and efficient manner by retaining the following locations once normalisation is complete: Aldergrove, Antrim, Ballykinler, Ballykinler Training Camp, Coleraine (subject to a review of adventurous training provision), Divis Key Point (on Divis Mountain), Duke of Connaught Unit, Holywood, Kinnegar, Lisburn and Magilligan.

We intend to close: Shackleton Barracks, Ballykelly in April 2008 when the current infantry battalion, 2nd Battalion, the Princess of Wales Royal Regiment, is scheduled to move; St Lucia Barracks, Omagh by 31 July 2007, when the Royal Irish Regiment (Home Service) battalions disband; and St Patrick's Barracks, Ballymena by no later than 31 March 2008, when the last Royal Irish (Home Service) soldiers will have transferred or been discharged. In considering which locations should be retained, I have been concerned to ensure that we fully meet the needs of the future long-term garrison based in Northern Ireland, that we can continue to provide the residual level of support needed by the Police Service of Northern Ireland for as long as it is required and that we structure the garrison as efficiently as possible so as to achieve value for money for the defence budget.

As a result of the security normalisation programme, we have also been considering the future requirement for Ministry of Defence civilian support staff in Northern Ireland as the garrison reduces from some 10,000 service personnel in August 2005 to its planned peacetime level of no more than 5,000. We assess that from a current strength of some 3,400 civilian staff today, there is likely to be a reduction of some 1,500 as all the normalisation changes take effect, but this will be partially offset by the creation of some 340 new civilian posts. We will seek to manage this change as sensitively as possible and in close collaboration with the trade unions, with whom we are starting formal consultation today on our future requirement. We will, of course, seek to avoid the need for compulsory redundancy as far as possible through transfer and voluntary early release or retirement, and through the pre-redundancy measures

which have been in force since August last year. The Department fully recognises the magnificent support given to the military over the past 37 years by its civilian staff. It is committed to engaging and supporting them at every stage of this period of change and is in correspondence with the trade unions on a possible additional package of support measures tailored to the particular circumstances of this programme.

In addition to the HQ and other units of 19 Light Brigade that we expect to relocate to Northern Ireland in 2007 and 2008, a new and non-deployable regional brigade headquarters will form at Thiepval Barracks, Lisburn. The current HQ 107 Ulster Brigade, based at Ballymena, will merge on 15 December this year into HQ 39 Infantry Brigade, which will itself be replaced by the new regional brigade headquarters on 1 August 2007.

The security normalisation programme is based on the continuing maintenance of an enabling security environment in Northern Ireland. Service personnel in the new peacetime garrison will be available for worldwide operations, but the armed forces are committed to continue to provide the support that the Police Service of Northern Ireland needs for as long as this remains necessary.

HEALTH

Community Pharmacies

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Andy Burnham): The Health and Social Care Act 2001 introduced powers to enable NHS primary care trusts to assure patient and public safety by requiring primary care health professionals to be included on a list maintained by the primary care trust. These provisions also enable trusts to take appropriate action where necessary to protect the public because of a health professional's poor or inadequate performance.

We have consulted professional and representative bodies on introducing these proposals for individual community pharmacists. Consultation on a draft regulatory impact assessment, available on the Department's website, took place last autumn.

Since then, we launched in March a major consultation on reforming the regulation of the pharmacy profession as a whole and to strengthen the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's role in protecting patients and promoting high standards of clinical practice. This ends on 19 June.

We shall also be considering the future requirements for the adequate regulation of health professionals as a whole and have received Andrew Foster's report on non-medical regulation.

In view of these developments, we have decided to defer the introduction of NHS supplementary list provisions for community pharmacists, pending the outcome of the current consultation and consideration of future requirements for professional regulation as a whole. I will make a further announcement when we have completed this work.

Patient Pathway

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Andy Burnham): The NHS improvement plan gave a commitment that by December 2008 no one will have to wait longer than 18 weeks from referral to hospital treatment.

The 18 week pathway is one of the most important reforms in the history of the NHS. It will significantly improve the patient experience, with most patients being treated even more quickly than 18 weeks. For the first time, the way we measure waiting times for all patients is changing and the entire patient journey will be measured. This will include waiting times for diagnostic tests and out-patient appointments beyond the first consultation, which are currently not measured. The 18 week pathway will therefore more accurately reflect the patient experience.

A listening exercise on the proposed principles and definitions that will underpin the 18 week pathway commitment was held last autumn. We received over 180 responses from the NHS and other interested organisations. I am grateful to all who have responded during this exercise.

Analysis of the responses has helped form the basis of the principles and definitions. These principles will help ensure that the 18 week pathway commitment is fair, achievable and affordable.

Today, we announce publication of "Tackling Hospital Waiting: The 18 Week Patient Pathway. An implementation framework", setting out plans for achieving the 18 week pathway and including the principles and definitions.

The implementation framework explains the nature of the 18 week pathway challenge, sets out a high-level implementation plan and timetable to achieve it, clarifying the contributions of all those involved.

We are committed to delivering a maximum 18 week pathway which will transform the NHS, putting it at the forefront of international best practice.

Copies have been placed in the Library.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Justice and Home Affairs Council

The Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality (Mr. Tony McNulty): The Justice and Home Affairs Council was held on 27-28 April 2006 in Luxembourg.

Unfortunately my right hon. Friend, the Home Secretary was unable to attend. In his absence, my noble and learned friend, the Attorney-General, Lord Goldsmith, and my noble Friend Baroness Ashton attended the meeting. I thought it would be useful if I were to outline what was discussed and decided at the Council meeting and the next steps in light of this.

The Council decided to increase Schengen visa fees from 2007, to meet the projected costs of issuing more secure, biometric visas in the future. Although the UK has not participated in this Schengen measure, the

Government actively support co-operation at EU level to enhance the security and integrity of visas and travel documents.

Commissioner Frattini gave the Council a brief update on the approach to be taken in a forthcoming Commission communication concerning the development of common visa application centres. The concept is being explored with a view to developing, in the future, shared visa application facilities for member states in third countries, including the collection of biometric information. The communication should be formally presented to the June JHA Council.

The presidency's efforts to move the SIS II—the second generation Schengen information system— legal instruments dossier forward were welcomed by all member states. The three outstanding issues to be resolved were biometrics; harmonisation of the conditions for entering alerts; and the data protection oversight arrangements. The UK was largely supportive of the presidency's ambitions but needed to consider the proposed arrangements further at national level. Other member states were in a similar position so a new text of the document will be circulated and this work will be taken forward by the working group.

The proposal for a Council decision on the improvement of police co-operation, especially at the internal borders, was discussed. It became apparent that the decision as it currently stands was unlikely to reach agreement as there were too many outstanding issues to be resolved. However, no member state wanted to suspend negotiations entirely. The Austrian presidency will now discuss with the Finnish presidency how to proceed with and revise the text.

The presidency updated the Council on the progress of discussions to date on the data protection framework decision. The three key issues so far related to: transmission of information to third countries; whether both police and judicial co-operation should be included in the scope of the instrument; and whether the instrument should be confined to cross-border transmission of information and further processing of that data, or whether it should also encompass data gathered and used in a purely domestic context. These would be discussed further at working group level and the presidency hoped to bring the key remaining political questions to the June JHA Council.

In the main Council format, there were presentations and discussions on the issue of human trafficking. The need for member states to share more information with Europol was highlighted. There was also a presentation on the implementation of the EU external relations strategy. The presidency informed the Council it would bring forward an action-orientated paper on Afghan drugs to the June Council. It also outlined the plan for the security conference which was held in Vienna on 4-5 May. The Commission also reported on the progress of the Hampton Court conference and the December Council. With a stronger emphasis on engaging with Africa and the Mediterranean region, positive results had been achieved. However, it was concluded that the Commission and member states need to do more to tackle the problems of illegal immigration.

The Commission stated that there was already a high level of consensus in the Council on the countries to be included in the list of safe countries for the purposes of the asylum procedures directive. An agreement for the procedure for adding and removing third countries was also needed. The Commission urged member states to press ahead with its implementation.

Peter Sutherland, the United Nations Secretary-General's special representative, made a presentation to the Council on the UN high-level dialogue on "International Migration and Development". The UN will publish a paper in June setting out the proposals to take this debate forward in New York in September. He stressed the need for the EU to play an active role and take the initiative in this area.

Political agreement was reached on the articles of the draft regulation on the law applicable to non-contractual obligations ("Rome II"). The presidency tabled a final compromise package which was agreed by qualified majority. The UK along with other member states raised a number of outstanding concerns, including on limitation of the scope of the instrument; simplification of the special rule on product liability; and the operation of the general rule in article 3 in relation to stock exchange transactions. On the latter, the UK expressed concerns, but there was no support from any other member state. After in-depth discussion the compromise was agreed.

The presidency provided an update to the Council of other community draft instruments containing provisions related to judicial co-operation in civil matters, in particular the draft "Directive on Services", the draft "Consumer Credit Directive" and the Green Paper on "Damages Actions for Breach of the EC Antitrust Rules". As was agreed at the January JHA informal, the presidency would provide regular updates in this area.

The Office of Publications made a presentation to the Council on N-Lex, a new electronic database containing the national legislation of member states, and Eur-Lex, the database that gives access to EU legal instruments. N-Lex was formally declared open.

The Council discussed two of the issues discussed on the Framework Decision for the European evidence warrant. The UK maintained its position that if there were to be definitions of those offences to which the principle of some dual criminality would not apply, then they should be included in a non-binding Council statement, following the model of the European arrest warrant. The Commission outlined the case for applying the EEW to requests for retained telecommunications data. Most member states, however, thought it would be more appropriate to leave this until the second part of this initiative decision due in 2007. The presidency has referred both matters back to expert level, where other outstanding issues remain under discussion. This framework decision is likely to be on the June JHA Council agenda.

A general approach was reached on the framework decision on the fight against organised crime, subject to parliamentary scrutiny reserves, including a UK parliamentary scrutiny reserve. National Parliaments will therefore still have the opportunity to complete their scrutiny processes, although in this case the Government take the view that this measure, as now drafted, meets the concerns expressed by the UK parliamentary Scrutiny Committees. In particular, as stated in the most recent letters from the former Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department, my hon. Friend the Member for Wythenshawe and Sale, East (Paul Goggins), the current draft of the

framework decision, includes language to allow member states to comply with the requirements to criminalise by way of their national laws of conspiracy.

The presidency noted that an ad hoc group had been created to explore alternative approaches to the proposed framework decision on procedural rights. There was a general acknowledgement that all options should be investigated including the option of a non-binding political resolution and a package of practical measures to improve co-operation in the areas proposed to be covered by the framework decision. The UK stressed the need for a broad approach, not merely focusing on a framework decision.

The Council debated the issue of whether the transfer of prisoners should be subject to a dual criminality requirement and agreed that a solution might be found using a presidency compromise proposal which would require the abolition of dual criminality for listed offences, but would provide an opt-out for those who wished to maintain dual criminality. This was supported by the UK. It was acknowledged by all that the key to solution would be the scope of the proposed opt-out. The working group will continue work on that basis.

The Council reached a general approach on the substance of the EU agreement with Norway and Iceland on surrender procedures. The text for this measure has not as yet been deposited for scrutiny by this House because it is a classified document. Work will now focus on the accompanying annexe which will be the form used to request surrender/extradition. The UK is satisfied with this and intends to operate a system as close to the european arrest warrant as possible.

Anthony Rice

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (John Reid): I should like to make a statement about the management of dangerous offenders in the light of the murder of Naomi Bryant by Anthony Rice, a prisoner serving a discretionary life sentence who was on life licence at the time he committed the murder. I have today placed in the Library of the House a copy of a report produced by Her Majesty's chief inspector of probation of the circumstances surrounding this case and, in particular, of the management of Rice throughout his previous sentence.

I would first offer my heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Naomi Bryant. I deeply regret that she should have been murdered in these circumstances. While nothing can compensate for her loss, we have a duty to ensure that lessons are learned and that the chances of another family having to suffer such loss again are as low as we can make them.

I am grateful to the chief inspector of probation for his report, which is a thorough and serious piece of work which merits careful consideration. It makes a number of criticisms about failures in the criminal justice system at various stages in the management of Anthony Rice. While individual members of staff did their best to discharge the very onerous responsibilities involved in managing dangerous offenders, there was, he finds, a series of errors and misjudgments that contributed to a case that was not managed to the standard the public have a right to expect. The chief inspector concludes that "on balance Anthony Rice should not have been released on life licence in the first place, and once he had been released he could and should have been better managed".

The chief inspector makes four principal findings and accompanies each with a key recommendation. These are supported by further practice recommendations. Given that he finds shortcomings at various stages of the management of Rice, the chief inspector makes a final recommendation that "there should be a major appraisal of current policy and practice for releasing prisoners from indeterminate sentences".

I take this report extremely seriously. The Government's first duty is to protect the citizens of this country, and I am determined that we should make our systems and procedures as effective and efficient as possible in order to do this. My right hon. Friend the Member for Norwich, South (Mr. Charles Clarke) announced to the House on 20 April a series of measures the Government would be taking in response to the report by the chief inspector of probation on the Monckton case. That work will be broadened out to include the recommendations in this report.

I can assure the House that I will move quickly to improve our processes and systems, including through legislation if necessary. We will consider the chief inspector's report extremely carefully and expeditiously. We need to move fast but, equally, these are weighty recommendations and we need to give them full consideration. I do not therefore propose to announce new measures today. I shall, however, return to this House as soon as I am able to do so.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Darfur Peace Agreement

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): I am also making this statement on behalf of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.

The UK Government warmly welcome the signature on 5 May of the Darfur peace agreement (DPA) by the Government of Sudan and the largest faction of the main rebel group—the Sudan Liberation Movement/ Army (SLM/A).

We congratulate the signatories to the agreement for having had the courage to take this important step towards peace. We strongly urge the other two rebel movements to demonstrate the same spirit and to sign the agreement without further delay. We also commend the tireless efforts of the African Union (AU) mediation, led by the AU's special envoy Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim.

Signature of the DPA follows almost two years of negotiations in Abuja, during which the UK maintained a permanent observer presence. My right hon. Friend the Member for Blackburn (Mr. Straw), the former Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Office Affairs, visited the talks in February this year, and I spent four days at the talks during the final push to secure an agreement.

This is an historic agreement. It will give the people of Darfur the opportunity to vote on regional government in a referendum. It guarantees representation for the rebels and for Darfur in general in government in both Khartoum and Darfur, as well as in key institutions such as the judiciary and civil service. It also grants Darfur a share of the national wealth, including a special fund to rebuild and develop the region. Most importantly for the millions of internally displaced persons in camps, the DPA includes enhanced ceasefire and final security arrangements aimed at restoring peace and security to the region, as well as integration of the movements' forces into Sudan's armed forces and security forces.

The challenge now is to turn the agreement into peace on the ground. We urge the parties urgently to implement the agreement, including, as a first step, by the rapid appointment of the relevant positions within Government and forming the necessary commissions. They should work to communicate the benefits of the deal to the people of Darfur and begin preparations for the Darfur-Darfur dialogue to bring the non-Abuja stakeholders on board. The Government of Sudan should also now accept the proposed handover to a UN mission and facilitate access to Darfur for the technical assessment mission to prepare for transition.

The international community also has an important role to play. We must continue to support the AU as it takes on its new responsibilities in Darfur, ahead of the proposed handover to a UN mission; and we should continue to apply pressure on and support to the parties to ensure implementation stays on track. The international community also has an active role to play in the Joint Assessment Mission to assess Darfur's reconstruction needs. This needs to be concluded rapidly, ahead of a pledging conference where donors will be called upon to make significant contributions towards meeting these needs.

The UK stands ready to play a full part in supporting implementation. On 6 May, I announced an additional £9 million to the UN's Common Humanitarian Fund, on top of the £40 million already allocated, to help address urgent humanitarian needs in Darfur and elsewhere in Sudan. The Foreign Secretary attended a Ministerial Security Council meeting on 9 May. This agreed on the need for a continued focus on implementation of the DPA and improving security in Darfur.

Darfur now stands at a critical juncture. Its people have suffered for far too long and it is now for their leaders, with of course the support of the UK and the whole international community, to give them the chance to rebuild their lives. The DPA provides the best opportunity to achieve this and we urge all those involved to seize it.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Forest Service Agency

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (David Cairns): This statement sets out the key performance targets for Forest Service.

Forest Service is an executive agency of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland. It is responsible for promoting the interests of forestry in Northern Ireland, the development of afforestation, the production and supply of timber and the maintenance of adequate reserves of growing trees. This includes the delivery of social, recreational and environmental benefits for the public at large. In March this year, a strategy for the delivery of forestry policy in Northern Ireland was published and I have set the agency the following targets for the 2006-07 business year to give effect to this:

To establish 500 hectares of new plantations;

To sell 400,000m^3 of timber to the wood processing sector;

To retain certification under the UK Woodland Assurance Standard;

To attract at least 400,000 paying visitors to forests; and

To deliver efficiency savings of £1.27 million.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 11 May 2006

HEALTH

Departmental Annual Report

The Secretary of State for Health (Ms Patricia Hewitt): I am today laying before Parliament the Department of Health's annual report for 2006 (Cm6814).

Copies have been placed in the Library.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Construction Industry Training Board

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Maria Eagle): I am pleased to announce the publication of the Construction Industry Training Board annual report and accounts for 2004-05 financial year. This document is now available in the Library.

Northern Ireland: Assembly (Standing Orders)

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Peter Hain): In addition to my appointment of Eileen Bell MLA (Alliance) as Presiding Officer to the Assembly under paragraph 3 (1) (a) of schedule 1 to the Northern Ireland Act 2006, I have today appointed Jim Wells MLA (DUP) and Fancie Molloy MLA (Sinn Fein) as Deputy Presiding Officers to the Assembly under the same legislation.

I have also placed copies of Assembly Standing Orders determined under paragraph 4 (1) of schedule 1 to the Northern Ireland Act 2006 in the Libraries of both Houses.

PRIME MINISTER

London Bombings

The Prime Minister (Mr. Tony Blair): I am grateful to the Intelligence and Security Committee for their report into the "London Terrorist Attacks on 7 July 2005" (Cm6785). Following consultation with the Committee over matters that could not be published without prejudicing the work of the intelligence and security agencies, as well as on matters which are sub-judice, I have today laid the report before the House.

I have also laid before the House today the Government's response to this report (Cm6786).

Copies of the report and the response have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Departmental Report

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. John Hutton): I am today able to announce the publication of the Department for Work and Pensions departmental report. The report provides details of the Department's performance in 2005-06 against its public service agreement targets and sets out the Department's expenditure plans for 2006-07 to 2007-08. Copies have been placed in the Library.

Written Ministerial Statements

Friday 12 May 2006

TREASURY

ECOFIN

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gordon Brown): At its meeting of 5 May 2006 the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) took note of a presentation on the Commission's annual budget proposals for 2007.

The Council also took note of a presentation on the Commission Action Plan towards an Integrated Internal Control Framework.

ECOFIN approved a contribution to the European Council's review of the EU's Sustainable Development Strategy.

The Council held an exchange of views on the Presidency's package of VAT proposals, including on place of supply.

The Paymaster General, the right hon. Dawn Primarolo MP, represented the UK.

DEFENCE

People, Pay and Pensions Agency (Key Targets 2006-07)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Tom Watson): The Key Targets that I have set the chief executive of the People, Pay and Pensions Agency for 2006-07 are as follows:

Delivering Results

Key Target 1:

Achieve 99.2 per cent. average timeliness and 97.5 per cent. average accuracy for established services: salary payments, expenses payments and pension awards.

Key Target 2:

Achieve 90 per cent. average responsiveness against key service standards.

Key Target 3:

Reduce unit costs in real terms by: salary payments 12 per cent; expenses payments 40 per cent; pension awards 20 per cent.

Key Target 4:

Complete creation of the PPPA: Initial operating capability by April 2006, in-service by April 2007, full operational capability by April 2008.

Reputation

Key Target 5:

Improve customer satisfaction index score to 75 per cent.

Key Target 6:

Extend Charter Mark to whole agency by June 2007

How We Work

Key Target 7:

Implement future pay system: first payments by April 2006, fully operational by May 2007, full system acceptance by July 2007.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

General Affairs and External Relations Council

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Geoffrey Hoon): The General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) will be held on 15 May in Brussels. Defence Ministers are attending for separate discussions as well as a joint session. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and I will represent the UK in discussions with Foreign Ministers with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence doing so for Defence Ministers' discussions.

The agenda items are as follows:

General Affairs

Preparation of the European Council: Draft annotated agenda

The Council is expected to agree the annotated agenda for the June European Council. This is likely to feature the Future of Europe, economic reform and the Hampton Court agenda. Enlargement will also be a key theme.

External Relations

Western Balkans

We expect the Council to adopt conclusions covering transition arrangements for the Office of the High Representative and the failure of constitutional reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We also anticipate conclusions calling for a free, fair and legal referendum in Montenegro and regretting the failure of Serbia to deliver Ratko Mladic to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia within Commissioner Rehn's deadline.

Discussion at the Council is likely to focus on the latter issue and we will want to reiterate the UK's full support for Commissioner Rehn's decision to disrupt the Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations in light of Serbia's non-compliance.

EU-Russia: Summit preparation

The Council is likely to agree the Summit information note. This sets out the EU-Russia relationship based on shared values: promotion of democracy, respect for human rights and the resolution of conflicts.

Iraq

Council discussions will focus on recent political developments. conclusions are expected, although their precise nature will depend on whether a Government are formed in advance of the Council. If a Government are formed by the 15 May, we would expect the Council to welcome this.

Iran

The Council will discuss Iran over lunch. Conclusions are expected. Discussions are likely to focus on the nuclear file and next steps, in the light of the International Atomic Energy Agency Director General's 28 April report and subsequent discussions in New York.

Middle East Peace Process

The Council will discuss the Middle East Peace Process over lunch.

External Relations Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner is likely to present proposals on Commission assistance for the Palestinians. These include increased EU aid and plans for an international mechanism to channel donor funding for basic services such as salaries for workers in key sectors such as health. The UK hopes that the Commission will deliver the mechanism as quickly as possible and that Foreign Ministers will endorse it at the Council. Council conclusions will be adopted.

Africa

The Council will discuss follow-up to the recent breakthrough in the Abuja peace talks. The EU needs to give support to, and put pressure on, the parties to implement the Darfur Peace Agreement as soon as possible, including through disseminating the benefits of the deal to those on the ground in Darfur.

EU Partners should now increase the pressure on the Government of Sudan to accept transition to a UN mission, and continue to provide assistance to the African Union Mission in Sudan. Co-ordination between international actors is essential if we are to avoid duplication and maximise the benefits of international assistance. The Council is expected to agree conclusions.

The Council is also expected to adopt conclusions on the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cote d' Ivoire and Uganda.

The Presidency will brief the Council on the EU-Africa Troika.

Nepal

Nepal is on the agenda in response to recent events in which King Gyanendra, who dismissed the multi-party government of Prime Minister Deuba a year ago, restored Parliament following weeks of violent street protests. Discussion at the Council will be a useful opportunity for the UK to discuss with EU partners how we now take advantage of the opportunity of a new government to bring about a full restoration of democracy and pursue a peace process.

Defence Ministers

European Defence Agency

Ministers will discuss prospects for establishing administrative arrangements between Turkey and the European Defence Agency (EDA).

The EDA Steering Board also meets in Defence Ministers' formation on May 15 and is expected to agree a code of best practice for defence procurement. Ministers will also discuss how to establish a research and technology fund to be managed by the EDA, and increased targets for member states research and technology spending.

Capabilities

The Chair of the EU Military Committee (General Rolando Moscha-Moschini) will report to the Council on three areas of work on military capabilities: progress on the Force Catalogue; strategic lift and battle groups. The Force Catalogue is part of the Headline Goal 2010 initiative and will provide a scrutinised (evaluated for military effectiveness) listing of the capabilities which member states would draw upon in contributing to European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) operations.

The Council is also expected to adopt the Single Progress Report, which outlines progress made in further developing ESDP military capabilities over the past 6 months.

Other capabilities issues that may be discussed are the ESDP Maritime Dimension and the Rapid Reaction Air Initiative.

Operation EUFOR Congo

In response to a request from the UN, the EU has decided to plan for the deployment of a military force, in support of the ongoing UN peacekeeping force (MONUC), during the forthcoming elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The force will consist of an advance element of approximately 500 troops deployed in Kinshasa with reserves of 1000 held 'over-the-horizon'.

The Operation Commander (designate) will update the Council on progress on the Operation Plan and the rules of engagement authorisation message.

The force generation process is underway with the second force generation conference planned for 10 May. The UK contribution to the force will be limited by our ongoing commitments elsewhere. The UK has already provided one officer to augment the EU Operations HQ in Potsdam, Germany and will deploy another officer to the French-led Force HQ which will be based in Kinshasa.

The Justice and Home Affairs Council approved the Joint Action establishing this operation on 27 April.

Joint session - Foreign Ministers and Defence Ministers

Emergency and crisis response

High Representative Solana is expected to brief the Council on work underway to improve the EU ability to provide a coherent response to crises. He will highlight agreement reached on how member states will, if necessary, deploy military assets in support of civilian led disaster response operations.

High Representative Solana is then expected to invite Michel Barnier, Special Adviser on the EU's response to crises, to present his non-paper on how to improve the EU's disaster response capability.

Civil Military Co-ordination

Council conclusions on Civil Military Co-ordination (CMCO) highlight the work undertaken by the Austrian Presidency (as part of a UK/Austria/Finland

tri-Presidency agreement and building on work started in our Presidency) to ensure effective co-ordination of EU crisis management instruments.

The conclusions welcome the Presidency's framework paper of possible solutions for the management of second pillar EU Crisis Management Operations which makes a number of concrete suggestions for improving CMCO and calls for recommendations for further work by July 2006.

Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans

We expect the Council to adopt conclusions on EU support for Security Sector Reform (SSR) in the Western Balkans. The conclusions set out seven principles for EU support: ownership of reform should lie with the responsible authorities of the region; EU support should take a broad based approach which contributes to stability and security while at the same time being tailored for country specific requirements; EU support, including through crisis management operations, should contribute to fighting organised crime in individual countries and throughout the region; EU support should be well co-ordinated both within the EU, through cross pillar co-ordination, and with other member states activities; the need for effective sharing of information between all EU and other international actors; the need for democratic accountability and parliamentary control of SSR within each country; a stock-take and lessons-learned process to monitor progress.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 15 May 2006

TREASURY

Court of Directors of the Bank of England

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gordon Brown): The Queen has been pleased to approve the appointment as non-executive directors to the Bank of England's court of directors of James Strachan, Robert Wigley and David Rhind.

The Queen has also been pleased to approve the reappointment as non-executive directors to the court of directors for a second term of Peter Jay, David Potter, Heather Rabbatts and Brendan Barber.

The new appointments are in place of Sir Bill Morris, Sir Brian Moffatt and Laurel Powers-Freeling. I thank them for the contribution they have made to the court.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Informal Meeting of Education Ministers 17 March 2006

The Minister for Higher Education and Lifelong Learning (Bill Rammell): The Scottish Executive Deputy Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning, (Mr. Allan Wilson), and Steven Effingham, Divisional Manager of the European Union Division of the DWP/DfES Joint International Unit represented the UK during the informal meeting of EU Education Ministers in Vienna.

Ministers discussed the European Commission's recent consultation on the European Qualifications Framework. They broadly welcomed the Commission's outline of the EQF, with many seeing the wide consultation process as the correct way to ensure that the proposal is developed in a bottom-up way with the support of all relevant stakeholders.

Ministers agreed that the EQF should provide a lightweight and flexible mechanism for supporting comparability—not automatic recognition—of qualifications in different member states. They supported the idea of establishing a European framework of eight qualification levels to which national authorities could relate their qualifications.

Ministers also supported the idea that the EQF levels would be accompanied by descriptors of skills and competences that learners should have acquired. They were concerned, however, that these descriptors should not be too detailed, with many calling for a simplification and refinement of the Commission's draft descriptors.

The UK believed that the EQF could make a real contribution to the Lisbon process, particularly if developed in consultation with stakeholders, and if the needs of citizens were kept at the forefront. UK noted the link to sectoral qualifications, and the potential for sectoral skills frameworks also to be aligned to the EQF.

Most countries flagged up the need for the EQF to be complementary to the qualifications framework being developed for the European higher education area under the Bologna process.

There was general agreement that the EQF should undergo an extended phase of piloting and testing before being fully rolled out. The Commission agreed to present a paper summarising the main areas of agreement between member states as a basis for moving forwards. The Commission would then set up a technical working group with representatives of all member states in order to work up the specifications of the EQF (in particular the levels descriptors). The Commission intends to come forward with a formal proposal for the EQF in the autumn of 2006.

On the European Institute of Technology, Ministers all agreed with the Commission's analysis concerning the so-called "knowledge triangle" of education-research-innovation, and Europe's poor performance in connecting these elements and exploiting the economic value of research outcomes. Most delegations welcomed the Commission's communication on the European Institute of Technology as a contribution to this debate. Most had questions concerning, inter alia.

The legal status of the BIT under the Treaties;

degree awarding powers given that this is a national competence;

funding issues, including potential overlap with the European Research Council and the Framework Programme for research;

intellectual property rights;

the relationship between the governing board and the knowledge communities;

secondment of resources to the BIT (benefits it for the sending institution?).

Some countries signalled strong scepticism. The UK, while enthusiastic about the Commission's efforts to take forward the Hampton Court agenda, stressed the need for more work with stakeholders, especially the universities and business sectors. Setting up a new institution may not be the best way forward. "The" UK stressed the need to build on existing partnerships, and suggested setting up an expert group to look at this issue, and to produce recommendations on issues such as funding, greater institutional autonomy and closer collaboration with business.

The Commission concluded the discussion by assuring Ministers that stakeholders would be consulted before the Commission came forward with a proposal. The Commission confirmed that the legal basis would cover education, research and competitiveness. Postgraduate degrees would in fact be awarded by the participating institutions (possibly jointly between member states), rather than by the BIT itself. Secondment of resources would not mean amputation—there would have to be clear added value for the "home" institution. It was too early to have a debate about location or financing, but there should be no conflict with the European Research

Council (which was a financing mechanism rather than a legal entity as the EIT would be).

The EU financial contribution would be discussed at the next revision of the financial perspectives in 2008; however, the EIT would have to rely heavily on private funding.

The Austrian presidency placed particular emphasis on discussions with the Western Balkans and widening the European area of education.

Ministers stressed the importance of the Lisbon agenda for the Western Balkans noting that their participation in programmes such as the Lifelong Learning Programme, Tempus and Erasmus Mundus, would support essential educational reforms in those countries. The European Training Foundation had an important role in facilitating cooperation between the Western Balkans and the EU in the field of education and training.

The UK supported EU enlargement and welcomed bilateral cooperation with Western Balkan countries on education issues. Qualification frameworks in the UK devolved nations, for example the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework, were a particular issue of interest where we might share good practice.

The Western Balkan Ministers expressed a strong interest in participating in the work on the European Qualifications Framework as a means of supporting reforms and the development of lifelong learning strategies. The Western Balkan Ministers also shared the EU's priorities for higher education reform, and were actively implementing the Bologna process in their countries. The Ministers stressed the need for continued dialogue between the EU and the Western Balkans on European education policy matters and adopted a declaration setting out the key messages of their discussions

Informal Meeting of Youth Ministers
29-31 March 2006

The Minister for Higher Education and Lifelong Learning (Bill Rammell): Simon Foster, European Union Division, DWP/DfES Joint International Unit and Suzanne Chisholm, Youth Policy Officer, Welsh Assembly Government represented the UK during the informal meeting of EU Youth Ministers in Bad Ischl.

The ministerial meeting ran alongside a youth event which started in Vienna on 27 March with the young people moving to Bad Ischl on 29 March to join the ministerial delegations for joint seminars and social events. The UK sent a delegation of young people representing the different nations.

It was acknowledged that a start has been made on implementing the objectives of the European Youth Pact, primarily under the employment guidelines and the European strategy for social inclusion, ensuring that the concerns of young people were incorporated into other policy areas. However, the European Council emphasized in its spring meeting 2006 that further progress is needed regarding the implementation of the European Pact for Youth. The emphasis of this conference was on what concrete action could be taken to make sure that vision became reality.

In the morning session, European Youth Ministers discussed issues of information, participation in democratic life and active participation of youth at local, national and European levels. There was an exchange of views on strategies for an improved implementation of youth policy objectives under the White Paper "A New Impetus for European Youth", under the European Youth Pact, and within the open method of coordination.

The Youth Ministers agreed that young people's voices must be heard at all levels with all stakeholders involved. There was considerable discussion on how to reach those young people who are currently disengaged from the political sphere or not part of a formal organisation. The UK gave examples of good practice at local level using local initiatives and at national level through the diverse representation on the Children and Youth Board set up to advise the Minister for Children, Young People and Families and officials in the Department on policy development.

The European Youth Pact emphasises that young people and youth organisations must be involved in European and national policy design in such key areas as employment, education, social inclusion and reconciliation of work and life. Active participation requires proper access to quality information at all levels. The European Youth Portal and the national youth portals were seen as well-suited for the provision of youth-related information by many delegations.

Joint working groups, with reports jointly presented by one minister and one young person, were formed in the afternoon to discuss the topics of:

Youth and jobs;

value and significance of informal and non-formal learning;

the future of youth in Europe to the final plenary session.

The participating youth representatives adopted a special Youth Declaration that was welcomed by the Ministers.

To continue the participatory dialogue at EU level, the presidency has submitted a proposal for creating an informal forum composed of the current EU presidency, the two subsequent presidencies, the European Commission and the European Youth Forum. This informal dialogue-based forum should meet regularly, in particular before the Education, Youth and Culture Council in autumn and in spring in Brussels to promote an exchange of views and ideas between young people and the presidency.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Deportation and Removal of Foreign Nationals

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (John Reid): I would like to provide an update on the issue of foreign national prisoners.

The House will understand that I can only provide the information available to me at this time. Very detailed consideration of the casefiles and other records by all agencies continues and further amendments may need to be made to the figures. Thus, it remains subject to change.

I am placing in the Library of the House a detailed note on the data that are now available in relation to the 1,023 prisoners released from prison without the consideration of deportation they should have received.

Progress continues to be made in the operation to deal with the released foreign prisoners. The operation is prioritising the serious cases first.

I have widened the definition of serious offences to include all cases where there has been any conviction for offences involving violence or a sexual element. This includes armed robbery. As the operation has progressed, detailed examination of the casefiles and other records has to date identified 179 offenders who had previously been convicted of a serious offence.

Of these 179 offenders, 35 have been convicted of the most serious offences, defined as murder, manslaughter, rape and child sex offences. Of the four who had committed murder, three are now within our control. Of the other 31 most serious cases which include rapists and child sex offenders, 23 are now within our control or deported. Some eight of these 35 had re-offended since release and had committed crimes that did not involve violence or a sexual element.

Some 55 of the 144 other serious offenders are now under our control or deported. Of these 144, nine are where a person has re-offended following release and committed a crime involving violence or a sexual element. A further 40 of the other serious offenders have also re-offended since release, ten of the offences involving violence or a sexual element.

All of the 1,023 have now been assessed and consideration of the case for deportation has started in 880 of the 1,023 cases, of which there was an initial decision to deport in 649 of these. Some 203 are now under either our control or have been deported or removed.

A number of hon. Members have asked for a detailed breakdown of cases by the prison from which they were released or by constituency. We intend to be able to provide this information in due course but we are currently prioritising the operational work on the consideration of the cases and, where deportations orders have been made, detentions. I hope hon. Members will understand.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Major Hazard Sites

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mrs. Anne McGuire): The Major Incident Investigation Board, set up by the Health and Safety Commission to supervise the investigation into the explosion and fire at Buncefield oil storage depot, published a progress report on 9 May. The investigation will include consideration of off-site and on-site risks, both of which will be taken into account by the board when making recommendations for future action.

Work has been under way, since before the Buncefield incident, to consider the implications of new information about major hazard sites which HSE has gathered in compliance with the Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations (COMAH). The analysis of this information does not suggest that there is an increased likelihood of an accident occurring at any of these sites. It has, however, allowed HSE to understand the risks with more precision.

The Cabinet Office had been co-ordinating the process. Information and analysis from the Buncefield investigation will be taken account of in this work, which will be the subject of consultation with stakeholders as soon as clear conclusions emerge, which is expected to be later this year.

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the BFI inspection reports on the following councils were published today: Brentwood borough council, Isle of Anglesey county council, Neath Port Talbot county borough council, Newport city council, North East Derbyshire district council, Rother district council, St. Edmundsbury borough council, London Borough of Tower Hamlets and Woking borough council. Copies have been placed in the Library.

The BFI reports detail a range of strengths and weaknesses in the housing benefit services provided by councils and make recommendations to improve the security and efficiency of benefit delivery.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is considering the reports and may ask the councils for proposals in response to BFIs findings.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 16 May 2006

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Government Indemnity Scheme

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Mr. David Lammy): The provision for the Government Indemnity Scheme is made by the National Heritage Act 1980. The scheme facilitates public access to loans of works of art and other objects for public display made to museums, galleries and other such institutions by private owners and non-national institutions. It does this by indemnifying lenders against loss or damage to objects they loan. Loans covered by the scheme must be for public benefit. The scheme also covers loans of such objects for study purposes within borrowing institutions where this would contribute materially to the public's understanding or appreciation of the object loaned. Examples of this are enhancing interpretation or explanation to the public of objects, or bringing into the public domain the conclusions of any study.

In the six-month period ended 31 March 2006, a total of 2403 undertakings were given to indemnify objects on loan to national and non-national institutions under section 16. The value of contingent liabilities in respect of undertakings given at any time under section 16 and which remained outstanding as at 31 March 2006 was:

£000

Institution	*Number of Indemnities*	*Loans In (Covered by Section 16 Indemnities)*	*Loans In (covered by the undertakings to Her Majesty)*	*Loans Out*
English Nationals	1666	1,898,440,957	212,129,902	706,133,554
MLA Administered Indemnities (non-national)	215	1,191,008,384	40,078,500	
Government Art Collection	20	3,157,000	25,000	1,394,300
Scottish Executive Education Department (non-national)	4	22,261,500		
Scottish Executive Education Department (national)	361	682,337,000		
The National Assembly for Wales (non-national)	1	32,000,000		
The National Assembly for Wales (national)	136	5,646,254		
Grand Total (Section 16 indemnities)	2403	3,837,851,095	252,233,402	707,527,854

The previous report for the six-month period ending 30 September 2005 omitted to include figures for the national museums of Scotland and Wales. These are shown below:

The value of contingent liabilities in respect of undertakings given at any time under section 16 and which remained outstanding as at 30 September 2005 for national museums of Scotland was £864,773,000 and £49,275,710 for national museums of Wales.

A total of 413 undertakings were given to indemnify objects on loan to national Scottish institutions and 223 undertakings for objects on loan to national Welsh institutions under section 16.

DEFENCE

Service Personnel's Health (Iraq)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Tom Watson): I would like to place on record my appreciation for the important work being done by Professor Simon Wessely and his colleagues at King's College, London, on the health of personnel who have served on Operation Telic. Today, two papers by his team have been published in *The Lancet* summarising the initial findings of a study which the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence, Dr. Lewis Moonie, announced on 7 May 2003, *Official Report*, column 34WS.

The first paper 'The Health of UK Military Personnel" who deployed to the 2003 Iraq war concludes that the vast majority of personnel who deployed have not so far experienced a statistically significant worse health outcome compared to those who did not deploy. However, the study has found that a small but measurable number of reservists (when compared either with regulars who did deploy or reservists who did not deploy) are showing some increased health effects as a result of deployment—particularly for common mental disorders (such as anxiety, depression and stress), post-traumatic stress disorder and fatigue. It remains the case, though, that the reported rates of indicators of common mental ill-health for both reservists and regulars are broadly of the same order as found in the general UK population.

Professor Wessely's second paper "Is there an Iraq War syndrome?" analyses the patterns of illness reported by UK service personnel following deployment on Operation Telic and compares them with those seen after the 1990-91 Gulf conflict. He concludes that there

is no sign of a repeated pattern of the illnesses, often referred to as "Gulf War Syndrome", reported widely after the latter.

The MOD takes the health of service personnel, both regulars and reservists, very seriously indeed and clearly this study is an important piece of work which will help us perform our duty of care to our personnel and their families. Although funded by MOD the study is independent. I welcome the conclusions published today and I am sure too that they will be welcomed by the men and women who have been serving in Iraq. Clearly it is very reassuring to know that the overwhelming majority of service personnel are returning to the UK physically and mentally well after service on Operation Telic. MOD's implementation of health lessons learned during Operation Granby has undoubtedly contributed to this. It is obviously especially important that we act on the key finding from the study in respect of the mental health of reservists. This is an area that we have already been monitoring closely and looking at possible solutions. I am, therefore, pleased to announce today a package of support for these particular service people.

We already offer a comprehensive physical and mental healthcare service to mobilised reservists. I will introduce later this year an enhanced post-operational mental healthcare programme for recently-demobilised Reservists. The programme will offer a mental health assessment, conducted by appropriately qualified members of the Defence Medical Services (DMS). This will be available to any member of the reserve forces who has been demobilised since January 2003 following deployment on any operation overseas and who has a concern about their mental health as a result. If individuals are then assessed as having a mental health problem that is categorised primarily as post-traumatic stress disorder or a related traumatic adjustment disorder, and that is directly related to their operational deployment and of a nature that can be treated within the resources of the DMS, then they will be offered out-patient treatment by the DMS.

If the assessment identifies cases that fall outside the parameters set out above, such as complex multi-disorder diagnoses or acute cases requiring in-patient care, the DMS will refer them—with our assessment results—on to the appropriate NHS providers in order to assist their access to NHS treatment, as well as encouraging contact with the relevant welfare organisations to ensure follow-up.

I will make a further announcement in a few months to confirm the details of the service that will be provided, including the location(s) at which the assessments will be provided, and the date on which the service will commence.

This scheme will complement work we have in hand to improve the understanding of military mental health issues in general across the NHS, and ensure that the necessary services are available for veterans of whatever age suffering from mental illness. This work involves Health Departments, the NHS providers and the charitable sector, and I hope to announce details on the outcome of this work later this year when it is completed.

Given the current findings of Professor Wessely's work, and his view that it would be premature to conclude that there has been no health effect as a result of deployment to Iraq, my Department is considering carefully the recommendation that further follow-up research is required. I understand that Professor Wessely plans to publish further results in due course.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Pesticides Safety Directorate (Performance Targets 2006-07)

The Minister for Climate Change and the Environment (Ian Pearson): The following performance targets for 2006-07 have been set for the Pesticides Safety Directorate (PSD).

To evaluate pesticide approval applications and applications for detergent derogations according to published targets and fees and contribute effectively to the review programme for pesticides.

To ensure that UK objectives are reflected in EC legislation, to actively monitor the use of pesticides and secure a high level of compliance with pesticide regulations.

To promote the sustainable use of pesticides through appropriate regulatory and voluntary measures and provide information to all stakeholders on pesticide issues.

To recover the full cost of our operations from the industry and from DEFRA and contribute to the Government's better regulation and efficiency agendas.

Further details are given in the Pesticides Safety Directorate Three-Year Business Plan 2006-09: Year 2006-07, copies of which will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Veterinary Medicines Directorate (Performance Targets 2006-07)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Ben Bradshaw): I have set the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) the following performance targets for 2006-07.

To authorise veterinary medicines against legislative requirements according to published targets and fees and ensure the field-use of veterinary medicines is safe and effective principally through the use of best practice in pharmacovigilance and through actively discouraging improper use.

To ensure that UK policy objectives are reflected in EC legislation and that UK legislation and guidance ensures that veterinary medicines can be used effectively and safely, offering protection to human health, animal health and welfare and the environment.

To actively monitor the safe use of veterinary medicines authorised in the UK through surveillance of residues and proportionate follow-up action where misuse is detected.

To recover the full cost of our operations from the industry and Defra and contribute to the Government's better regulation and efficiency agendas.

Further details are given in the VMD Business Plan for 2006-07 copies of which will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Central Science Laboratory (Performance Targets 2006-07)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Ben Bradshaw): The following performance targets for 2006-07 have been set for the Central Science Laboratory (CSL).

SERVICE DELIVERY

To achieve a minimum of 90 per cent. of project milestones in commissioned projects which support DEFRA's objectives.

To achieve a mean score of 4.5 on a scale of 0 to 5 for the assessment of customer satisfaction using the agreed methodology.

MANAGING THE AGENCY EFFECTIVELY

To recover the full economic costs of the agency's services from Government Departments, agencies and external customers.

To deliver the efficiency targets set out in the business plan.

To deliver e-Government and commercial exploitation of research outputs.

SCIENCE QUALITY

To enhance the level of assessment in the 2006-07 Science Audit over that for 2001-02.

IMPLEMENTATION OF REVIEWS

To work with the laboratory strategy team in implementing the next phase of the agency review.

Further details are given in the CSL business plan for 2006-7 copies of which will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Veterinary Laboratories Agency (Performance Targets 2006-07)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Ben Bradshaw): I have set the Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) the following performance targets for 2006-07.

FINANCIAL

To achieve full cost recovery.

EFFICIENCY

To deliver 2.5 per cent. efficiency savings.

SERVICE DELIVERY

To meet a 85 per cent. of rationale, objectives, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation (ROAME) milestones.

To achieve 85 per cent. of surveillance deliverables to time.

To achieve a score of at least 75 per cent. satisfaction in the VLA customer satisfaction survey.

QUALITY

Maintaining current third party certifications and accreditations.

To achieve ISO14001 certification for the regional laboratories.

SAFETY

To implement the VLA safety plan 2006-07 to timescales indicated in the Business Plan.

Further details are given in the VLA Business Plan for 2006-07 copies of which will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Marine Fisheries Agency (Performance Targets 2006-07)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Ben Bradshaw): I have set the Marine Fisheries Agency (MFA) the following performance targets for 2006-07.

FISHING VESSEL LICENSING

Issue 100 per cent. of over 10 metre licences by 23 March and 100 per cent. of under 10 metre licences biennially by 30 June.

QUOTA MANAGEMENT

No overfishing of quota stocks which results in EU deduction or infraction proceedings against the UK.

FISHERIES ENFORCEMENT

Deploy enforcement resources on land in line with risk weightings.

GRANTS

Process completed claims within eight weeks of submission.

FISHERIES DATA

Enter information on catches and fishing activity onto the fisheries database within five working days of receipt.

MARINE ENVIRONMENT

Inspect 100 per cent. of FEPA licensed construction activities that are accessible at least once during a licensing period.

Further details are given in the MFA Business Plan for 2006-07 copies of which will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

HEALTH

Human Tissue Authority

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Ms Rosie Winterton): Section 29 of the Human Tissue Act 2004 sets out the procedure for approval of certain codes of practice of the human tissue authority. The codes have today been laid before Parliament. The codes give advice and guidance to those carrying out activities covered by the legislation, and deal specifically with:

Consent;

anatomical examination;

the removal, storage and disposal of human organs and tissue;

post mortem examination;

donation of organs, tissue and cells for transplantation; and

donation of allogeneic bone marrow and peripheral blood stem cells for transplantation.

Subject to parliamentary approval, the codes will take effect from 1 September when the Act is fully implemented.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Climate Change Adaptation in Africa Research and Development Programme

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development (Mr. Gareth Thomas): I am today announcing an allocation of £24 million for the Climate Change Adaptation in Africa: Research and Development Programme. DFID is supporting this programme in partnership with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. We anticipate that other donors will lend support as the programme becomes established.

The total budget, combining contributions from DFID and IDRC, will be up to £31.5 million. The programme will seek to identify ways in which communities, organisations and governments in poor countries across Africa can adapt to the impacts of climate change. Climate change will impact the poorest hardest and is likely to impair growth and poverty reduction efforts. The poor will have to cope with more droughts, more extreme temperatures and sudden and intense rainfall causing greater food and water insecurity, loss of income, higher death rates and more prevalent diseases.

The programme will:

(i) provide support to African-led research in this area;

(ii) help those vulnerable to climate change to learn from actual cases of climate adaptation;

(iii) help develop the capacity of African scientists and organisations to adapt to climate change; and,

(iv) establish a network of international scientists who will provide guidance, mentoring and supervisory inputs in response to requests from African researchers.

DFID is allocating a total of £24 million over five years to fund the new programme, starting in the financial year 2006-07. Funding for the first two financial years, £9 million, is part of the total £255 million DFID announced for all research in these two financial years.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Gas Supply Infrastructure

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Mr. Alistair Darling): I am making a statement today to the House on the interaction of existing Government policy and planning procedures with regard to the need for additional gas supply infrastructure.

This statement reiterates previous public commitments[1] made by this Government on the importance of gas supply infrastructure and will help clarify the Government policy context for planning and consent decisions on gas supply infrastructure projects.

The UK economy faces a major challenge; our indigenous gas supplies are in decline and we are moving towards increasing import dependence on gas. To manage this change, new gas supply infrastructure is needed to increase Great Britain's capacity to import, store and transport gas efficiently. A regulatory environment that enables the development of timely and appropriately sited infrastructure projects is therefore vital.

The need for increased gas supply infrastructure, and a regulatory environment to allow such infrastructure to be delivered to the market in a timely fashion, was set out by the Government in the Energy White Paper of 2003[2]: "Our Energy Future—Creating a Low Carbon Economy". It identified four challenges, one of which was securing the reliability of energy supplies. This remains integral to an energy policy that meets the needs and expectations of all energy consumers. It is being considered as part of the DTI's energy review[3] in the context of the measures that are required to develop the GB market framework for delivering reliable energy supplies. It is clear that any weakness in infrastructure could push up gas prices, or result in interruptions to supply, with harmful consequences for both UK markets and UK consumers.

The decline in our indigenous supplies has serious implications for our gas import infrastructure, storage and domestic transportation needs. The Government welcome all solutions which could help address this need, and favours no particular route. The market is responding to this challenge, with actual and planned investment in gas import infrastructure, storage and related transportation of some £10 billion over 2005-10. The projects have the potential to make a real difference to our gas supply infrastructure; by 2010, our storage capacity could more than double and our import infrastructure is planned to more than triple.

Ultimately, as my hon. Friend the Minister for Energy noted[4] to the House last year, failure to help facilitate such infrastructure will, immediately or over time, create difficulties in balancing supply and demand, reducing the reliability of our energy supply arrangements, with potentially disastrous consequences for the local, regional and national communities and economies.

To meet this challenge we require a regulatory environment that enables the development of timely and appropriately sited new gas supply infrastructure projects. The current consents regime is only now starting to deal with a new tranche of gas supply infrastructure projects; we must consider how avoidable delays can be prevented in the future to ensure that these projects, and those that follow them, can commission on time if approved. This means a planning consent regime that offers more clarity for developers about processes and timescales, thereby contributing to a lower overall level of risk for developers.

Our focus must therefore be on reducing the regulatory barriers to maximising gas supply, a view shared by the Trade and Industry Committee[5], and in line with this Government's focus on better regulation. We are looking to achieve this through a number of measures, as set out by my right hon. Friend the then Secretary of State for Trade and Industry in a parliamentary debate[6] on security of supply earlier this year.

The measures will cover:

legislation[7] (when parliamentary time permits) to establish an offshore regime to enable innovative projects to go forward—gas storage in salt caverns offshore, and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) import projects with offshore unloading;

a review of the onshore consents regimes, aiming towards simplification and streamlining of procedures, in co-ordination with the Energy Review, and with the Barker Review of Land Use Planning into the planning and land use system; and

measures to improve public understanding of the need for additional gas supply infrastructure projects, including onshore projects, and to promote best practice among project sponsors when applying for regulatory consents.

This statement forms an integral part of the third action, and my department is actively progressing the other measures.

This Government believe that allowing the free operation of a competitive GB market, within an appropriate regulatory framework overseen by an independent regulator, is the most efficient way to ensure security of gas supply. Government policy establishes broad objectives, which are supported by

light touch regulation. The private sector then takes commercial decisions to develop the infrastructure that can maintain and improve the reliability of energy supplies. This Government warmly welcome the potential diversity of solutions that the market is seeking to deliver. Both onshore and offshore, large and small solutions are required to meet our needs.

The storage of gas onshore and offshore is only possible in certain geological structures, which are present in a limited number of locations in Great Britain. Such salt formations must have a certain minimum thickness in order to store gas.

Gas is now also stored in some depleted oil and gas fields[8]. Only one field is currently in operation but there are several others at different stages of development. These provide "ready made" storage structures with seals that have proven to be secure for millions of years. The nature of these structures is well known from the data collected during their development. An additional benefit is that storage in oil-bearing reservoirs can increase the amount of oil ultimately extracted from them. However, the reservoir characteristics needed for storage can be different from those needed to develop the field and not all onshore fields will be suitable for gas storage. Local planning officers should take this into consideration when making or preparing advice on planning consents.

The DTI recognises the importance of local democracy in the decision-making process, and the significant contribution that local involvement makes to the quality of decision making. The views of all stakeholders must be taken into account. But if we are to maintain a rigorous planning system, it must also enable decisions to be taken in reasonable time. A balance must be struck between meeting the concerns of local authorities and those they represent, and the national need for infrastructure that will provide us with secure energy supplies[9].

As my hon. Friend the Minister for Energy set out to the House last year[10], the provision of energy infrastructure is part of a delivery system that provides an essential national service. Business and homes in the UK require a reliable supply of energy free from disruption and interruption. New energy infrastructure projects may not always appear to convey any particular local benefit, but they provide crucial national benefits, which all localities share. In particular, projects add to the reliability of national energy supply, from which every user of the system benefits.

Against the background of the clear national need for new gas storage infrastructure, it is important that developers, where they are not already doing so, start an early dialogue with planning authorities to ensure that appropriate policies are included in Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks. Where developments need to come forward ahead of changes to local planning policy, it will be vital for developers to begin an early dialogue with local planning authorities, and the community more generally, about their proposals. It will be important to ensure that the environmental impacts of their proposals are better understood, and that the national need for these developments is fully taken into account by local planning authorities when making their decisions regarding planning consents.

In summary, we need timely and appropriately sited gas supply infrastructure to be delivered by the market, because:

Great Britain is becoming increasingly dependent on gas imports, and requires new gas supply infrastructure to help ensure security of supply;

new projects enable extra supply and storage options if they proceed without avoidable delays;

there are limited locations currently suitable for much needed gas storage projects;

onshore storage is needed to enable slow-moving gas to be available close to market when consumers require it;

new energy infrastructure projects provide national benefits, shared by all localities.

I am today placing in the Libraries of both Houses a fuller note, including annexes, setting out Government policy, to help clarify the context for planning and consent decisions on gas supply infrastructure.

[1]Cf Annex A.

[2]Energy White Paper, February 2005, Cm.5761, Section 6.51.

[3]Energy Review consultation document, "Our Energy Challenge", DTI, January 2006.

[4]Written Ministerial Statement, Renewable Energy Statement of Need for Transmission System Upgrades, 21 July 2005.

[5]Trade and Industry Committee 1st Report on Security of Supply, 13 December 2005.

[6]House of Commons, 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns: 486-534.

[7]Consultation currently being carried out as part of the DEFRA Marine Bill: paragraphs 9.76-9.79

http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/water/marine/uk/policy/marine-bill/index.htm.

[8]In some countries, aquifers are also used to store gas. Again specific geological conditions are required for such storage. There is some current commercial interest in such projects in the UK.

[9]DCLG Planning Policy Statement 1 recommends planning authorities should "recognise the wider sub-regional, regional or national benefits of economic development and consider these alongside any adverse local impacts".

[10]Written ministerial statement, "Renewable Energy Statement of Need for Transmission System Upgrades", 21 July 2005.

Winter Energy Supply

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Mr. Alistair Darling): It has been a tight winter for energy supply, and this has led to high energy prices. The energy market had taken steps to prepare for the winter, and Government worked closely with Ofgem and National Grid to ensure that all possible actions were taken to secure energy supplies. Looking ahead to next winter, I am announcing today the creation of a Business Energy Forum to look at strategic energy issues. Looking beyond next winter, I am depositing in the House a parliamentary statement of "Need for Additional Gas Supply Infrastructure". This sets out the economic case for taking action on planning to enable our strong energy market to deliver.

OUTTURN FOR WINTER 05/06

The gas market for winter 2005-06 was tighter than the previous winter. Gas supplies were maintained, but increased gas prices arising from the tight supply-demand balance were a major issue for industry as well as for domestic users. A fire at the Rough gas storage facility on 16 February 2006 led to the facility being taken out of operation, and heightened concerns about supply during the final stages of the winter. There was one Gas Balancing Alert, on 13 March 2006, which followed the loss of the Rough storage facility, but no forcible interruptions due to supply-demand constraints. Adequate supplies of gas and electricity were successfully maintained on every day this winter.

The market had responded to projected increased demand, with additional import infrastructure at the Isle of Grain LNG terminal, the expansion of the Interconnector import capacity, and a new storage facility, Humbly Grove. All these began operation at the start of the winter. DTI played a proactive role, working with developers and regulators to smooth the path for these developments. The Government encouraged offshore producers to be ready to maximise their production capacity in the winter, and supplies of gas direct from the offshore fields held up well throughout the winter.

There was significant demand-side response from the electricity-generating sector. In terms of base-load generation, there was switching from gas to coal. In addition, there was some switching from gas to distillate fuel. The level of coal-fired generation was more significant than had been expected, and this clearly has implications for carbon emissions and climate change. Accordingly, the experience gained here will be taken into account by the Government's Energy Review.

Other energy intensive users also reduced demand significantly in response to high prices. The Government also worked to increase the awareness of energy intensive users of the importance of demand side response, and had facilitated switching from gas to other fuels for power generators and other users, by working with the Environment Agency to ensure this could be accommodated within the regulatory regime.

Price signals would have been expected to be sufficient to incentivise full use of new import facilities. There was, however, under-utilisation of this capacity, despite strong price signals to the market, particularly early in the winter. Lower than anticipated delivery of gas from continental European sources through the interconnector led to further increases in price. Ofgem has estimated this cost UK consumers up to £1.5 billion this year over the winter. The Government are looking into how to resolve this, supporting Ofgem and the European Commission's investigations. The Government also continue to push hard for liberalisation of the European market, including in particular, transparency of gas stocks and movements throughout the EU.

Throughout the winter, the Government worked closely with National Grid and Ofgem to communicate information on the gas market to Parliament, industry and the public, in particular on price. The Government recognise the difficulties faced by industrial users, particularly energy intensive energy users, and also domestic users.

For domestic users, the Government have increased funding for tackling fuel poverty by approximately £300m over the 2005-2008 period. The Government's main way of tackling fuel poverty in vulnerable households in England is Warmfront. Similar schemes, Warm Deal, the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme, and the Warm Homes Scheme also operate Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland respectively. These provide heating and insulation measures to vulnerable households. To help those on low incomes, the Government have committed itself to continued winter fuel payments for the duration of this Parliament.

OUTLOOK FOR WINTER 2006-07

National Grid's draft "Winter Consultation Document", published today, indicates the supply-demand balance for gas next winter is expected again to be tight. Only a modest increase in demand is anticipated. Production of gas from the UK Continental Shelf, although lower than last winter, will continue to be by far the most important source of supply to the UK. Over the medium term, it will continue to contribute significantly to meeting UK demand. The balance of demand will need to be met through imports and release of gas from storage.

The market is delivering further new import infrastructure that is due to come on line next winter. This includes the completion of the Langeled Pipeline from Norway and the further expansion of the Belgian interconnector. There are also plans for the Balgzand-Bacton pipeline from the Netherlands to be in place this winter, and the new Excelerate LNG ship import facility in Teesside has recently been announced. In addition, the Humbly Grove storage facility should have had the opportunity to fill up with gas over this summer, unlike last year. The Government are monitoring carefully progress on restoring operations at the Rough storage facility.

The availability of adequate import infrastructure is only one aspect of supply. The Government remains committed to the liberalised market as the means of delivering security of supply. Interactions between the UK and other markets are growing, and the Government will be working to ensure that imports through the Interconnector and imports of LNG respond to demand from the UK. We will be meeting key companies over coming months, as we did last winter, to emphasise the importance to the UK of maximising gas supply in the winter. We will continue our efforts with Ofgem and the European Commission to push for greater transparency and liberalisation in continental European markets.

Electricity generation is expected to be similar to last winter, with around one third of electricity generation capacity gas-fired. Last winter showed, however, that during periods of high gas demand, coal generation becomes significant as the base load generator, and some gas-fired generators switch from gas to distillate as an alternative fuel. The Government will be working to ensure that reliability of alternative power generation capacity is enhanced, and to ensure that the environmental regulatory regime allows flexibility for power generators to switch from gas to alternative fuels if necessary.

The Government are taking early action to ensure that security of supply is assured during the coming winter, and to ensure that the impacts of a tight demand-supply

balance are mitigated. The Government recognise that all participants in the market have a role to play, including the gas supply industry, including producers, transporters, and suppliers, users including industry, power generators and other energy intensive users, and regulatory bodies.

The Government are working to ensure that the best possible information on supply and demand forecasting is available to the industry. An important part of this includes working closely with National Grid who are producing their Winter Consultation Document, to be published by Ofgem today. The Government are also reviewing energy emergency arrangements, as part of proper contingency and emergency planning, consulting industry and other interested parties. The Government will be working closely with CBI, Ofgem, National Grid, producers, shippers, suppliers and industrial users to ensure that all possible preparations are made for next winter, that these are effectively coordinated, and communicated.

I am therefore announcing today the creation of a Business Energy Forum. This will be high-level group jointly chaired by my right hon. Friend the Minister for Energy (Malcolm Wicks) and Richard Lambert, Director General Designate of the CBI. The group will provide a forum for discussion of a broad range of strategic energy issues, with a focus on security of supply next winter. Its members will include representatives from industry bodies, including the Engineering Employers Federation, the Energy Intensive Users Group, and the Chemical Industries Association, gas producers and shippers, electricity generators and suppliers and representatives of other user groups.

Looking beyond next winter, there is further significant investment in gas supply infrastructure planned. The need for additional infrastructure, and a regulatory environment to allow such infrastructure to be delivered to the market in a timely fashion remains a priority for this Government. That is why today I am also depositing in the House a parliamentary statement of "Need for Additional Gas Supply Infrastructure", which sets out the economic case for our growing need for more infrastructure, and clarifies the Government policy context for planning and consent decisions on gas supply infrastructure projects.

The lessons of last winter are being taken into account. In the light of last winter's experience, gas supplies should be able to meet daily demand, although concerns remain about high prices. The Government remain committed to ensuring that the UK's strong energy market has the opportunity to operate effectively next winter and in the years to come.

TRANSPORT

London Underground and National Railways (LUNR) Passenger Screening Trials

The Secretary of State for Scotland (Mr. Douglas Alexander): We announced in November last year that the Department for Transport will be undertaking a small number of trials at stations on London's surface and underground rail networks, to test the effectiveness of passenger screening equipment in an operational environment.

The first trial took place on the platforms for the Heathrow Express at Paddington station over a four-week period during January and February of this year. The data from the trial have been analysed and will be included in the final trial report.

The next phase of the project will be held at stations on the London Underground and will test equipment that can detect traces of explosives on passengers and their belongings.

Following consultation with London Underground, the British Transport Police and other stakeholders, Canary Wharf and Greenford have been chosen to host the next series of trials.

The trial at Canary Wharf will begin on Wednesday 17 May and will also run for a period of around four weeks. The trial will test the use of a document scanner, a finger scanner and a cabin baggage X-ray machine. Each day a small number of randomly selected passengers will be invited to take part, although any participation will be entirely voluntary. There will be minimal disturbance to the station's operations and the flow of passengers throughout the day will not be affected.

Once the trial at Canary Wharf trial has been completed, a similar trial at Greenford station will begin in which equipment that can analyse explosive traces on clothing and bags using swabbing and air samples will be tested.

Furthermore, in conjunction with the British Transport Police, we shall be trialling the use of explosives-sniffing dogs at a main London station and a major regional station, also for a limited period.

The sole purpose of these trials that we are undertaking is purely to test their application in a genuine rail environment. They are not direct measures to enhance security at these stations. No decisions have been taken on the future use of this equipment, all the data and feedback we can gain during the tests is merely to help inform any future judgments.

The UK's railway system is a network made up of 2,500 stations and 11,000 miles of track. It carries one billion passengers a year. The British public understand that a closed security system on a rail network of this size is unworkable.

However we must still aim to cut down the risks as much as possible, whilst still allowing people to go about their day to day business.

No single security measure is either foolproof or capable of mitigating every threat so we need to keep a range of measures available. It is therefore important that we not only consider both existing and emerging technologies, but that we subject them to vigorous tests in a mix of authentic environments to see just how effectively they can contribute towards keeping our networks as safe and efficient as possible.

Publication for Transport Annual Report 2006

The Secretary of State for Scotland (Mr. Douglas Alexander): I have today published my Department's annual report for 2006. Copies have been laid before Parliament and placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The report sets out the Department's activities and achievements over the last year. It also describes the Department's future expenditure plans for the period of the spending review 2004.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 17 May 2006

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Judicial Diversity

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): My noble Friend the Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor has made the following written ministerial statement.

"I am announcing today how the strategy which the Lord Chief Justice, the Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission and I have agreed to promote diversity within the judiciary is to be taken forward in the light of the implementation of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005. I am also announcing particular changes that will contribute to delivering my judicial diversity policy.

Increasing the diversity of the judiciary, particularly the number of women and those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, remains one of my key priorities. The launch of the Judicial Appointments Commission and the new responsibilities of the Lord Chief Justice provide an ideal opportunity to set in place a new strategy to build upon the improvements made in recent years.

The Lord Chief Justice, the Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission and I are committed to ensuring the continuation of a judiciary of the highest calibre, with candidates drawn from the widest possible range of available talent. We have agreed an integrated strategy by which we aim to bring about a more diverse judiciary with increased understanding of the communities it serves, in order to ensure a judiciary of the highest quality which contributes to increased public confidence in the justice system.

The key planks of the strategy, which will require a co-ordinated approach by my Department, the Judicial Appointments Commission and the judiciary, are:

to promote judicial service and widen the range of people eligible to apply for judicial office;

to encourage a wider range of applicants, so as to ensure the widest possible choice of candidates for selection;

to promote diversity through fair and open processes for selection to judicial office solely on merit; and,

to ensure that the culture and working environment for judicial office-holders encourages and supports a diverse judiciary and increases understanding of the communities served.

Details of the division of responsibilities between my Department, the Judicial Appointments Commission and the Directorate of Judicial Offices for England and Wales have today been published on the DCA website www.dca.gov.uk.

A comprehensive, co-ordinated and collaborative approach will be adopted by the three bodies to ensure that the diversity strategy is delivered effectively.

This strategy is supported by research commissioned by my Department to better understand the reasons for the under-representation of women and members of black and minority ethnic communities in the judiciary. The research, undertaken by Opinion Leader Research, has today been published on the DCA website www.dca.gov.uk. and copies placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

I am also announcing today further measures to promote greater diversity in the judiciary:

the Judicial Work Shadowing Scheme is to be extended to cover tribunals, with 10 tribunals having signed up to participate in the Scheme, so as to provide potential applicants with an enhanced understanding of judicial opportunities;

a working group involving members of the judiciary and magistracy has reported on how experience as a magistrate can be counted in lieu of some sittings as a fee-paid judge, helping to encourage those from different backgrounds to consider a judicial career. The Judicial Appointments Commission will consider how best to take forward this work.

The new strategy will ensure that my Department, the Judicial Appointments Commission and the judiciary build upon the success of recent years and continue to appoint judicial office-holders of the highest possible quality, in whom the public can have the utmost confidence."

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

EU Education Council

The Minister for Higher Education and Lifelong Learning (Bill Rammell): The Scottish Executive Minister for Education and Young People, Mr. Peter Peacock, and the UK Deputy Permanent Representative to the EU, Anne Lambert, will represent the UK during the Council in Brussels. Win Harris (Director of the DWP/DfES Joint International Unit) and Sarah Wingfield (Education Council Team Leader, DFES) will also attend.

This meeting of the Education, Youth and Culture Council will not include any significant youth agenda items, as the new text for the Youth in Action Programme, which was due to be the main item for discussion, is due to be adopted by the Commission on 24 May.

The first item on the agenda of the Education Council is to agree conclusions on the Commission communication on the European Indicator of Language Competence. These conclusions invite the Commission to set up an advisory board, composed of a representative of each member state and one representative of the Council of Europe, to advise on technical matters and the organisational and resource implications for member states of taking part in the survey. The Government support this approach, as we believe it is essential to have further information on how the Indicator would operate in practice as well as costs and burdens before we take a final decision on whether to participate in its implementation. We also support the current compromise position set out in the conclusions, which is to test at the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) level 2 (that is, Year 9, ages 13-14 in England), but with the flexibility for member states to test at ISCED level 3 if the second foreign language is not taught before then.

Ministers will then be asked to agree a general approach on the Commission's proposed recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning. The Minister will state that the UK is generally happy with the text but will make it clear that our parliamentary scrutiny reservation still stands. He will suggest that the wording in the description of competence six (social and civic competence) is changed so that the reference to "essential" knowledge

of European integration, structures, objectives and values is changed to "highly desirable".

The recommendation for a European quality charter on mobility will then be discussed. I am grateful to the council for recently clearing scrutiny on this recommendation. The Minister will not intervene as we can support the text as it stands.

The main area for discussion will probably be during the exchange of views over the financial aspects of the Lifelong Learning Programme. A partial political agreement on the lifelong programme was reached under the UK presidency at Education Council in November 2005, but this excluded the financial aspects, as the EU budget had not been set. The overall budget was subsequently agreed in April 2006, giving the Lifelong Learning Programme about half the funds the Commission had hoped for. This is the first opportunity that Ministers will have to indicate their priorities for the programme with the reduced funding, and to comment on the balance of how the funding is split. The Officials in the Education Council will then negotiate the detail of the funding breakdown. The Minister will seek to raise the profile of Grundtvig (adult learning) and suggest that this money comes from the much larger Erasmus programme.

The exchange of views will be followed by a policy debate on the review of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy. Member states were invited to submit a written response to the 3 questions which have been tabled at all Councils, which the UK has done. The Minister will contribute to the debate by stating that education has a role to play in ensuring economic prosperity and social inclusion, but that it is important that we achieve these aims through the existing Lisbon agenda.

The morning will conclude with two information points from the Commission:

(i) on the Communication on modernising Higher Education which has just been issued and;

(ii) on the European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Training (ECVET).

I will report back on the outcome of the Council as usual.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Minister for Schools (Jim Knight): I am today launching the statutory consultation on a package of reforms to the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS).

The reform proposals reflect an agreement that has been reached following several months of negotiations with union and employer representatives. The key reform objectives of long-term affordability and sustainability have been achieved whilst ensuring that the TPS will continue to be an important and valuable element of the total remuneration package for teachers and lecturers. I am committed to the teaching profession continuing to be an attractive career choice with increasingly flexible career paths. Recruitment, retention and motivation will all be supported by a modernised TPS that will provide scheme members with greater choice and flexibility over the ways in which they can plan and save for their retirement.

Tough decisions have had to be taken to ensure that the teachers and lecturers of today—and those that will join the profession in future years—can continue to enjoy the benefits of a high-quality, defined benefit occupational pension scheme. I am, therefore, extremely grateful for the positive and constructive approach taken by all parties during the detailed and complex negotiations that have resulted in an agreement on a comprehensive package of reforms to the TPS.

The reform proposals will reduce by £5.4 billion the long-term costs of the TPS over the next 50 years. This is in line with the agreement reached in October 2005 between Government and the TUC on the framework for the reform of the pension schemes covering teaching, the Civil Service and the NHS. These savings will be delivered through the introduction of a pension age of 65 for new entrants from 1 January 2007; changes to the benefit structure for both existing members and new entrants; and an increase from 6 per cent. to 6.4 per cent. in the contribution rate paid by all members of the TPS.

To ensure the long-term affordability and financial sustainability of the TPS, agreement has also been reached with the unions and employers on a cost-sharing arrangement that will see members and employers meeting an equal share of any future cost pressures rather than them falling entirely on the employers as has been the position up until now. The agreement also provides for a ceiling of 14 per cent. on the employer contribution rate that will apply from the next valuation of the TPS in 2008. This agreement provides for much greater certainty and stability in employer costs that, to a significant extent, ultimately fall to the taxpayer.

I very much welcome this package of reforms. I am confident that it will be recognised by the membership as a very good outcome to the review of the TPS in which their long-term interests have been so well represented by their unions and employers. A copy of the consultation document will be placed in the Library. It can also be accessed on the DFES website at www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Departmental Report

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Margaret Beckett): I am today laying before Parliament the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Departmental Report for 1 April 2005—31 March 2006 (Cm 6823).

The report is a clear and comprehensive account of what the FCO has done under the leadership of my right hon. Friend the former Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs over the last financial year. It sets out our achievements, including how we performed against our public service agreement targets. It gives details of how we spent public funds. And it shows that the FCO has delivered real successes for the Government and for the British public during the period of the report.

The most visible way in which the FCO protects the interests of British people is through our public services. Over the past year, our consular network has dealt with major crises from hurricanes in the United States and Mexico to terrorist bombings in Egypt as well as helping tens of thousands of other British people in distress overseas. We also run the fastest large-scale visa operation in the world.

The FCO has continued to deliver increased prosperity through its support for British business. UK Trade and Investment, our joint operation with the Department for Trade and Industry, helped to attract record levels of inward investment. Our network around the world also made a significant contribution to bringing the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games to London.

In addition to these direct services, the FCO delivers real benefits to British people through active diplomacy. We used the twin UK presidencies of the European Union and of the G8 to help us meet strategic objectives, including starting talks on Turkey's accession to the EU, agreeing the EU budget, and taking concrete action to help development in Africa and to manage climate change. We have engaged bilaterally and multilaterally across the globe, most notably in the middle east. We have supported democracy in Iraq, we have built an international consensus over Iran's nuclear ambitions, and we have led the response to fast-moving developments in the middle east peace process.

The FCO played a central role in making sure there was international co-operation following the 7 July attacks in London and was also active in cementing measures to strengthen the international response to terrorism.

Other important achievements included hosting the London conference on Afghanistan which set the agenda for the next phase of reconstructing the country. During our EU presidency we played a leading role at the UN world summit which, among other things, agreed the formation of a new Human Rights Committee and of a new Peace Building Commission.

The FCO remains strong in traditional skills, but continues to adapt and develop new ones. Our trained consular rapid deployment teams are ready to go anywhere at a moment's notice to help British people in trouble. We are further developing skills in project and programme management. Our overseas network won "Investors in People" accreditation in December 2005, which means that the whole of the FCO is now accredited by the scheme.

We deploy our resources where they can add real value to UK interests and the work of other Government Departments. We use information technology to help us work more flexibly and effectively. We are becoming more diverse as we aim for challenging targets for numbers of women, disabled and minority ethnic staff.

The report makes clear the commitment of FCO staff and records the concrete and specific benefits they have delivered over the past financial year. It also sets out how we are learning lessons for the future. The FCO's White Paper, "Active Diplomacy for a Changing World: The UK's International Priorities", published on 28 March, will provide a firm foundation for maintaining this strong performance for the future. I look forward to the FCO delivering this strong performance under my leadership as Foreign Secretary. I commend this report.

PRIME MINISTER

Cabinet Committee Chairs

The Prime Minister (Mr. Tony Blair): I have placed an updated list of Cabinet Committees, and of who chairs them, in the Libraries of both Houses.

A full list, including membership and terms of reference will shortly be placed in the Library of the House and on the Cabinet Office website.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 18 May 2006

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Child Care Proceedings Review

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): The review of the Child Care Proceedings System in England and Wales is published today. It was commissioned in "A Fairer Deal for Legal Aid" in July 2005 as a joint piece of work between the Department for Education and Skills and the Department for Constitutional Affairs. Its recommendations aim to deliver improvements in the outcome of proceedings, particularly for children, and to ensure that all resources in the system are used in the most timely, effective way.

Recommendations for improvement fall into five main areas: helping families (ensuring families and children understand proceedings); better informed resolution (ensuring applications are only made after all safe, appropriate alternatives to court have been explored); preparation for proceedings (improving the quality and consistency of section 31 applications); during proceedings (improving the quality of case management); and inter-agency working (encouraging closer professional relationships).

The full and timely implementation of the recommendations made is critical. To ensure this takes place, I will be chairing a ministerial delivery group, which will include DfES and Welsh Assembly Ministers. The purpose of this group will be to ensure a high accountability for progress on the implementation of the review and reduction in delay generally in handling care applications. There will also be a delivery board of senior officials, which will deal with more detailed implementation issues.

HEALTH

NHS Dentistry

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Ms Rosie Winterton): I am pleased to announce that we are making £100 million of capital investment funding available to the NHS to take forward infrastructure improvements for NHS primary dental care services. This builds on the four year £80 million capital investment programme already committed to supporting a 25 per cent. expansion in the number of training places for dentists. NHS dental practices and their patients will benefit from a programme of capital investment of £100 million over the two years 2006-07 and 2007-08. This will:

Support dentists in modernising premises and equipment for patients and;

allow primary care trusts to give greater financial support to help dentists establish new dental practices or expand existing surgeries.

The £100 million of capital investment will be made available to the NHS, through SHAs, over the next two years to take forward infrastructure improvements for NHS primary dental care services.

CABINET OFFICE

Cabinet Office Departmental Report

The Minister for the Cabinet Office (Hilary Armstrong): I have today, with my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, laid before Parliament the "Cabinet Office Departmental Report 2006" (Cm 6833).

The departmental report describes the work of the Cabinet Office and includes a performance report for each of our public service agreement targets. The report contains information on the achievements and successes of the Cabinet Office, outlines the priorities ahead and also includes a set of tables showing past outturn and future expenditure plans.

Copies are available in the Vote Office and in the Library.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Parliamentary Boundary Commission

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Peter Hain): The Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland has today published the "Revised Recommendations for Parliamentary Constituencies in Northern Ireland" prepared by the Northern Ireland Parliamentary Boundary Commission.

The Revised Recommendations follow three public local inquiries which were held into the Commission's Provisional Recommendations (published on 29 April 2004). In reaching decisions on the Revised Recommendations the Commission has accepted, wherever practicable to do so, the recommendations of the Independent Assistant Commissioners who conducted these inquiries.

The Revised Recommendations continue to provide for 18 constituencies and revise the boundaries of 12 constituencies.

The Commission must consider all representations on the Revised Recommendations received within one month of their publication.

I will, of course, report back to Parliament once the Commission has submitted its final recommendations to me.

Criminal Justice Inspection (Avoidable Delay)

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. David Hanson): The Government have received a thematic inspection report from the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland, Mr. Kit Chivers. The report, "Avoidable Delay: A thematic inspection of delay in the processing of criminal cases in Northern Ireland", has today been published.

The Government accept the core findings of the report that cases are taking too long. The timeliness with which the criminal justice system dispenses justice is an important element in its effectiveness and efficiency and in maintaining and raising public confidence. I therefore welcome this report and its findings.

In line with the findings in the report, we have set up a dedicated inter-agency team to develop a new strategy to deliver improvements to case processing times.

Copies of the chief inspector's report have been placed in the Library.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Royal Mail

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Mr. Alistair Darling): I have today proposed the basis of the financial framework for Royal Mail that the Government as shareholder have, in principle, agreed with the company. This will fulfil our commitment to see a publicly owned Royal Mail restored to good health and providing customers with an excellent service and its employees with rewarding employment. It will give Royal Mail the freedom it needs to use its financial resources as it sees fit so that it can invest to succeed in a fully competitive and tightly regulated market.

The Government intend to exercise their powers under section 72 of the Postal Services Act 2000 to release £850 million of reserves that Royal Mail has built up through past profitable performance so those funds can be transferred to a special account, the pension escrow account, upon which the pension fund trustees could draw, should Royal Mail fail as a business. When the pension fund deficit has been recovered and Royal Mail's balance sheet strengthened by successful operation, it is expected that the escrow fund will be released and surplus cash may be returned to the Government as shareholder. This arrangement provides confidence to pensioners and a sustainable financial framework for Royal Mail.

Government have agreed in principle to extend the existing debt package such that £900 million is available for use by the Royal Mail. This will allow the company to embark on an investment programme so that it can transform its effectiveness, secure the efficiency improvements required under the regulatory settlement and successfully compete in a newly liberalised market.

As part of the overall financing arrangements for Royal Mail, Social Network Payments of £150 million per annum for the next two years and any further support for the post office network for the period from 2008 will be met from voted expenditure. The level of any support after 2008 will depend on decisions on the future of the Post Office network and we will be consulting about this.

I am confident that these proposals will enable Royal Mail to implement its ambitious transformation plans to secure a successful future in a competitive market under the regulatory regime.

TRANSPORT

London Underground

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Gillian Merron): I am pleased to announce that Chris Bolt has been re-appointed as PPP Arbiter until December 2010. Mr. Bolt was originally appointed as Arbiter on 31 December 2002 for a four-year term, and this appointment has now been extended for a further four years. This extension will provide continuity in the lead up to, and during, the PPP periodic review that must be completed by October 2010. The periodic review will enable London Underground and the PPP companies to determine the outcomes and prices paid under the PPP contract for the next seven and a half years after 2010.

The PPP Arbiter appointment is made by the Secretary of State under sections 225 to 226 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999. The Arbiter's principal role is to ensure that any differences between the PPP parties, particularly during a PPP review, about the price to be paid to the PPP companies or about economy and efficiency can be resolved independently, swiftly and with certainty.

Chris Bolt was appointed as Chairman of the Office of Rail Regulation on 5 July 2004 for a five-year term.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 22 May 2006

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): My noble Friend the Secretary of State, has made the following written ministerial statement:

"Today I have deposited copies of The Freedom of Information Act 2000—First Annual Report on the operation of the Freedom of Information Act in Central Government—2005 in the Libraries of both Houses".

This is the Annual Report analysing the performance of central Government in the first full year of Freedom of Information.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Higher Education Applications Process

The Minister for Higher Education and Lifelong Learning (Bill Rammell): I am delighted to announce today the response to the Department for Education and Skill's consultation on Improving the Higher Education Applications Process. This response is issued on behalf of myself and my ministerial colleagues in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The consultation exercise that has led to today's publication was undertaken following a recommendation in the 2004 report from the Admissions to Higher Education Review group. That Group, chaired by Professor Steven Schwartz (former VC Brunel University), considered the principles that should underpin a fair and transparent admissions process and made a number of recommendations to the sector and to Government. One recommendation to Government was to -

"Set up a high-level implementation group as soon as possible to achieve PQA"

My right hon. Friend the Member for Norwich. South (Mr. Charles Clarke), former Secretary of State for Education and Skills, in a statement to this House on 14 September 2004, accepted that recommendation and put in place the structures to fulfil that recommendation.

For the last 18 months, the Department for Education and Skills has been consulting with key stakeholders in the education sector on how this could be achieved. A public consultation was launched on 9 September 2005 that included a number of proposals for reform to the current application system and offered for consideration two models of post-qualification application (PQA).

Having analysed and considered the response to that consultation, we are pleased to recommend a number of reforms which will make the system fairer for students and more efficient for higher education institutions. Responses identified strong support in principle for a move towards a system of PQA, but also many practical obstacles to implementing such a system.

We believe that the reforms we recommend for 2008-09 will realise some of the key benefits of PQA and lay firm foundations for further steps in that direction. Crucially, the proposed new system for 2008-09 will offer those students who achieve higher grades than required by their first firm conditional offer the chance to seek an alternative place that best matches their aspirations and circumstances. We want to build on the step-change that these early reforms represent and, in light of experience of them, commit to working for the introduction of PQA from 2012. We have recommended a further review in 2010-11 to facilitate that objective.

In summary, the reforms would:

provide more and better information on which HEIs can base their admissions decisions;

involve students submitting, and HEIs considering, fewer initial applications, thereby reducing administrative burdens;

ensure applications are considered on the basis of a gathered field, creating a more equal chance for all students and reducing the temptation for them to place early, ill-researched applications;

give students better feedback on their applications, allowing them to make better informed decisions about their HE options;

give those who have failed to gain an offer with their initial applications better opportunities to continue applying in search of a place;

result in fewer students needing to enter Clearing; and

offer those students who achieve higher grades than required by their first firm conditional offer the chance to seek an alternative place that best matches their aspirations and circumstances.

We have recommended the establishment of a delivery partnership, involving representatives from higher and further education, schools and other interested stakeholders, to introduce these recommendations for the 2008-09 academic year. The delivery partnership will also be tasked with assessing the impact of those changes after they have had time to bed down and to review again a move towards a full PQA system.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Criminal Records Bureau

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Joan Ryan): The Criminal Records Bureau has today published its five-year strategy and business plan 2006-07. Copies of the document will be placed in the Library of the House.

TRANSPORT

Ports Policy Review Launch

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Dr. Stephen Ladyman): I am pleased to announce today, in conjunction with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Wales and Northern Ireland, and with Andrew Davies AM, the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks, the launch of a review of ports policy covering England, Wales and Northern Ireland. (Ports policy in Scotland is being progressed separately by the Scottish Executive through its National Transport Strategy and subordinate freight strategy.)

We undertook, in the White Paper "The Future of Transport", to:

"review our policy framework to keep track of wider changes affecting ports and to ensure we continue to have the right basis for their sustainable development", [paragraph 7.28]

That is the intention of this review. We publish today a discussion document, "Ports Policy—Your Views Invited", aimed at stimulating wide debate during a consultation period spanning the coming three months.

The review covers a broad range of policy issues. Based on new forecasts of demand for port facilities, which the Department's consultants MDS Transmodal are publishing alongside the discussion document, our discussion document starts from the broad principles which we see as informing Government involvement in the seaports sector following this review.

It includes coverage of the national, regional and local policy dimensions; expected capacity requirements; inland and coastal connections by road, rail and water; safety, security and environmental issues; competition at national and international level; governance and accountability; how the country's smaller ports can make the most of their opportunities, and whether there is scope for improving ports planning procedures.

The House is aware that our original intention had been to await decisions on the three proposed major container terminals at Felixstowe South, Bathside Bay and London Gateway. The first two have been approved, but the London Gateway decision is taking longer than originally expected to determine. We do not want to delay the review: our view is that we need to press on with addressing important questions affecting ports policy for the longer term.

We shall, in close liaison with our partners in Government, carefully consider all responses to the discussion document. The aim is then to develop a policy statement in the first half of 2007.

Alongside the discussion document, the Department is also publishing the conclusions of the municipal ports review, Opportunities for ports in local authority ownership. This has been developed in close liaison with the Department for Communities and Local Government, with the British Ports Association and with the municipal ports themselves. I am grateful for their contributions. The review highlights opportunities for real improvements in ports' management and performance, and I look forward to its recommendations being taken forward. Copies of all documents will be placed in the House Library, and can be found on the Department's website www.dft.gov.uk.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 23 May 2006

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Crown Application of the Planning Acts

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Yvette Cooper): The Government, on 17 May, laid before Parliament the statutory instruments subject to the negative resolution procedure required to commence part 7 chapter 1 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and incorporate the Crown into the planning system.

They are:

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (Commencement No. 9 and Consequential Provisions) Order 2006 (SI 2006 No. 1281 (C. 43));

The Town and Country Planning (Application of Subordinate Legislation to the Crown) Order 2006 (SI 2006 No. 1282);

The Planning (Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Hazardous Substances) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006 No. 1283); and

The Planning (National Security Directions and Appointed Representatives) (England) Rules 2006 (SI 2006 No. 1284).

These instruments will commence Part 7 Chapter 1 of the 2004 Act which will end the Crown's immunity from the planning system by applying the planning Acts to the Crown. These will apply existing planning subordinate legislation to the Crown with modifications where necessary; amend the listed buildings and hazardous substances regulations; and provide rules covering the role of special advocates for planning cases with national security implications.

These instruments will come into force on 7 June 2006.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Official Solicitor and Public Trustee Trusts and Estates Cases

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): My noble Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs, has made the following written ministerial statement:

"My right honourable and noble Friend, the Lord Chancellor has approved proposals for the Official Solicitor and Public Trustee (OSPT) to retire from the bulk of his existing caseload of trusts and estates work over the next two years. This follows a recommendation in April 2004 in an NAO review of the Public Trustee's stewardship of client funds that he should establish a pro-active strategy for divesting himself of trusts and estates work, particularly in terms of becoming a trustee of last resort and outsourcing his investment activities.

Where cases cannot otherwise be closed during that period, the OSPT proposes to invite expressions of interest from a private sector corporate trustee to take over and administer his cases in accordance with best market regulated practice. The OSPT will work to ensure that the interests of beneficiaries will be secured through this process. The proposals will be designed to deliver the administration of their trusts in the future in accordance with best practice standards. There will be full consultation with those affected, who will be able to put forward any alternative solution more appropriate in their particular case than that which the OSPT proposes. If agreement is reached with a private sector corporate trustee, or on an alternative solution in a particular case, the OSPT will retire from these cases in favour of the new trustee.

As announced in April 2000 in "Making Changes: The Future of the Public Trust Office", since the Official Solicitor was also appointed Public Trustee in 2001 he has only accepted any new trust and estates case where he has been satisfied that, in accordance with strict "last resort" acceptance criteria, a public sector trustee is required. In 2005-06, for example, only 13 cases were accepted by him as Official Solicitor, and one as Public Trustee. He is, however, currently responsible for administering about 1,750 trusts and estates, mainly taken on before the last resort criteria were applied."

Her Majesty's Courts Service

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): The following table list sets out the key performance targets* that have been set for Her Majesty's Courts Service for 2006-07:

Relevant PSA	*Target 2006-07*
PSA 1	To improve the delivery of justice by reducing the proportion of ineffective trials to no more than 15.5 per cent. in the Crown Court and no more than 21 per cent. in the magistrates' courts.
PSA 2	To reassure the public, reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour and building confidence in the Criminal Justice System with compromising fairness.
PSA 4	By 2009-10, increase the proportion of care cases being completed in the courts within 40 weeks by not less than 49 per cent. in the County Court and not less than 61 per cent. in the magistrates' courts.
PSA 5	To achieve earlier and more proportionate resolution of legal problems and disputes by: Increasing the opportunities for people involved in court cases to settle their dispute out of court to 40 per cent.; and Reducing delays in resolving those disputes that need to be decided by the courts by increasing the proportion of small claims hearing that take place within target time by 81 per cent.

Copies of the HM Courts Service business plan for 2006-07 have been place in the Libraries of both Houses.

*More information on these and other key supporting targets are published in the Strategic and Business Plans, which includes how HMCS helps deliver PSA1 and 2 (joint Criminal Justice System targets).

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

HE Student Finances

The Minister for Higher Education and Lifelong Learning (Bill Rammell): This announcement covers repayment arrangements for student loans made from September 2006 onwards for borrowers who move abroad after completing their courses.

Deferred fee loans will be made available in 2006-07 for EU students who are accepted at our universities with the first full cohort eligible to repay from April 2010.

Repayments will be collected directly by the Student Loans Company (SLC) and, as for students who stay in the UK after finishing their course, will remain income contingent with repayments based on 9 per cent. of income over an earnings threshold.

The Government are determined to ensure that all EU students repay fee loans on an income contingent basis. Our policy is for repayments to be fair and affordable and that on leaving their course, all those who can contribute to the costs of their Higher Education, should do so. This will ensure that students returning to countries where average earnings are low, will repay on an income contingent basis.

However living costs and earnings vary from country to country and so we will use an index of price levels to establish fair earnings thresholds based on where borrowers choose to live. This principle will also apply where borrowers move outside the EU.

Countries will be banded according to price levels and the bands will be as follows:

Band	*Price level index (UK=100)*	*Repayment Threshold (UK=£15,000)*
A	0<30	£3,000
B	30<50	£6,000
C	50<70	£9,000
D	70<90	£12,000
E	90<110	£15,000
F	110<130	£18,000
G	130+	£21,000

In addition, for student loans paid out from 2006 all borrowers will have entered into an enforceable contract to allow debts to be pursued in the courts as necessary, wherever a borrower may choose to live.

From 2007 students planning to move overseas after finishing their course, will be required to sign a repayment agreement with the SLC that establishes how they will repay their loan once they have moved overseas.

This means the SLC will be able to take action to enforce the debt in the courts both in the UK and abroad if necessary. We intend to make use of EC regulation 44/2001 which will allow the SLC to enforce a judgement made in the UK courts in the rest of the EU.

These arrangements will be enacted in regulations which are expected to be laid before Parliament later in the year.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

General-Affairs and External Relations Council 15 May 2006

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Geoffrey Hoon): My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Sir John Grant (UK Permanent Representative to the EU) and I represented the UK at the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) in Brussels on 15 May 2006. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence represented the UK at the Defence Ministers discussions.

The agenda items were covered as follows:

General Affairs

Preparation of the European Council (15-16 June, Brussels): Draft annotated agenda

The Council discussed preparation of the European Council on the basis of a draft annotated agenda presented by the Presidency. Likely agenda items include the Future of Europe, Hampton Court follow-up and EU enlargement.

The Presidency agreed to issue draft European Council Conclusions to COREPER (Committee of Permanent Representatives) ahead of discussion at the Foreign Ministers informal meeting at Klosterneuberg, Austria on 27-28 May.

Inter-institutional agreement (IIA)

The Council endorsed a new inter-institutional Agreement on the EU's 2007-2013 Financial Perspective in line with the provisional agreement reached between the Council and the European Parliament in April.

The new inter-institutional agreement will enter into force on 1 January 2007, replacing the existing agreement.

External Relations

Uzkbekistan

The Council adopted Conclusions reiterating the EU's call for an independent inquiry into the Andijan massacre, expressing concern about the deteriorating human rights situation and reaffirming that the measures imposed in October 2005 remain in force.

Western Balkans

The Council adopted Conclusions on Serbia and Montenegro regretting her non-compliance with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and supporting Enlargement Commissioner's Rehn's decision to disrupt the Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations, while indicating support for discussions resuming once full co-operation with ICTY is achieved.

The Council also agreed Conclusions on Montenegro reiterating the importance of a free and fair referendum and on Bosnia and Herzegovina, expressing disappointment at the failure of constitutional reform and a readiness to engage with Bosnia and Herzegovina on transition arrangements for the Office of the High Representative.

Preparation of EU-Russia Summit

The Council had a short discussion on the forthcoming EU-Russia Summit on 25 May. We expect the agenda to cover issues such as energy, visa facilitation, economic reforms and commitment to common values.

Iraq

The Council was briefed on latest developments.

The Council adopted Conclusions welcoming the progress made in Iraq to form a government of national unity; stating that the EU stands ready to engage with the new government to achieve a secure, stable and democratic Iraq.

Iran

The Council was briefed on the Foreign Ministers' E3+3 meeting in New York on 8 May and discussed next steps.

The Council adopted Conclusions which expressed deep regret at the failure of the Iranian authorities to take the steps deemed essential by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board and the UN Security Council as well their threats to maintain this failure into the future. The Council called on the Iranian authorities to cooperate fully with the IAEA, suspend all enrichment related and reprocessing activities, including research and development, and to suspend the construction of a reactor moderated by heavy water. It expressed the EU's full support for the Security Council making this mandatory. The Council also underlined its deep concern about the human rights situation in Iran.

Middle East Peace Process

The Council endorsed the Quartet's decision of 9 May that the EU would establish a temporary international mechanism to help provide basic services to the Palestinian people.

The Council adopted Conclusions welcoming the statement of the Quartet Principals on 9 May in New York; expressing concern about the deterioration of the humanitarian, economic and financial situation in the West Bank and Gaza; welcoming the endorsement by the Quartet of the temporary international mechanism. Conclusions also called for early engagement between the Israeli Prime Minister and the President of the Palestinian Authority in line with President Abbas' commitment to a platform of peace.

Belarus

The Council was expecting to adopt a common position freezing the assets of President Lukashenko and several key supporters responsible for fraudulent elections. Due to technical problems, this is expected to be formally adopted by the Education Council on 18 May.

EU-Africa troika

The Council discussed the outcome of the EU-Africa troika meeting held in Vienna on 8 May.

Sudan

High Representative Solana congratulated those involved in reaching agreement at Abuja. There was a need to put pressure on those who had not yet signed up to do so.

The Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) provided an additional basis to enable the UN to take over from the Africa Mission in Sudan (AMIS). The EU needed to support the peace process economically and, until transition, through support to AMIS. Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner said the Commission would provide €100 million in humanitarian and reconstruction aid.

The Council adopted Conclusions welcoming the DPA and calling for its rapid implementation, reiterating the EU's readiness to contribute to the reconstruction and development of Darfur, including through AMIS; and restating the EU's support for transition from AMIS to a UN mission.

Uganda

The Council agreed Conclusions welcoming recent elections, calling for further democratisation and urging the Government of Uganda and the international community to work towards peaceful resolution of the conflict in Northern Uganda and in the Great Lakes region. The Conclusions also reiterated the Council's call for the Government of Uganda and neighbouring countries to work together to effect the arrest warrants of the Lord's Resistance Army commanders indicted by the International Criminal Court.

Zimbabwe

The Council discussed concerns about human rights abuses and the deteriorating economic situation in Zimbabwe. The EU had a clearly determined Common Position, including benchmarks: it was for the Government of Zimbabwe to comply with these international standards.

Cote d'Ivoire

The Council adopted Conclusions expressing concerns about the delay in the implementation of the transition roadmap and recalling the EU's readiness to support the peace process.

AOB: Nepal

The Council briefly discussed recent developments in Nepal. Partners agreed to keep EU policy towards Nepal under active review with a view to preparing recommendations on possible EU assistance.

AOB: Rendition

High Representative Solana briefed the Council on his recent appearance at the European Parliament. The Council of Europe is also expected to issue a report on rendition.

Defence Ministers

Sudan

High Representative Solana and NATO Secretary General De Hoop Scheffer stressed the importance of maintaining close EU/NATO co-operation over the assistance each organisation is providing to AMIS.

European Defence Agency

The Council noted the report submitted by the Head of the Agency on its activities.

Capabilities

The Council adopted Conclusions noting the progress achieved in the development of capability planning required by the Headline Goal; recognising the Roadmap to the Progress Catalogue and welcoming the steps taken towards resolving the shortfalls in the area of Strategic Airlift.

The Council also adopted Conclusions in the area of Rapid Response, noting the successful outcome of the Battlegroups Coordination Conference on 3 May.

Operation EUFOR Congo

The Council adopted Conclusions urging the Government to create a climate in which free and fair elections can be held while noting the EU's continued support to DRC, including through EUFOR Congo.

Joint session with Defence Ministers

Emergency and crisis response

The Council adopted Conclusions welcoming High Representative Solana's proposals to improve the EU's ability to respond to disasters and the coordination of transport for the relief efforts, in the context of the Hampton Court follow-up.

Civil military coordination

The Council adopted Conclusions highlighting the work undertaken by the Austrian Presidency to ensure effective coordination of EU crisis management instruments; welcoming the Presidency's framework paper of possible solutions for civil-military coordination and recommendations for further work by July 2006.

Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans

The Council agreed Conclusions setting out the principles of EU support for Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans.

HEALTH

Over-the-Counter Medicines Initiative

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Andy Burnham): I am pleased to announce that the first report of the Better Regulation of Over-the-counter Medicines Initiative (BROMI) was published today and has been placed in the Library. Copies are available for hon. Members at the Vote Office.

The report contains the BROMI group's first recommendations to reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens surrounding over-the-counter (OTC) medicines regulation. The recommendations have been accepted.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) will introduce, with immediate effect, a new scheme for the self-certification of certain changes to the patient information of over-the-counter medicines and a new transparent complaints procedure in respect of patient information.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Deportation and Removal of Foreign Nationals

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (John Reid): I would like to provide an update on the issue of foreign national prisoners. As my predecessor promised, I will set out the latest information I have on the foreign national prisoners released without consideration of deportation having been made since February 1999. I will set out eight priority areas for management action to achieve our long-term policy goals on foreign national prisoners. And I will set out two immediate changes to current guidance which I now believe are necessary to deal with the present serious situation.

I would like first, however, to set the handling of the consideration and deportation of foreign national prisoners into context. The context is the backdrop of mass migration prompted by the end of the Cold War and other global changes. The effects of this can be seen in the huge increases in the past decade in asylum-seeking, in immigration, and generally in the numbers of passenger journeys all over the world.

Against this backdrop, our immigration and asylum systems have secured notable achievements in recent years: the number of asylum seekers has been reduced by 72 per cent from its peak in 2002; we now decide 73 per cent of asylum cases within 8 weeks compared to the 22 months it took to decide asylum cases (including older cases) in 1997; and I can say that February and March were the first months in which we have achieved the target known as the 'tipping point', with removals running at the highest rate ever.

It is in this context that the issue of foreign national prisoners should be considered.

My first priority has been to protect the public by identifying, controlling, considering for deportation and, where appropriate, deporting the foreign national prisoners who were released without due consideration of deportation having been made. I am today reporting on progress since my written statement to the House on 15 May, *Official Report*, column 40WS.

Analysis of these cases has, as I indicated in an oral answer in the House on 15 May, revealed some duplicate files and the total overall number of these cases currently stands at 1,019, although it is possible that this figure may either reduce further due to the discovery of additional duplicates as the process of analysis is completed; or rise as the Immigration and Nationality Directorate re-checks that it has captured every relevant case.

In sharing information on these cases with the House, I would like to add the caveat that the investigative process has uncovered flaws in data collection, not least the lack of a unique personal number for use by the Home Office, prisons and the police to identify an individual. An additional factor rendering the information subject to change is the continuing examination of the records by all relevant agencies, including for re-offending. I can therefore only give the best information available to me as of today on the 1,019 foreign prisoners.

Subject to these caveats, the figure for the number of offenders convicted of a serious offence, as defined in my statement of 15 May, now stands at 186. As I said at that time, the previous figure of 179 was liable to change since the scrutiny of around 200 of the 1,019 cases was yet to be completed. That has so far resulted in an additional seven cases being identified in this category.

Of these 186, 37 have been convicted of the most serious offences, defined as murder, manslaughter, rape and child sex offences. This is an increase of two since 15 May as a result of the scrutiny of past offences. All four of the murderers are now detained in prison. Of the other 33 most serious cases which include rapists and child sex offenders, two are believed dead and

23 are in prison. We have so far identified that eight of these 37 have re-offended since release (of which six have been convicted) but no offence discovered so far has involved violence or a sexual element.

Of the 149 "more serious" offenders, 66 are now under our control and six have been deported. Of these 149, 13 have re-offended following release (of which 11 have been convicted) with a crime involving violence or a sexual element.

All of the 1,019 have now been assessed and consideration of the case for deportation has started in 999 cases. There has been an initial decision to deport in 778 of these cases. Of these 778,197 are detained, one is electronically tagged, 10 are reporting regularly to the Immigration Service or Prison Service and 37 have been deported or removed.

As police and agencies focus hard on these cases, I believe it is essential to be clear about our long-term policy. My objectives are straightforward: all non-EEA nationals who are given a custodial sentence should face deportation; and deportation should happen as early as possible in that sentence. But to achieve these long-term objectives, I believe management must address eight priority areas.

Firstly, there is today no unique personal number for individuals who come into contact with the criminal justice, immigration and asylum systems. I have instructed management to tell me how this can change.

Secondly, as my predecessor has already set out, there are prisoners within the system whose nationality is not known. There is currently no legal obligation on people who are suspected, charged or convicted to declare their nationality and no sanction against them if they refuse to co-operate or they declare a nationality falsely. I have tasked management to come up with a way of stopping this, even if it needs legislation.

Thirdly, there have almost certainly been foreign nationals whose nationality was known but who were not referred to the Immigration and Nationality Directorate for consideration for deportation. For example, before September 2004, guidance to prisons on which cases to refer to the Immigration and Nationality Directorate covered only those cases which were subject to a court recommendation and omitted to cover other categories of case which should have been considered by the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. In addition, a HO Circular to police of December 2004 sets broad criteria by which the police should refer cases to the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. It is not clear enough that this Circular has been systematically implemented. I have demanded therefore that management ensure all future instructions are given to all agencies of the criminal justice, asylum and immigration systems and are both consistent and fully implemented.

Fourthly, the criteria governing which individuals should be considered for deportation appear to have been varied over time on authority which is unclear. They have then not been consistently applied. For example, the derivation of the inclusion of those convicted of three or more offences over a five-year period in the criteria, as set out by my predecessor on 3 May, is unclear. I have ordered the policy officials to audit trail all policy criteria and the process by which they ensure that guidance is both clear and consistently applied.

Fifthly, there are foreign national prisoners who were considered for deportation under the current criteria, but where the decision was made not to deport, or where a decision to deport was frustrated by difficulties over return to the home country. I have ordered that all decisions on deportation are now made according to the most robust interpretation of the requirements of our international obligations.

Sixthly, I have instructed managers to work with colleagues in Scotland and Northern Ireland to audit the numbers of foreign national prisoners released in Scotland and Northern Ireland and to establish how many of these were referred to the IND for consideration of deportation. I have demanded clear procedures for dealing with foreign national prisoners held in Scotland and Northern Ireland are written and followed.

Seventhly, historically there have never been systematic arrangements in place for collecting information on the nationality of mentally disordered offenders, referring them to the Immigration and Nationality Directorate and considering them for deportation. This is a hugely difficult group to deal with. But I have tasked officials to construct arrangements for considering deportation where appropriate for people in this group taking account of their very specific circumstances.

Finally, as my predecessor set out in his statement of 3 May, I have demanded enhanced arrangements to facilitate the return of prisoners earlier in their sentence, including Prisoner Transfer Agreements.

These eight management priority areas will form the basis of a long-term 'agenda for change' to deal more effectively with foreign national prisoners.

However, there are also two immediate steps which are forced on me by the urgency of the present problems and the constraints on the system. Those constraints include both the trained caseworking resource available in the Immigration and Nationality Directorate to consider cases for deportation, despite the steps we have taken to reinforce the Criminal Casework Team, and detention capacity.

To enable them to deal effectively with the current flow of cases, I have agreed two immediate changes to the system.

The first change is to prioritise cases for consideration according to the degree of risk a person poses to the public. At present the criteria for consideration for deportation includes people who have committed several minor and non-violent offences, but excludes those who have had two custodial sentences of under a year for, say, actual bodily harm. This is a perverse outcome in public protection terms. I have therefore authorised that instead of considering for deportation those with three convictions regardless of seriousness or risk, the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will now consider for deportation all non-EEA nationals who have been given 12 months prison sentence, either in one sentence or as an aggregate of two or three sentences.

The second immediate change is to tighten the guidance given to caseworkers in deciding whether or not an individual should be deported. Rule 364 of the Immigration Rules, which sets out the criteria which officials should weigh in the balance against a person's crime in taking the decision whether to deport and which dates back to 1994, currently goes wider than the requirements of the Human Rights Act and the European Convention on Human Rights would stipulate. It is not right that the system should tilt the exercise of discretion in favour of the criminal rather than public safety in this way. I have therefore approved the issuing of new guidance to caseworkers which interprets the decision-making criteria much more tightly.

I believe that these immediate measures will help to ensure that more of those offenders who pose a risk to public safety are dealt with fairly and efficiently, and will face deportation where that is appropriate.

None of the reforms set out above, in particular the long-term agenda for change, will be delivered unless the right leadership is in place across the system. I have therefore instructed the new Permanent Secretary of the Home Office to address the following issues as a matter of urgency: performance; weak services, because not every field of our operations matches the standard of the best; leadership and skills, where we have under-invested; fragmentation and silos, exacerbated by communications which are too weak; and systems and processes, which simply need to be stronger.

And finally, I announced yesterday that the Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality, my hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham Hodge Hill (Mr. Byrne), will be taking overall responsibility for this reform agenda, reporting to me. I have told him I want to consider any option he believes feasible, however radical it may be. I intend to report back to the House on progress and proposals for change before the summer recess.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Visit to Uganda

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): I visited northern Uganda on 15 and 16 May to look at the situation on the ground and to discuss the conflict and other issues affecting our development partnership with President Museveni and his Foreign Minister, Sam Kutesa.

The security situation in northern Uganda has improved over the last year, as Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) numbers have declined in the face of better performance by Uganda's army and less freedom of movement for the LRA in southern Sudan. LRA attacks have fallen, and some of those displaced by conflict in the eastern part of the region have started to return home. But there are still 2 million people displaced, 1.7 million of whom are living in camps. Fear of the LRA remains strong, especially in the Acholi districts of Kitgum, Gulu and Pader. One young girl I spoke to still walks four hours every day there and back to sleep at a night centre as she has done since 2003 for fear of abduction. People will not go home until they are quite certain it is safe to do so. A significant number of the LRA are now active in Garamba national park in the north-eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), including leaders who have been indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC). This adds to regional insecurity.

The humanitarian effort, including the £20 million provided by DFID in 2004-05, has improved conditions in the camps. But the camps are crowded and there are major challenges in providing essential services. I visited Padibe camp in Kitgum district where 35,000 displaced people still live. In the Health Centre, there were only a handful of health workers, no doctor present, beds had no mattresses to hand, there was a shortage of drugs, and no ARVs for HIV-positive patients. Less than six litres of water are available per person per day compared to a humanitarian target of 15 litres per person per day. There is a cholera outbreak in the region. The humanitarian situation continues to demand our attention.

In my discussions with President Museveni and his Foreign Minister, I emphasised that greater effort was needed to address the humanitarian situation and as security allows to help people return home. We agreed that the Joint Monitoring Committee recently established by the Government and including the core group of bilateral donors (UK, US, Netherlands and Norway), the UN and civil society should help achieve this provided there was an agreed and effectively monitored plan. I made a commitment to continued substantial humanitarian assistance from the UK and for help with recovery when this becomes possible.

I welcomed President Museveni's discussions with the government of southern Sudan about tackling the LRA, but emphasised that ICC's warrants against the LRA leadership had to be enforced. I also emphasised that the regional integrity of the DRC must be respected. We agreed that a Special Envoy could have an important role to play in achieving the regional cooperation required to deal effectively with the LRA.

I also emphasised the importance of the government working with the opposition in the new Parliament to strengthen political pluralism and to help achieve an effective and accountable parliamentary process. I raised the care of Dr Kiiza Besigye and President Museveni assured me that due process will be followed in his High Court trial. I also discussed the President's commitment in his election manifesto and subsequent public statements to tackle corruption. Promoting good governance in Uganda is an important priority for the UK.

Visit to Somalia

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): On 17 May 2006, I visited: Wajid, the United Nations' logistics hub for the drought relief operation in Southern Somalia to which DFID has contributed £12 million; and Baidoa, the temporary seat of the Somalia Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP) and Government (TFG).

In Wajid, I saw at first hand the effect of the drought: firstly in an Action Contre Le Faim (ACF) therapeutic feeding centre for malnourished children brought from

distances of up to 50 km, and then in a camp occupied by about 11,000 people who were living in terrible conditions under very basic shelters, and being fed by the World Food Programme. Now that some rain has arrived, the menfolk have returned to their homes to begin cultivation. However, the harvest will not come for several months, and the families in the camps will need to be cared for in the meantime. I was also able to visit a UNICEF-organised tent school in the camp, where about 300 children and an equal number of boys and girls are enjoying very basic primary education for the first time in their lives. UN agency and Non-Governmental Organisation representatives told me that despite the logistical and security problems of working in Somalia, the relief effort had averted a humanitarian disaster, and while I was there I committed a further £2 million to support what I hope will be post-drought operations.

In Baidoa, I called on President Abdulahi Yusuf Ahmed, Prime Minister Ali Mohamed Gedi, and Parliamentary Speaker Sharif Hassan Sheik Adan, the leaders of the Transitional Institutions. I was struck by the warmth of their welcome, and how, having earlier this year buried their differences, they are trying to build a new administration from absolutely nothing, working from loaned properties including a warehouse converted into a parliamentary chamber. Despite their great fragility, these transitional institutions represent the best hope for taking Somalia forward from over 15 years of internal conflict, which sadly has continued with recent fighting in Mogadishu. The President and Prime Minister emphasised the urgent need for support to education—not currently available to the vast majority (about 80 per cent.) of children—and I was able to announce plans for a new £6 million DFID partnership programme with UNICEF and others over three years.

Building the new institutions, and the systems to bring internal reconciliation, security and stability as pre-requisites for development, will take time, but some progress is being made. I committed a further £1.5 million to the UNDP-led institutional support programme to the Transitional Institutions.

We must all hope that the political transition in Somalia, fragile though it still is, will start to bring the stability and security for which the ordinary people of that country have been yearning for so many years. The UK will continue to provide support to the Somali Transitional Institutions to that end.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Prosecution Guidelines

The Solicitor-General (Mr. Mike O'Brien): My right hon. Friend the Attorney General has made the following written ministerial statement:

"Treasury Counsel is appointed by the Attorney General. In the light of the increase in the complexity of cases prosecuted by Treasury Counsel and the need to ensure that appointments are open and fair, I commissioned a review of the current Treasury Counsel arrangements. The review team, comprising Dru Sharpling, the Chief Crown Prosecutor for Crown Prosecution Service, London; Mohammed Aziz, Commissioner at the Commission for Racial Equality; Philip Oliver, a non-executive director of the Crown Prosecution Service and Richard Ferguson QC, has delivered a report to me that includes 23 recommendations, which I have accepted.

In the course of their work, the review team consulted widely, including members of the judiciary, Treasury Counsel, chairman of the Bar Council and the Crown Prosecution Service and other barristers. Additionally, the CPS conducted, on behalf of the review team, an independent consultation exercise from an equalities perspective. I am placing a copy of the review team's report in the Library of the House.

The recommendations should ensure that Treasury Counsel is appointed in accordance with open and fair competition rules that promote equality and diversity, whilst maintaining the high standards of service provided by them. Other important recommendations address new ways of monitoring the performance of Treasury Counsel, which delivers a valuable service to the public.

The addendum to the report sets out proposals for the appointment of Treasury Counsel outside London and an alternative approach for dealing with serious criminal cases that would not be conducted at the Central Criminal Court."

TRANSPORT

Transport Innovation Fund

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Dr. Stephen Ladyman): In July 2004 the Secretary of State for transport announced the creation of the Transport Innovation Fund (TIF). The Fund will support:

"the costs of smarter, innovative local transport packages that combine demand management measures, such as road pricing, with measures to encourage modal shift, and better bus services;

local mechanisms which raise new funding for transport schemes; and

regional, inter-regional and local schemes that are beneficial to national productivity."

Today I am publishing further guidance on our approach to the first of these objectives, setting out the criteria we intend to use to assess bids for a second round of pump priming to support scheme development. Copies of the guidance are available from the Department for Transport (DfT) web site at www.dft.gov.uk and in the Library of the House.

The TIF represents a new approach by the Department for Transport (DfT) to the allocation of some of its budget. Through the TIF, resources will be directed towards the achievement of two high priority objectives—specifically tackling congestion and improving productivity. The principle underlying the TIF is that resources should be allocated on the basis of an assessment of how these objectives can be most effectively and sustainably met. The provision of pump priming funding only applies to congestion TIF schemes.

"The Future of Transport" White Paper identified the risk that, despite effective policies to promote smarter choices and network management, without radical measures, including more effective demand management, road congestion will spread over time to longer periods in the day, and to more road users. This

would have negative impact on both quality of life and on the economy. Local road pricing schemes are also important in order to pilot technology and systems and to inform the decisions on the development of national road pricing in the longer term.

We recognise that the development and appraisal of such packages will be a complex and costly process for many local authorities. That is why the Government decided to offer a limited number of local authorities some financial assistance with scheme development in advance of substantive congestion TIF funding. In July 2005 it was announced that up to £18 million was set aside between 2005-06 and 2007-08. The first allocations were made to seven areas in November 2005. The guidance published today covers the second allocation of funding.

It explains the basis on which DfT intends to allocate this pump priming funding for the second round and sets out the information that will be required from local authorities intending to bid. The guidance applies both to authorities considering putting forward new proposals and to authorities who successfully obtained funding in the first round of pump priming and who wish to apply for further funding. Eligibility for funding is restricted to local authorities in England.

The process for allocating pump priming funding is separate from the process of allocating the main TIF. Full guidance on the TIF was published in January 2006. It is not necessary to have had a successful pump-priming bid in order to apply for funding to the TIF through the congestion entry point. Nor does a successful pump-priming bid offer any guarantee of success in a bid for main TIF scheme funding.

West Coast Route Modernisation

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Derek Twigg): The Department for Transport have this morning published a progress report describing the substantial amount of work carried out in renewing : nd upgrading this key railway route, along with the commitments due for completion by the end of 2008.

Copies of this report have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and will be available on the DFT website www.dft.gov.uk.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 24 May 2006

TREASURY

Community Budget

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (Ed Balls): The statement on the 2006 budget of the European Communities (EC budget), entitled "European Community Finances" (Cm 6770), has today been laid before Parliament. This White Paper is the 26th in the series. As in the past, it covers annual budgetary matters and includes details of recent developments in European Community financial management and in countering fraud against the EC budget. It also describes the EC budget for 2006 as adopted by the European Parliament, and details the United Kingdom's gross and net contributions to the EC budget for calendar years 2000 to 2006 and financial years 2000-01 to 2007-08.

HEALTH

Legal Services (Regulation)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Bridget Prentice): On 17 October 2005, I informed this House of the publication of the White Paper "The Future of Legal Services: Putting Consumers First" setting out the Government's proposals for the regulatory reform of legal services in England and Wales. I am pleased today, just seven months later, to be publishing the draft Legal Services Bill for pre-legislative scrutiny, as the first step in delivering on those proposals. Copies of the draft Bill and accompanying regulatory impact assessment will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The draft Bill sets out our detailed plans for the creation of a strong independent oversight regulator the Legal Services Board which will ensure that front line regulators discharge their duties effectively. In addition, legislation will provide the LSB with a wide range of powers including those to authorise and de-authorise front line regulators and to quickly bring unregulated legal services under its remit through secondary legislation to best protect consumers interests. Our proposals also provide for the creation of an independent office for legal complaints, which for the first time will remove the handling of legal complaints from the legal professions. The OLC will help to foster greater consumer confidence and result in quick and fair redress.

The draft Legal Services Bill also sets out arrangements to facilitate alternative business structures, which would enable different kinds of lawyers, and lawyers and non-lawyers, to work together on an equal footing. These structures will allow legal services to be delivered in new ways, promoting greater competition and innovation and enabling providers to better respond to the demands of consumers. A range of safeguards will be put in place to protect consumers and demand high standards.

In taking forward these proposals the Government have continued to engage with key stakeholders. The consumer advisory panel, comprising representatives of main consumer bodies, has contributed significantly to informing and shaping the proposed reforms. In addition to the consumer panel we have, throughout the process, maintained effective engagement with all stakeholder groups including the legal professions, consumer organisations and the general public.

The draft Legal Services Bill will be subject to pre-legislative scrutiny by the Joint Committee that has been constituted for that purpose, which will report by July 2006. This timeframe provides an opportunity for Parliament to take evidence and consider the detail of the proposals and make recommendations through the Joint Committee's final report.

These proposals are complex and important and I believe it is right that Parliament should have the opportunity to scrutinise them in draft form. I look forward to receiving the Joint Committee's report.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Marine Environment

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Ben Bradshaw): I am pleased to announce the Government's response to the 25th report of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution: "Turning the Tide—Addressing the Impact of Fisheries on the Marine Environment".

The Royal Commission's report, which was presented to Parliament in December 2004, was an important contribution to thinking on how we can better protect the marine environment. The RCEP report made over 70 recommendations covering a wide range of fisheries activity and their impact on the marine environment.

We have for the most part accepted the RCEP's recommendations. The key recommendation in the RCEP report was the need for a new framework for marine management. Our response reflects developments on the Marine Bill, in particular the public consultation launched in March this year. The response also reflects Government's recent decisions on decommissioning, and progress made since publication of "Securing the Benefits", the Fisheries Departments' response to the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit landmark report, "Net Benefits".

Key elements of the response, structured around seven themes, are:

Improved management of the marine environment

Improved management of fisheries

International fisheries management

Research

Public participation

Jurisdictional issues

Reducing the environmental impacts of aquaculture

The Government's full response will be published on the DEFRA website shortly.

Copies of the response are being placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Great Britain - China Centre

The Minister for Trade (Mr. Ian McCartney): I am pleased to announce the Government's continued support for the Great Britain-China Centre (GBCC), through a grant-in-aid by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, after a recent review.

The GBCC has been a centre of expertise on China, with a particular focus on human rights, labour reform and improving the rule of law in China, since 1974. It can contribute unique skills and access to fulfilling these important functions. The Centre also provides support for parliamentary and other exchanges with China. The GBCC is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office through an annual grant-in-aid of £300,000.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office commissioned a review of the GBCC in mid-2005. The aim of the review was to examine whether the function provided by the GBCC was required, and whether the Centre's existing form as a NDPB was the best option for delivery.

During the consultation period following the review, many hon. Members expressed their views to the Government on the valuable role of the GBCC in promoting sensitive issues such as labour reform and the rule of law in China. It was judged that the arm's-length approach of the GBCC brings value-added benefit that cannot be achieved by Government. In light of these responses and subsequent work by the GBCC and officials of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to correct the management and control weaknesses identified in the Review, the Government have decided to maintain the GBCC's NDPB status.

The follow-up work to the review has ensured that the GBCC now has stronger financial controls, a better alignment of the Centre's work with Government policy on China and improved management oversight. Ministerial agreement to these new measures brings to an end the process initiated by the review. The GBCC now looks forward to further consolidating and expanding its position as a centre of expertise on China, widening its project base and diversifying its funding sources, including from the EU, UN and the private sector.

Throughout this period, we have appreciated the constructive and co-operative approach of all members of the Executive Committee and staff of the GBCC. The Government welcome the conclusion of the review and looks forward to continuing to work in partnership with the GBCC on China.

TRANSPORT

M6 Toll

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Douglas Alexander): The M6 toll road was privately financed, built, and is now operated by Midland Expressway Ltd (MEL) under a concession agreement signed by the then Secretary of State for Transport in 1992.

Having borne all the financial and development risk associated with the construction of the £900 million M6 toll, Macquarie Infrastructure Group (MIG)—the owners of MEL—are proposing to refinance MEL's debt, recognising the revised risk MEL now bears as operator of the road, which has been open to traffic since December 2003.

I am pleased to record that MIG have agreed to fund £112 million of road improvements in the West Midlands from their total refinancing resources.

This re-investment will fund improvements to the slip road access from the M42 to the southern end of the M6 toll, and will cover the costs of construction, operation and maintenance of a new road from the M54 and Telford to the M6 and the M6 toll.

The need for this link was identified in the west midlands area multi-modal study (WMAMMS), to improve access to and from the M54 corridor and Telford, and the Highways Agency has been undertaking detailed work with a view to developing a scheme for entry to the targeted programme of improvements.

The new road should open to traffic around 2012 (subject to the usual statutory processes), helping to free up current bottlenecks and to improve road travel through the region.

WALES

Departmental Report

The Secretary of State for Wales (Mr. Peter Hain): The Wales Office departmental report was published today, Wednesday 24 May 2006.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 25 May 2006

TREASURY

Civil Registration Reform

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (John Healey): I announced to the House on 16 November 2005, *Official Report*, col 51WS the publication of the consultation paper 'Registration Modernisation' containing proposals for giving local authorities greater responsibility and accountability for the delivery of the local registration service in England and Wales. The consultation paper also included other proposals to modernise civil registration.

Around 150 responses were received to the consultation paper from local authorities, registration officers, specific interest groups, national and regional groups, and representative organisations. There was overwhelming agreement from the full range of respondents that a new governance framework is long overdue and almost unanimous support from local authorities and regional local authority groups to the proposed revised framework.

The Government intend to push ahead with the new governance arrangements and other changes which can be taken forward under existing legislation. The General Register Office will work with the Local Authority Coordinators of Regulatory Services and the Society of Registration Officers to agree national standards and over the next two months aim to finalise the guidance to be issued to local authorities. The guidance will also seek to deal with the concerns about the employment position of registration officers raised in response to the consultation. The Government will keep under review the need for legislation on other aspects civil registration.

I have placed a copy of the report on the response to the consultation paper in the Libraries of both Houses.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

City of London Franchise Report

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Bridget Prentice): My noble Friend the Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor has made the following written ministerial statement:

"I have today laid before Parliament the City of London corporation report on the City of London (Ward Elections) Act 2002, hereafter referred to as "The Act". The Act reformed and modernised the business element of the franchise for local elections in the City of London.

The City of London corporation submitted the report on the working of its new franchise arrangements to me pursuant to Section 7(1) of the Act.

I am inclined to think that a further report will be required following the 2009 elections, however I will make a final decision on whether to ask the city to submit one, under section 7(2) of the Act 2002, at the time".

DEFENCE

Equal Opportunities Commission Action Plan

The Secretary of State for Defence (Des Browne): The action plan forms phase three of an agreement signed by the MOD and the EOC in June 2005 that outlined the MOD's commitment to tackling sexual harassment.

To inform the action plan, MOD commissioned independent research into the nature and extent of sexual harassment in the Armed Forces, including a survey of all service women. The action plan demonstrates the MOD's commitment to tackling the serious issues highlighted by this research. It provides a clear undertaking to create an environment, through strong leadership, in which harassment is recognised as inappropriate and preventable.

The full text of the action plan and the survey report is at

www.mod.uk/DefenceIntenet/AboutDefence/Issue/DiversityAndEquality/EqualOpportunitiesInTheArmedForces.htm

and copies are also available in the Library of the House.

Gurkhas

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Tom Watson): On 11 January 2005, the then Secretary of State for Defence, announced to the House that we were undertaking a comprehensive review of the terms and conditions of service under which Gurkhas serve in the British Army, which would subsume an earlier review on married accompanied service for Gurkhas.

I am pleased to be able to confirm that improved married accompanied service arrangements are being implemented from 1 April this year, and I hope our Gurkha soldiers will benefit from the much better opportunities to have their families with them at their permanent station. We have also been able to introduce national insurance contribution records for Gurkhas, so that they can qualify for the associated benefits, and they now pay food and accommodation charges, and are eligible for refunds, on the same basis as British soldiers.

But the then Secretary of State for Defence warned that the review would be a major piece of work, and it has raised some very substantial and complex issues which I do not intend to press to hasty conclusions. Therefore, although at the time of the last statement it was hoped that the review could be completed by late autumn 2005, it is now unlikely that I will be able to make any further announcement until later this year.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Departmental Report

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (David Miliband): My 2006 Departmental report which contains information on progress against the Department's aims and Public Service Agreement Targets, the challenges ahead and summary expenditure plans for 2005-06 to 2007-08 will be laid before Parliament today.

Drought Order Applications

The Minister for Climate Change and the Environment (Ian Pearson): My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, on the application by the companies concerned, has today granted drought orders that empower Mid Kent Water and Southern Water to limit or prohibit the uses set out in the Drought Direction 1991 (as modified in the Orders). The Mid Kent Water order affects its entire supply area. The two Orders granted to Southern Water apply to the company's Medway, Thanet, Hastings and Sussex Coast/Sussex North supply areas but not to the company's Hampshire and Isle of Wight supply areas. These follow the Order granted last week to Sutton and East Surrey Water.

We have seen 18 months of below average rainfall. In these circumstances, the Government's priority is the protection of consumers and of the environment during this exceptional drought. By reducing non-essential uses, through the sensible implementation of this type of drought order, essential supplies to communities can be better maintained should the drought continue. Taking precautionary action now is the responsible thing to do.

In taking these decisions, we have carefully considered the reports by the independent Inspectors. The reports concluded that there has been an exceptional shortage of rain and that without the proposed non-essential use bans there is a substantial threat to water supplies in the companies' supply areas. In reaching their conclusions the Inspectors examined the companies' performance in terms of leakage, and noted that both are meeting the long-term targets set by the economic regulator, Ofwat. I am persuaded that the restrictions allowed by these Orders are necessary over and above any further improvements on leakage they are able to make in the short term. I have made clear that we expect to see continued efforts from all the companies to improve leakage. But reducing leakage alone does not solve the problems of low rainfall.

We are granting these Orders as a precautionary measure, to allow the companies to take the actions proportionate to the evolving threat to supplies. While the exercise and use of the powers conferred through the Orders is a matter for each company concerned, I expect each company to implement the restrictions in a manner that achieves the most in the way of water savings with as little impact as possible on businesses and in the light of changing circumstances. I have asked each company to keep me informed about the way that they are implementing those restrictions that prove necessary and their overall position on supplies. In addition to this my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and I will be meeting next week with both the Regulator, Ofwat, and all of the water companies to discuss the management of water resources.

Many people have reacted positively to the message that in addition to action by the companies, we have collective responsibility for managing water as a shared resource. I hope that today's decisions will help everyone focus on the key message that in the areas affected it is their actions now, and in the months to come, which will help all of us to avoid more extreme sanctions should the drought continue into the summer and beyond.

Recent rainfall will temporarily boost river flows and help to maintain reservoir stocks, but will do little for overall supplies because the region relies heavily on groundwater (water that seeps through the soil into porous rocks, such as chalk) for 70 per cent. of its supply; in the case of Mid Kent Water that rises to 85 per cent.

In its report to Ministers last week, the Environment Agency advised that the winter recharge season for groundwater is now over, yet groundwater levels remain critically low. The rain we are seeing now and any we see over the rest of the summer will have little impact on groundwater levels, because at this time of year the effects of evaporation and the uptake of water by growing plants and trees means that most of the rain does not reach the aquifers. In winter we usually get more rain than in other seasons, and a higher proportion gets down to the aquifers. But even though we have passed the recharge season we are still taking hundreds of thousands of tons of water every day from the aquifers in the areas concerned.

There are no further drought orders under consideration. I will keep the House informed of any further decisions, should more applications for drought orders be made.

HEALTH

MHRA

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Andy Burnham): My predecessor my right hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool and Wavertree (Jane Kennedy), informed the House of progress made by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) in investigating the incident that occurred with the phase 1 clinical trial for a drug in development known as TGN1412, 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, cols 13-14WS. The MHRA is today publishing the final report of its investigations. A copy of the report has been placed in the Library and copies are available for hon. Members in the Vote Office.

The report indicates that the adverse incidents did not involve errors in the manufacture of TGN1412 or in its formulation, dilution or administration to trial participants. The report does reference a number of procedural shortcomings that were brought to light by

the MHRA's inspection. None of these was judged to have led to the adverse incidents suffered by the volunteers in this trial, but they are being followed up in the normal way through regulatory action with the company.

The MHRA therefore confirms its conclusion set out in its interim report of 5 April that an unpredicted biological action of the drug in humans is the most likely cause of the adverse reactions in the trial participants. Monoclonal antibodies are a relatively new type of biological drug, although there are a number of them already licensed and in use. However, TGN1412 is a new class of monoclonal antibody which has a stimulatory mode of action affecting certain types of cell in the immune system. In this case the resulting activity seen in humans was not predicted from apparently adequate pre-clinical testing. This is a complex scientific issue which raises important scientific and medical questions about the potential risks associated with this type of drug and how to make the transition from pre-clinical testing to trials in humans.

In the earlier written ministerial statement it was also announced that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State had agreed to the establishment of an expert working group to consider what this incident reveals about the underlying science, and how clinical trials involving these types of products should be managed and authorised in the future. My right hon. Friend has appointed Professor Gordon Duff to chair the expert group. Professor Duff has now identified, and appointed on behalf of the Secretary of State, the members of his group which have today been announced.

The terms of reference of the expert group are to consider what may be necessary in the transition from pre-clinical to first-in-man phase 1 studies, and in the design of these trials, with specific reference to:

biological molecules with novel mechanisms of action;

new agents with a highly species-specific action; and

new drugs directed towards immune system targets.

To provide advice in the form of a report to the Secretary of State for Health for the future authorisation of such trials with an interim report to be provided within three months.

We will then provide a further report to the House when the expert group provides its interim report.

The members of the group are as follows;

Professor Gordon W Duff MA BM BCh PhD FRCP, FRCPE, FMedSci, Professor of Molecular Medicine & Director of Division of Genomic Medicine, Sheffield University: CHAIRMAN

Professor John I Bell MA DM FRCP FMedSci, Regius Professor of Medicine, Oxford University

Professor Dame Carol M Black CBE MD FRCP FMedSci, President of the Royal College of Physicians of London and Professor of Rheumatology, Royal Free Hospital, London

Professor Sir Leszek K Borysiewicz MB BCh FRCP F Med Sci Deputy Rector, Imperial College London

Professor Janet H Darbyshire OBE MB ChB FMedSci FRCP FFPH, Director of the MRC Clinical Trials Unit, Co-Director of UK Clinical Research Network and Professor of Epidemiology, Royal Free and University College London Medical School.

Professor Neva E Haites OBE MB ChB PhD MRCPath FRCPE, Professor of Clinical Genetics & Head of College and Vice-Principal, College of Life Sciences and Medicine, University of Aberdeen

Sir Bob Hepple QC FBA, Cambridge University and Chair of the Nuffield Council of Bioethics

Ms Amanda Hoey, Director, ConsumerHealth Consulting Ltd - Lay representative

Dr Stephen C Inglis BSc PhD, Director, National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC)

Professor Lars Klareskog, Professor of Rheumatology, Karolinsha University, Stockholm

Professor Robert Lechler MB, ChB, PhD, FRCP, FRCPath, FMedSci Vice-Principal (Health), King College London

Professor Dr Johannes Löwer MSc, MD President of the Paul Ehrhlich Institute, Langen, Germany*.

Professor Andrew J McMichael MB BChir PhD CNAA FRCP FRS Professor of Immunology, Oxford University

Professor Alexander F Markham BScPhD MB BS DSc FRCP FRCPath Chief Executive Cancer Research UK and Professor of Medicine, St James University Hospital, Leeds

Professor B Kevin Park BSc PhD Hon MRCP FMedSci, Professor of Pharmacology & Head of Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics, Liverpool University.

Mrs Vivienne Parry - Lay representative

Professor Munir Pirmohaimed MC ChB PhD FRCP Professor of Clinical Pharmacology, Liverpool University

Professor Mark J Walpoft MB BChir MA FRCP FRCPath F Med Sci Director of the Welcome Trust & Professor of Rheumatology/Immunology, Imperial School of Medicine, Hammersmith

Professor Herman Waldrnann PhD, FRS FRCPath F Med Sci Professor of Pathology, Sir William Dunn School of Pathology, Oxford

Observers

There will be a number of observers to the expert group from:

The European Medicines Agency

Department of Health

Department of Trade and Industry - Biosciences Unit

US Food and Drug Administration

Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices Agency, Japan

MHRA

*Agency of the German Government responsible for the regulation of biological medicinal products for humans and animals.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Bichard Inquiry

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (John Reid): Copies of the Government's third progress report on implementing the recommendations of the Bichard Inquiry have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses today. Our last report was made in November 2005 and there have been many positive developments over the last six months. Twenty one of

Sir Michael's 31 recommendations have been substantially delivered and clear work plans are being taken forward in relation to those which remain outstanding.

The IMPACT programme is at the heart of achieving fundamental improvements in police information management. It is delivering against Sir Michael's recommendations in this area as one aspect of ensuring the police have the facilities, procedures and skills to make best use of information to safeguard the vulnerable and combat all forms of crime. This latest reporting period has seen the introduction of the Impact Nominal Index, which is facilitating the sharing of information across all forces. A statutory code of practice on police information management has come into force, together with extensive operational guidance and a programme of training and support to ensure improved national standards are embedded in day-to-day policing.

Sir Michael rightly emphasised the importance of sharing information between the relevant delivery agencies and once again there is much positive progress to report. In particular, the recent publication of the revised "Working Together to Safeguard Children" provides the national guidance recommended by Sir Michael on notifying the police and children's social care, and sharing information among agencies, where there are suspected criminal offences against children.

Our intensive programme of work to develop a central vetting and barring scheme covering all those wishing to work with children or vulnerable adults is continuing. The introduction of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Bill at the end of February was a very important milestone. In parallel with the legislative process, we are pressing on with a set of interim changes to systems to help ensure those unsuitable to work with vulnerable persons are prevented from doing so. The Criminal Records Bureau has made a key contribution to this work by putting in place a number of specific changes which Sir Michael highlighted as necessary.

We are giving increasing emphasis to the new online training for head teachers and school governors which focuses on the critical importance of being aware of safeguarding issues when recruiting staff. We are also exploring ways to extend the safer recruitment training more widely in schools and other sectors of education, the wider children's workforce, the voluntary sector, and other work sectors such as healthcare.

Finally, and in addition to all the work to implement its specific recommendations, the Bichard Inquiry continues to provide all of us with a strengthened focus on protecting children and those adult members of our society who are especially vulnerable. The safeguarding agenda is becoming increasingly coherent and prominent and that is a process which must and will continue.

Foreign Nationals (Deportation and Removal)

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (John Reid): I would like to correct an error contained in my written statement of 23 May, *Official Report*, column 77WS and to apologise for inadvertently misleading the House.

In my statement I reported that four murderers and 23 other "most serious" offenders, including rapists and child sex offenders (who were among the 1,019 cases who were not considered for deportation before their release from prison) were detained in prison. I was subsequently informed that of these one murderer, one rapist and one child sex offender who had been detained have in fact since been released on bail by the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal. In addition, I have been informed of eight other cases where the individual has been bailed, including four in the "more serious" category. I have been told that these bail applications were heard over the past two weeks and that more hearings are due to take place in the coming days.

I have asked the Department to recheck all the figures provided to the House in my statement.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Community-based Restorative Justice

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. David Hanson): On 5 December 2005 I initiated a consultation on draft guidelines which were aimed at putting in place important safeguards recommended by the Criminal Justice Review as prerequisites for community-based restorative justice schemes playing a part in dealing with low-level crime. The consultation period closed in March. There were 56 responses from a range of organisations and individuals.

The issues raised in the consultation merit careful consideration. Any guidelines which eventually emerge must deal effectively with the concerns many have reflected to me in their submissions and in meetings on this issue. It is important that any relationship which the schemes may develop with the criminal justice system helps to promote and not undermine public confidence in the system. I regard it as essential that the guidelines should set the necessary high standards expected of any organisations seeking to play a role within the criminal justice system.

I am now considering the issues and concerns raised in the consultation and will make a further statement on the way ahead when that process has been completed shortly.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Iraq Legal Advice (Freedom of Information)

The Solicitor-General (Mr. Mike O'Brien): The information Commissioner has today published an enforcement notice under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in relation to requests for information relating to the advice given on the legality of military intervention in Iraq in 2003.

The Cabinet Office and the Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers have issued a disclosure statement which the information commissioner is satisfied meets the

requirements of his enforcement notice. The disclosure statement draws very heavily on material already in the public domain.

Copies of the enforcement notice and disclosure statement are annexed to this statement and have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

PRIME MINISTER

Ministerial Committees of the Cabinet

The Prime Minister (Mr. Tony Blair): I have today placed a copy of the current list of Cabinet Committees, their full membership and terms of reference in the Libraries of both Houses. Details have also been updated on the Cabinet Office website.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

European Union Competitiveness Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Jim Fitzpatrick): My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Science and Innovation has made the following ministerial statement:

I will be attending the Competitiveness Council in Brussels on 29—30 May 2006.

MONDAY 29 MAY

In the morning, there will be a policy debate on the EU sustainable development strategy, centred around questions set by the presidency.

There will be an update on the current work programme on better regulation, followed by an exchange of views.

There will be a policy debate on the Commission's proposal for a directive on consumer credit, centred on questions set by the presidency.

Over lunch and in the afternoon there will be discussion of the services directive, which the presidency has put on the agenda for political agreement.

TUESDAY 30 MAY

There will be a discussion on the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development, including the rules of participation, on which the presidency is seeking agreement on a general approach.

There will also be a progress report by the Commission on the development of the European space policy and road map, followed by a report from the presidency of a recent conference on GMES (Global Monitoring for Environment and Security).

In addition to the items listed above, there will be eleven items which will be taken under "Any Other Business". There is not likely to be any debate on these items:

a) Competitiveness clusters to promote industrial growth and to strengthen the regions in Europe (Information from the Commission).

b) Conference on REACH (Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals) (Vienna, 30-31 March 2006) (Information from the presidency).

c) Conferences related to consumer protection held during the Austrian presidency (Information from the presidency).

d) Proposal for a programme of community action in the field of Health and Consumer Protection 2007 (Progress report).

e) Information on EU import duties on primary aluminium (Information from the Polish delegation).

f) Public Procurement Directives (Information by German, French and Austrian delegations).

g) Tourism policy (Presentation by the Commission).

h) Tourism Ministers Conference (Vienna, 20-21 March 2006). (Information from the presidency),

i) Delivering on the modernisation agenda for universities: Education, Research and Innovation. (Information from the Commission).

j) International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) (Information from the Commission),

k) Type approval of motor vehicles (Information from the French delegation)

WORK AND PENSIONS

Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): The Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council will be held on 1 June in Luxembourg. My hon. Friend the Minister for Disabled People (Anne McGuire) will be representing the UK except for the item on the Working Time Directive where the UK will be represented by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and my hon. Friend, the Minister for Employment Relations and Minister for London (Jim Fitzpatrick). Health and Consumer Affairs issues are being taken on 2 June.

The first item is a policy debate on the review of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy. Member states were invited to submit a written response to three questions which have been tabled at all Councils. Additional questions have been posed about social inclusion to Employment and Social Policy Ministers. The Minister will contribute to the debate by stating that the most relevant link between the work of this Council and the Sustainable Development Strategy is through its focus on generating economic prosperity, more and better jobs and increasing social inclusion.

The second item is on Social Services of General Interest. The Commission will give a presentation on its recent Communication which addresses the area of the legal uncertainty arising from the situation whereby the European Court of Justice is developing the law on social services on a case-by-case basis. The Social Protection Committee has drafted an Opinion on the Communication and the revised draft Services Directive. It generally welcomes both documents.

The Council will reach partial general approach on both the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/04 on the co-ordination of social security schemes and the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the co-ordination of social security systems, and determining the content of Annex XI.

Ministers will be expected to endorse political agreement on the amended proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a European Institute for Gender Equality. The proposal provides for the creation of a European Gender Institute to produce objective, reliable and comparative information on gender equality and data at national and European levels and to give visibility to gender equality. Its aim is to increase the opportunities for sharing knowledge, data and information on best practice, and facilitate networking.

There will be Council conclusions on the Review of the implementation by the Member States and the EU institutions of the Beijing Platform for Action. Following the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, the Council asked Member States to undertake an annual review of the implementation of the resulting Platform for Action. Each Presidency concentrates on different areas. The Austrian Presidency is looking at 'Women and Health' and has produced a report and a set of indicators.

There will be an endorsement of the joint contribution of the Employment Committee and the Social Protection Committee on Flexicurity.

There will be a Progress Report from the Presidency on the proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on improving the portability of supplementary pension rights. This is intended to make it easier for workers with occupational pensions to move around the EU.

The Council is being asked to reach political agreement on the amended proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity – PROGRESS. This is the EU-level spending programme for the period 2007-13, which will provide financial support for the implementation of the Community's objectives for employment and social affairs and the achievement of the Lisbon goals.

The Council is being asked to reach political agreement on the annual Employment Guidelines on the proposal for a Council Decision on Guidelines for the Employment Policies of the Member States. The Guidelines set out the framework of common priorities for Member States' employment policies. In 2005 the Council agreed that the Guidelines should run for three years under the refocused Lisbon Strategy for Jobs and Growth. Member States will report on their employment policies in relation to the Guidelines as part of the new National Reform Programmes, to be published in October.

The Council is also seeking political agreement on the amended proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2003/88/EC concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time. The Working Time Directive, adopted in 1993, regulates maximum working hours and entitlements to rest breaks for workers. It sets out a maximum average working week of 48 hours although the UK retains an individual opt out from this provision.

Under Any Other Business the Presidency will give a report on Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Globalisation adjustment Fund. There are six written items on Presidency conferences and information from the Portuguese delegation on the Council of Europe Ministers Conference on Family Matters: "Changes in Parenting". The Commission is providing information on its recent Communications on "Guidance on the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services", "Implementing the partnership for growth and jobs: Making European a 'pole of excellence' on corporate social responsibility", and "Decent Work" and "European Year of Equal Opportunities for all 2007". I do not expect any debate on these items.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 8 May 2006

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

European Vocational Qualifications

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on recent progress on the establishment of a European vocational qualifications framework. [67218]

Bill Rammell: The UK conducted a national consultation on the European Commission's proposal for a European qualifications framework between September and December 2005, and submitted its response in January 2006. UK experts participated in a conference in Budapest in February 2006 to discuss the issues emerging from the consultation. The Commission is currently consulting an expert group containing technical representatives from all EU member states in order to finalise its proposal. We anticipate that a final proposal will be produced in autumn 2006. The final proposal will cover the full spectrum of education and training, including both academic and vocational qualifications.

Level 3 Qualification

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many 19 to 25-year-olds in Coventry South are studying for a first level 3 qualification. [67863]

Bill Rammell: In the academic year 2004/05 there were 269 19 to 25-year-olds in Coventry South studying for a full NVQ level 3 or equivalent qualification* in further education and work-based learning.

This does not include access to HE qualifications or wholly privately funded study aims.

Teachers Pension Scheme

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* contribution rates and *(b)* proposed contribution rates to the Teachers' Pension Scheme are for (i) teachers and (ii) employers; and from when the proposed rates will take effect. [66278]

Bill Rammell: The pension contributions currently paid by teachers and employers to the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) are 6 per cent. and 13.5 per cent. of salary respectively. The 2004 valuation of the TPS is reporting a net pressure on the contribution rate of 0.8 per cent. of salary. This is on the assumption that the change in contribution rate would take effect from 1 January 2007.

As part of the negotiations between DfES, unions and employer representatives on a package of reforms to the TPS, discussions are continuing on how current and any future pressures arising from scheme valuations should be handled between employers and scheme members. The expectation is that a formal consultation on reform proposals will be launched during May. This will include details of how the 0.8 per cent. net pressure arising from the 2004 valuation will be dealt with in the contribution rate paid by employers and scheme members; and the respective contribution rates that will apply from 1 January 2007.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the projected annual increase in cost is to local education authorities of the proposed increase in the employers' contribution to the Teachers' Pension Scheme. [66778]

Bill Rammell: The proposed increase in employer contributions from January 2007 will add a maximum of 0.8 per cent. to the paybill of local authorities for all those teachers in membership of the Teachers' Pension Scheme. This cost increase has been more than covered in the levels of the minimum funding guarantee for 2006-07 and 2007-08, and by the increases in dedicated schools grant of 6 per cent. in 2006-07 and 6.4 per cent. in 2007-08.

Under-performing Colleges

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether under the proposals in the further education White Paper (Cm 6798) a local education authority would be permitted to take over responsibility for an under-performing college. [67565]

Bill Rammell: Local authorities and the LSC have crucial roles to play in delivering the reforms set out in the White Paper 'Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances', and must work together to drive progress through a shared strategy. The White Paper makes clear that we want local authorities to play a strategic leadership role, consistent with their leadership role in children's services overall, ensuring the integration of 14-19 reform with the wider agenda for children and young people in the locality. The Learning and Skills Council will be the primary partner for the local authority, and will use its funding and powers to secure high quality provision which meets the needs of learners and employers in every area. This will include providing opportunities for new and existing high quality providers to openly compete for provision.

The White Paper sets out a robust approach to tackling underperformance which could culminate in the Learning and Skills Council ceasing to fund provision which does not improve; or requiring changes to governance or executive management.

If a change in governance or leadership is required, this might include a stronger role for the relevant local authority at the invitation of the existing governing body.

If funding is withdrawn, replacement provision is likely to be sourced by competition. No one model is expected to arise out of a competition to secure a replacement provider. It would be open to a local authority to participate in a competition if it wished to do so.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Aid Projects

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps the Government takes to ensure that aid-sponsored projects are clearly demarked as donor sponsored and not claimed by recipient governments as domestic government funded. [68151]

Hilary Benn: Information on the support provided by DFID to partner countries is publicly available (including on DFID's website www.dfid.gov.uk) and is disseminated in partner countries by DFID offices and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) missions.

We believe that aid is more effective when used to support developing countries' own plans, and to strengthen their own capacity to deliver. So where possible, DFID works in partnership with developing country governments, and integrates our support with their programmes. In such partnerships, our aim is to ensure public understanding of our combined efforts rather than to separately identify donor funded work.

Where however, governments do not share our commitment to reducing poverty reduction, human rights and good financial management, it is important to ensure that our aid is visibly separate from government programmes. For example, in Zimbabwe, no DFID funding is channelled through the Government. All our assistance, which focuses on humanitarian need and the HIV/AIDS crisis, is provided through non-governmental organisations and UN agencies. This substantially reduces the scope for the government to claim credit for assistance provided by DFID

Development Funding

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funding the Government have allocated to the *(a)* Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, *(b)* UN Economic Commission for Africa and *(c)* Pan-African Parliament for each of the next three years; what funding has been provided in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [66839]

Mr. Thomas: The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) sets out Africa leaders' priorities to help boost agricultural growth and food security at continental, regional and country levels. As the UK and other G8 countries only responded firmly to CAADP during 2005, no funds were explicitly allocated to it over the last three years. However, the response below identifies where DFID funding was consistent with the CAADP.

At the country level, the CAADP commits African countries to spend 10 per cent. of their budgets on the agriculture sector. DFID's support to African country budgets will help them do this. However, detailed information on how budget support is allocated to sectors by Africa governments are not held centrally and to gather it would involve incurring a disproportionate cost.

At the regional and continental levels, DFID provided around £80 million over the last three years for agricultural research, one of CAADP's four priorities. In the next three years, DFID has allocated around £85 million to agricultural research in Africa as part of its response to CAADP.

In financial year 2005-06, DFID committed an additional £200,000 to design a programme of additional regional support under CAADP. This will clarify DFID's plans for additional regional work on CAADP over each of the coming three years. DFID has provided a total of £2,348,000 to the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UN-EGA) over the last three financial years (£1,000,000 in 2003-04, £673,121 in 2004-05 and £675,000 in 2005-06). DFID has recently been considering a contribution for the next three years with the Commission. However, this has been delayed whilst the UN-ECA re-examines its role in conjunction with the African Union and the African Development Bank, under the new leadership of Abdoulie Janneh. We expect the UN-ECA to be in a better position to discuss its future needs with donors after its Annual Meeting in May.

No support has been given to the Pan African Parliament to date. However, DFID is currently discussing priorities for support with the Pan African Parliament. We hope to complete the design of a Pan African Parliament support programme over the coming months.

HIV/AIDS

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken by his Department to increase the percentage of HIV positive pregnant women in Africa with access to *(a)* information, *(b)* drugs and *(c)* antenatal treatment to prevent transmission of the virus to their child. [68160]

Mr. Thomas: Access to prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT) services is unacceptably low in many sub Saharan African Countries where often less than 5 per cent. of pregnant women are able to access these services. The recent Secretary General's report to the UN reporting on progress for the past five years on AIDS, highlights that only 9 per cent. of HIV positive pregnant women in low and middle income countries have access to PMTCT services.

DFID has been actively engaged in building international consensus, and as co-chair of the Global Steering Committee for the June 2006 HIV/AIDS UNGASS will be pressing for agreement on actions required to scale up services towards universal access to a comprehensive programme of prevention, treatment and care, including access to PMTCT by 2010 with a "Road Map" for future action.

DFID believes that PMTCT is an important prevention measure which should form part of a comprehensive response to HIV prevention, and has encouraged partner countries to integrate PMTCT plans into maternal and child health and sexual & reproductive health services.

DFID funds are not earmarked for PMTCT, but integrated within AIDS programmes. DFID also works through UN agencies at country level. For example, DFID is currently providing £4 million to

"a universal access to HIV prevention programme with the Joint United Nations Programme for HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) in Rwanda".

DFID is the second largest donor to UNICEF which is the lead UN agency responsible for PMTCT services under the global task force (GTT) arrangements.

Maternal Health

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he expects his Department to meet its public service agreement targets on maternal health. [68164]

Hilary Benn: I expect the 2005-08 public service agreement target on maternal health in Asia to be met by 2008. I do not, however, expect the target on maternal health in Africa, to be met by 2008. Progress against this target after 2008 will therefore be subject to further discussion during the next spending review.

The target for Asia is to achieve an increase of 15 percentage points in the proportion of births assisted by skilled birth attendants. The latest estimate is 43 per cent. using data from 2001 to 2003, compared to 38 per cent. in 2000. If the current rate of progress continues, it is estimated that the target should just be achieved by 2008.

The target for Africa is to achieve an increase in the proportion of births assisted by skilled birth attendants by 11 percentage points. The latest estimate is 47 per cent. and increases before 2008 are unlikely. DFID has not yet estimated when this will be achieved.

Further detail on the latest progress against these and all public service agreements will be presented in the 2006 Departmental Report which will be laid before Parliament in the next few days.

Millennium Development Goals

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what contribution the United Kingdom has made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals; and what recent assessment his Department has made of the time scale for the goals to be achieved. [67888]

Hilary Benn: The UK's contribution towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals is summarised in DFID's reports of progress towards the 2003-06 and 2005-08 public service agreements (PSAs). Those PSAs are based on the Millennium Development Goals. Progress was last reported in the 2005 Autumn Performance Report which was laid before Parliament in December 2005. Copies of this report are available in the Libraries of the House on the DFID website (www.dfid.gov.uk). Progress will also be reported in DFID's 2006 Departmental Report. This will be laid before Parliament within the next few days.

DFID has not yet made an assessment of the time scale for each of the goals to be achieved in the period after 2008. The departmental report will however, summarise progress in the key countries in which DFID works.

Public Service Agreements

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which of its public service agreement targets his Department is furthest from meeting. [68166]

Hilary Benn: The most recent assessment of progress towards the public service agreements was outlined in DFID's Autumn Performance Report, which was laid before Parliament in December 2005. Progress will also be reported in DFID's departmental report. This will be laid before Parliament in the next few days.

The six targets in the 2005-08 public service agreement that are currently furthest from being met are:

an increase in the ratio of girls to boys enrolled in primary school by five percentage points in Africa;

an increase in the proportion of births assisted by skilled birth attendants by 11 percentage points in Africa;

an increase in net primary school enrolment by eight percentage points in Asia;

a reduction in under-five mortality rates for girls and boys by 24 per 1000 live births in Asia;

a tuberculosis case detection rate above 70 per cent. in Asia;

a greater impact of EC external programmes on poverty reduction and working for agreement to increase the proportion of EC official development assistance (oda) to low income countries from its 2000 baseline figure of 38 per cent. to 70 per cent. by 2008.

Sexual Violence

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken by his Department to work with Governments in Africa *(a)* to improve the status of women, *(b)* to reduce the incidence of sexual violence, particularly during conflict, and *(c)* to prosecute cases of sexual violence. [68168]

Hilary Benn: There is growing political consensus among member states of the African Union on promoting gender equality and empowerment. A Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa was ratified in November 2005. A key element is the elimination of discrimination against women. DFID seeks to encourage and support African Governments in their work at country level to put this into practice. DFID has provided financial support to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), who has developed an African Gender and Development Index which shows specific gaps in the status of women at country level.

DFID provides financial support for work to reduce violence against women and to provide support for legal assistance in a number of countries in Africa. For

example, in Sierra Leone, DFID has provided support for Sexual Assault Referral Centres for victims of sexual assault and gender based violence; in Ethiopia it has provided core support to the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association, who provide legal aid and assistance for issues affecting women; in Uganda DFID supports UNICEF's protection work in northern Uganda, one component of which aims to address sexual and gender based violence; and in Uganda and Ghana DFID provides support to programmes aimed at tackling domestic violence. DFID also provides financial support to the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) which supports the Trust Fund for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the Women, Peace and Security Programme.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken by his Department to assist the government of Liberia *(a)* in reducing the incidence of rape and *(b)* to prosecute rape cases effectively. [68169]

Hilary Benn: DFID funding to Liberia is mainly channelled through multilateral organisations, such as UN agencies, and the European Commission. To contribute to better public safety, and in response to a request from the UN Secretary General, DFID has recently provided £2.1 million to the United Nations Development Programme Trust Fund for Crisis Prevention and Recovery in Liberia for support to the deactivation of unqualified Liberian National Police (LNP) Officers. The LNP is responsible for maintaining law and order, investigating crime, collecting evidence and arresting and remanding suspects pending trial. Effective reform and rebuilding of the LNP would be a significant step towards providing more security for people, including women. DFID has also contributed £6 million to the disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation and reintegration process since 2003, improving safety and security for the population.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the trend in the number of severely malnourished children in Darfur over recent months. [67873]

Hilary Benn: The massive international response to the Darfur crisis led to a significant improvement in the humanitarian situation last year, including in rates of malnutrition. Since January, however, rising levels of violence, lawlessness and displacement, together with a shortfall in donor funding for this year, threaten to reverse the progress that has been made.

UNICEF has recently warned of a risk of rising malnutrition. They have also reported instances of increasing rates of children being admitted to feeding centres, in line with what would be expected at this time of year because of the changing seasons. However, with the exception of localised pockets, malnutrition rates currently remain below the emergency threshold, and are significantly better than this time last year.

UNICEF's warning underlines the urgent need to end the violence in Darfur, to allow humanitarian agencies unrestricted access, and for donors to increase their funding for the 2006 appeal. The UK has been one of the few donors providing early and reliable funding to the crisis in Darfur in 2006. We continue to press our international donor partners to contribute more, and we are also working with the UN to find ways of mitigating the impact of the current shortfall of funding.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of recent statements by the UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs regarding the state of the relief operation in Darfur. [68233]

Hilary Benn: We share the concerns raised by Jan Egeland, UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs. As he noted, the security situation has deteriorated dramatically since January, with increasing levels of banditry, armed clashes and attacks on civilians and UN and NGO staff. This rising level of insecurity threatens to reverse progress made in 2005. Over the last four months alone, 200,000 people have been driven from their homes by the violence. The ability of the UN and NGOs to access the most vulnerable people is becoming a critical issue with no or very limited access to up to 650,000 people in Darfur.

As Mr Egeland rightly identified, these problems are compounded by the increase in restrictions and administrative delays imposed on humanitarian agencies by the Government of Sudan. We continue to press the Government for unimpeded and safe access for the humanitarian agencies. We hope that a conclusion to the Abuja peace process will aid this process.

The UK has played a leading role in the international community's response to Darfur, including support to the Abuja process. The UK is one of the few donors providing early and reliable funding to the humanitarian effort in 2006. We continue to press our international donor partners to contribute more, and we are also working with the UN to mitigate the impact of the current funding shortfall and security-related issues.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of trends in the incidence of malnutrition in Darfur. [68234]

Hilary Benn: The massive international response to the Darfur crisis led to a significant improvement in the humanitarian situation last year, including in rates of malnutrition. Since January, rising levels of violence, lawlessness and displacement, together with a shortfall in donor funding for this year, threaten to reverse the progress that has been made.

UNICEF has recently warned of a risk of rising malnutrition. They have also reported instances of increasing rates of children being admitted to feeding centres, in line with what would be expected at this time of year because of the changing seasons. However, with the exception of localised pockets, malnutrition

rates currently remain below the emergency threshold, and are significantly better than this time last year.

UNICEF's warning underlines the urgent need to end the violence in Darfur, to allow humanitarian agencies unrestricted access, and for donors to increase their funding for the 2006 appeal. The UK has been one of the few donors providing early and reliable funding to the crisis in Darfur in 2006. We continue to press our international donor partners to contribute more, and we are also working with the UN to find ways of mitigating the impact of the current shortfall of funding.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Avian Influenza

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what preparations have been made for civil contingency planning in the event of an avian influenza epidemic. [68050]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has robust disease control plans and instructions to address an avian influenza epidemic in birds. These are set but in our Exotic Animal Disease Generic Contingency Plan, which is available on the Defra website:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/avianinfluenza-contplan.htm.

These plans and procedures are kept under closer review. They were tested recently during the national avian influenza exercise 'Hawthorn'. They were also used effectively to deal with the case of H5N1 avian influenza in a swan in Cellardyke, Scotland and the recent outbreak of H7N3 avian influenza in Norfolk. We also continue to work very closely with operational partners including the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS), the Department of Health, the Health Protection Agency, the Food Standards Agency, and the devolved administrations.

In addition, my Department has been actively involved in Department of Health-led planning in the event of an influenza pandemic. This is to ensure consistency and the sharing of expertise and experience.

Carcase Transportation

Charlotte Atkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will seek to legislate to require animal carcases to be transported in *(a)* sealed and *(b)* refrigerated lorries. [67614]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Animal By-Products Regulation (EC) No. 1774/2002 lays down strict rules for the collection, transport, storage, handling, processing and use or disposal of all animal by-products, which includes the carcases of fallen stock, in order to safeguard public and animal health.

Animal by-products must be collected and transported in leak-proof, covered vehicles or containers in accordance with Annex II of the EU Regulation. Local authorities, usually Trading Standards, are the enforcement authority for animal by-products legislation and are responsible for ensuring the conditions of the Regulation are complied with.

Transportation in a refrigerated vehicle is not a specific requirement of Annex II of the Regulation, unless the material is unprocessed Category 3 material destined for the production of feed material or pet food, when it must be transported chilled or frozen unless it is processed within 24 hours of departure. In other cases the transportation of animal by-products must take place at an appropriate temperature to avoid any risk to public or animal health and take place without undue delay. In all cases vehicles must be maintained in a clean condition, and be clean and dry before use, and washed and disinfected after use.

In addition, under section 79 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, local authorities have a duty to check their areas periodically for existing and potential statutory nuisances, and to take reasonably practicable steps to investigate complaints of statutory nuisances, including any dust, steam, smell or other effluvia arising on industrial, trade or business premises and being prejudicial to health or a nuisance. A "premises" may be a dwelling, place of business, land, beach, vessel or sea.

Once satisfied that a statutory nuisance exists or may occur or recur, a local authority must issue an abatement notice requiring that the nuisance be ceased or abated within a specified timescale. It is an offence to breach or fail to comply with an abatement notice, which carries upon summary conviction through the courts a maximum fine up £5,000 for domestic premises and £20,000 for industrial, trade and industry premises.

Some plants and processes that have the potential for emissions of offensive odours are regulated under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations, which are enforced by either the Environment Agency or local authorities depending on the type of installation. Plants and processes that are covered by these regulations are not subject to the statutory nuisance regime, in order to remove double jeopardy.

Vehicles on public highways are not "premises" within the statutory nuisance regime on odour. However, vehicles driven in a careless or antisocial manner (that is causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress) may be seized by the police under section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002.

Cetaceans

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* the European Commission, *(b)* France and *(c)* other EU member states regarding actions necessary to reduce cetacean by-catch. [67034]

Mr. Bradshaw: A European Commission Technical Working Group met on 20 April to discuss the problems member states had been having with implementing the use of acoustic devices (pingers) in gillnet and entangle net fisheries and possible ways forward. The Commission will report back to the Council Internal Fisheries Group.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funding his Department has *(a)* allocated and *(b)* spent on scientific research into preventing cetacean strandings in UK waters since 2003. [67035]

Mr. Bradshaw: The UK Government has spent £734,000 on researching by-catch mitigation measures and monitoring by-catch on vessels from 03/04 to the end of 05/06. Strandings data is obtained separately under the Defra-funded Cetacean and Turtle Stranding Scheme, carried out by the Natural History Museum in partnership with the Institute of Zoology and Scottish Agricultural College.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the Answer of 17 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2506W, on cetacean by-catch, when he expects the Sea Mammal Research Unit to publish its report on observer schemes investigating cetacean by-catch. [67076]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Sea Mammal Research Unit is due to present a report to the Department on observer schemes investigating cetacean by-catch on completion of the research contract in spring 2007. However, results of observer schemes will be used to fulfil the obligations of Council Regulation (EC) 812/2004 and the first information will be available when the UK Government reports to the Commission on 1 June 2006 on by-catch monitoring in specified fisheries.

Incinerators

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment he has made of the *(a)* frequency and *(b)* potential health consequences of the emission from municipal incinerators of PM2.5 particles. [67172]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 2 May 2006]*: Following the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit report Waste not, Want not, published in 2002, Defra commissioned an independent body to bring together information on waste management facilities, including municipal incinerators, currently used in the UK and Europe, and the currently available scientific evidence on their environmental and health effects.

The resulting Review of Environmental and Health Effects of Waste Management: Municipal Solid Waste and Similar Wastes report; was peer reviewed by the Royal Society and published in May 2004. Among the other conclusions drawn, the report showed that risks to human health from incineration are small in comparison with other known risks to health.

Emissions from municipal incinerators of PM2.5 particles (estimated at 0.029 thousand tonnes in 2004) are proportionally lower than the contribution from other sectors, at around 0.03 per cent. of the national total of 104 thousand tonnes. The major sources of PM2.5 are thought to be road transport (27 per cent.), domestic combustion (14 per cent.), agriculture, (8 per cent.) industrial off road machinery (7 per cent.) power stations (4 per cent.) and small scale waste burning (4 per cent.). However, this fraction of national emissions will not represent the level of human exposure arising from each source sector as a result of the different heights and conditions of release.

Defra recently launched a consultation on measures to review the Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This consultation suggests a much more wide ranging approach for pollutants such as fine particles (PM 2.5), which is cost effective, geared towards improving public health in the UK and will lead to further improvements in air quality. Further details on this consultation can be found on the Defra website: http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/airqualstrat-review/index.htm

Resource Efficiency

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent representations she has received on improving resource efficiency. [67182]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department receives a range of representations on the subject of improved resource efficiency.

One of the main Government initiatives encouraging resource efficiency s the Business Resource Efficiency and Waste (BREW) Programme, which is returning £284 million from additional landfill tax to businesses over three years. The Programme helps to ensure that advice and assistance are available to help businesses achieve waste reductions and other resource savings in the most effective ways.

The Programme is being developed in full consultation with stakeholders. The Department is currently consulting with stakeholders on the third year of the Programme's delivery, beginning with a stakeholder event on 5 May. A selection of funding options will then be put forward for a full 12 week public consultation in August.

Sakhalin II Development

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the compatibility of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's funding for Shell's proposed Sakhalin II development with the Government's proposed resolutions at the International Whaling Commission on protecting the Western Gray Whale from anthropogenic impact. [67240]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government are fully aware of the environmental issues associated with this project including any potential impact on the Western Gray Whale. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) and other members of the lender group are treating these issues very seriously and the group's concerns have been reflected in improvements made by the project operators to the project's social and environmental standards.

In December 2005 EBRD Management agreed that all documentation required for beginning a public consultation process was "fit for purpose". A 120 day public consultation period ended on 28 April. EBRD Management is now considering all written responses received and additional representations from public consultation meetings.

If EBRD Management recommends to its Board that the project should receive EBRD funding, then the UK Government will decide in the light of the case made by EBRD on the project operators' response to concerns raised, whether or not to support an EBRD loan. In reaching its decision, the Government will carefully assess all aspects of the project, bearing in mind its commitment to other International organisations.

Waste (Statutory Bodies)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will introduce legislation to establish a statutory body with responsibility for waste. [68043]

Mr. Bradshaw: In compliance with Article 6 of the Waste Framework Directive (75/442/EEC as amended), the "competent authorities" which we have designated to be responsible for the implementation of the Directive's waste management controls are set out in paragraph 3 of Schedule 4 to the Waste Management Licensing Regulations 1994 (as amended). We have no plans to amend the current list of designated competent authorities.

Wind Farms

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Wales on *(a)* the proposal (i) to delay and (ii) to cancel the issuing of a licence for the development of the offshore wind farm at Scarweather Sands and *(b)* the effect of a wind farm for breeding harbour porpoises; and if she will make a statement. [67600]

Mr. Bradshaw: There has been no discussion with the Secretary of State for Wales. Licensing of the proposed offshore wind arm at Scarweather Sands is a matter for the National Assembly for Wales.

My officials in the Marine Consents and Environment Unit, which is administering the licence application under the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985 on behalf of the Assembly, are in discussion with officials in the Welsh Assembly Government.

No decision has yet been taken by the Assembly to grant a licence partly because of the decision taken by the developer to postpone construction for commercial reasons until 2008 and to allow further data currently being collected about the local population of harbour porpoises to be properly assessed.

TRANSPORT

A27 (Chichester)

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on (i) the Highways Agency's plans for improvements to the A27 around Chichester and (ii) alternative methods of easing congestion. [68607]

Dr. Ladyman: The Secretary of State for Transport commissioned the South Coast Corridor Multi-Modal study (SoCoMMS) to investigate congestion, safety and environmental problems of transport on the South Coast between Southampton and Thanet.

In July 2003, the Secretary of State rejected the recommended improvements to the A27 Chichester Bypass. The Highways Agency was asked to work closely with the principal local authorities and the statutory environmental bodies to identify and develop less environmentally damaging options for easing congestion, including management measures, which reduce the need for major road construction, and report back.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment was made of alternative methods of easing congestion before the Highways Agency published its proposals to improve the A27. [68608]

Dr. Ladyman: The Secretary of State for Transport commissioned the South Coast Corridor Multi-Modal study (SoCoMMS) to investigate congestion, safety and environmental problems of transport on the South Coast between Southampton and Thanet. At Chichester the report recommended two alternatives for addressing congestion on the A27. The Secretary of State rejected both these options on environmental grounds and asked the Highways Agency to work closely with the principal local authorities and the statutory environmental bodies to identify less environmentally damaging options, including management measures, which reduce the need for major road construction.

A key requirement of any options identified was that they should be capable of delivering planned housing and economic growth. It was agreed that any options identified would be reported back to Ministers before more widespread local consultation was undertaken.

A number of alternative junction improvement strategies were considered as part of developing the proposal put to public consultation but they did not meet the objectives set.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received on the Highways Agency's plans for improvements to the A27 around Chichester. [68609]

Dr. Ladyman: A joint Public Consultation exercise, between the Highways Agency and West Sussex county council was held in late 2004 and early 2005. To date the Highways Agency have received over 9,000 responses to their proposals, including many alternative suggestions for dealing with traffic problems in the Chichester area. Once I have received the Public Consultation Report from the Highways Agency later this year, I will announce my decision on the way forward.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received on alternative methods for easing congestion around Chichester since the Highways Agency published proposals to improve the A27. [68671]

Dr. Ladyman: Since the Highways Agency's proposals were published I have received a petition from Mr. Pieter Montyn, signed by over 2,000 residents of the Manhood Peninsula, requesting an A27 northern bypass solution as a method for easing congestion around Chichester. Subsequently, I have received a copy of his presentation to the Highways Agency on his proposed A27 northern alignment route. All alternative suggestions made will be considered before I make my decision on the way forward later this year.

Aircraft Noise

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the Government's definition is of excessive noise from aircraft; and what the World Health Organisation guidelines are on aircraft noise. [68298]

Derek Twigg: We have stated in consulting on our proposals for night flying restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted that one of our broad aims is

> "to strike a fair balance between the protection of local communities from excessive aircraft noise levels at night and the provision of air services at night where they are of benefit to the national, regional or local economy".

The expression 'excessive noise' does not apply to a specific level of aircraft noise. Based on research, the Government use various measurements of aircraft noise as indicators of disturbance or of potential annoyance, or as criteria for mitigation measures, including advice for land use planning purposes.

The World Health Organisation has produced 'Guidelines on Community Noise'. The guideline values have regard to specific environments and effects rather than the source of noise, so there are no specific guidelines on aircraft noise. For each environment and situation, the guideline values take into consideration the identified health effects and are set based on the lowest levels of noise that affect health. Guideline values typically correspond to the lowest effect levels for general populations.

The 'Guidelines on Community Noise' document, which sets out the full range of guideline values, is on the internet at the following address http://www.who.int/docstore/peh/noise/guidelines2.html

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take in the Civil Aviation Bill to bear down on aircraft noise. [68332]

Derek Twigg: The 'Future of Air Transport' White Paper set out the combination of measures by which the Government aim to limit and, where possible, reduce the number of people in the UK significantly affected by aircraft noise. These include promoting research and development into new low noise engine and airframe technologies. We have incorporated the key elements of the International Civil Aviation Organisation's balanced approach to controlling noise at airports into UK law; EU directive 2002/49/EC requires periodic noise mapping at many airports from 2007 to identify day and night noise problems and, from 2008, action plans to deal with them.

The Government have powers to regulate noise at airports designated for the purposes of section 78 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 (Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports are currently so designated). This regulation includes departure noise limits and restrictions on night flying. We will also consider exercising similar powers at other airports if there is evidence that a major noise problem is not being dealt with adequately through local controls.

The Civil Aviation Bill will give airports clear powers to impose penalties on airlines who fail to follow noise preferential routes and other procedures designed to avoid, limit or mitigate the effects of aircraft noise. In the case of airports designated for the purposes of section 78 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982, where the Secretary of State has specified noise controls, he will have the power to direct that a penalty scheme be made, amended or revoked to enforce those controls. It will be for the managers of non-designated airports to decide whether to use these powers in the light of their local circumstances.

Climate Change

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has *(a)* made and *(b)* plans to make of the effects of (i) regional transport strategies in England and (ii) the transport schemes listed as number one priorities in the regional funding allocations submitted by the regional assemblies on the Government's public sector agreement target for greenhouse gas emissions. [64479]

Dr. Ladyman: Regional transport strategies are subject to strategic environmental assessment, and the implications for greenhouse gas emissions will be carefully considered before strategies are approved. Advice put forward by regions on regional funding allocations sets out their proposals for affordable programmes of schemes. Decisions on each new scheme will remain subject to normal approval processes which take account of climate change impacts alongside other environmental, economic and safety factors.

Congestion (Greater Manchester)

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of traffic congestion in Greater Manchester; and if he will make a statement. [67256]

Dr. Ladyman: The 2002 survey of traffic speeds in urban areas estimated that the average vehicle delay, comparing actual speeds with those that would be achievable by a car in the absence of other traffic, for the routes surveyed in Greater Manchester was 17.8 seconds per vehicle kilometre. The average for all the urban areas surveyed was 24.9 seconds per vehicle kilometre. We have been developing new measures of congestion that are more meaningful in urban areas. Greater Manchester will publish a new local transport plan congestion target by July, along with a baseline for the new indicator.

Departmental Advertising Costs

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on advertising for job vacancies in each of the last five years. [65965]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* The Department for Transport was established in May 2002.

The Department uses the most appropriate publication for recruitment advertising, be it national, regional, trade magazine or website depending on the nature of the vacancy.

The following table lists the costs incurred by DFT(Central) in recruitment advertising in all grades together with advertising senior civil service jobs with executive agencies:

	£
2002-2003	241,868.87
2003-2004	403,605.10
2004-2005	472,277.65
2005-2006	199,789.44

Advertising costs for recruitment below the senior civil service in DFT's executive agencies are as follows:

DVLA	£
2002-03	142,272.00
2003-04	179,473.00
2004-05	154,197.00
2005-06	74,766.00
DSA	
2002-03	128,000.00
2003-04	498,655.62
2004-05	536,620.34
2005-06	90,771.69
MCA	
2002-03	150,502.97
2003-04	218,251.07
2004-05	167,511.82
2005-06	222,906.98
GCDA	
2002-03	22,965.00
2003-04	16,361.00
2004-05	22,546.00
2005-06	6,900.00
VOSA	
2002-03	[1]326,503.00
2003-04	530,267.00
2004-05	399,889.00
2005-06	263,738.00
HA	
2002-03	572,684.36
2003-04	471,313.26
2004-05	500,309.00
DVLA	£
2005-06	[2]1,017,294.00
VCA	
2002-03	12,709.00
2003-04	2,800.00
2004-05	6,755.00
2005-06	750.00

[1] VI costs only
[2] Includes the recruitment of the traffic officer service

Departmental Initiatives

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the departmental initiatives for each year since 2000 which required bids for funding from *(a)* voluntary organisations and *(b)* local authorities together with the total resource allocated to each initiative in each year; how many successful bids there were in each year; what proportion this figure represents of the total bids received; and what assessment he has made of the costs of (i) preparing bids for each initiative and (ii) assessing those bids. [66013]

Dr. Ladyman: A table setting out the information on the major capital funding initiatives, for which bids were required, provided by the Department since 2000, has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Driving Instructors

Willie Rennie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many driving instructors have been removed from the Register of Approved Driving Instructors due to convictions for sexual assault in each year since 1988; and how many days elapsed between conviction and removal in each case. [68420]

Dr. Ladyman: The Driving Standards Agency's records only show the number of Approved Driving Instructors (ADIs) removed from the register since 1996-97, as shown in the following table.

	Number of ADIs removed following:	
	Registrar's decision/resigned etc.	*Registrar's decision*
1996 to 2002		
1996-97	2,633	?
1997-98	4,432	?
1998-99	3,787	?
1999-2000	2,356	?
2000-01	2,301	?
2001-02	3,017	?
2002 to 2006[1]		
2002-03	?	109
2003-04	?	103
2004-05	?	113
2005-06[1]	?	84

[1] Up to 28 February 2006.

The reason for removal from the Register following a decision by the Registrar is not recorded, nor is the time elapsed between any conviction and removal.

The figures from the year 1996-97 to 2001-02 show both removal from the register following a decision by Registrar and those who chose to leave the register. The figures from 2002-03 show only those who were removed as a result of the Registrar's decision.

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority

Derek Conway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many applicants with only one fully functioning eye have successfully applied to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency for a driving licence in each of the last five years. [68403]

Dr. Ladyman: These data are not available. However, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency has estimated that it deals with in the region of 1,000 to 1,500 cases per year in which a loss of vision in one eye is either declared on a driving licence application form, or notified during the currency of a driving licence.

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passports sent to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) were subsequently reported missing in each of the last 10 years; and how many owners of passports lost by the DVLA have claimed compensation. [68707]

Dr. Ladyman: Original documents (including passports) have been required to support applications for first photocard driving licences since April 1999. Statistics are only available for the past five years.

Over this period the total number of passports reported as missing by drivers was 20,660 (14,968 UK and 5,692 foreign). To date 7,740 (5,282 UK and 2,458 foreign) have become the subject of claims for compensation. Approximately 25 per cent. can be attributed to a DVLA error in keying the address, with 75 per cent. due to non-delivery by Royal Mail. Over 12,500,000 applications for first photocard driving licences (ie those requiring the submission of identity documents) were processed during this period.

Drivers are requested to wait for a minimum of 15 working days before contacting DVLA about non-delivery of documents, but in many cases they do not follow this advice. DVLA officials will investigate every report, but it is a fact that many drivers do not bother to ring back if the documents later turn up.

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the additional average cost to each customer would be of secure delivery of passports returned by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority. [68708]

Dr. Ladyman: Holders of UK passports do not have to enclose them with their applications. Those who hold digitised passports only need to quote the passport number so that DVLA can check identity on line with the UK Passport Service. All other UK passport holders can have their applications checked at some 750 mainline post offices, and DVLA's local offices, for a small charge, with immediate return. Holders of EU passports, and those from certain designated countries, can take them for checking at three DVLA local offices (Glasgow, Nottingham, Wimbledon) and DVLA's Reception at Swansea.

To introduce a standard system of charging for the return of passports (and other identity documents) would be viewed as unfair to those members of the public who have no need to submit them. If offered as an individual service on request this could amount to £10 at the very least (£4.10p special delivery/£2.50p courier service plus additional clerical involvement at DVLA).

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passports returned by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority have been delivered by *(a)* standard mail and *(b)* recorded delivery in the last 10 years. [68709]

Dr. Ladyman: Original identity documents (including passports) have only been required to support applications for first photocard licences since April 1999. No historical data exists to distinguish between the use of standard and special/recorded mail, but current issue per day is 8,500 and 200 (97.7 per cent. and 2.3 per cent.).

Derek Conway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many appeals were made *(a)* to magistrates courts in England and Wales and *(b)* to sheriffs' courts in Scotland against rulings of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency under the terms of section 92 and 100 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 in each of the last five years. [68417]

Dr. Ladyman: Statistics are available only from April 2003 onwards and relate to both applications refused under Section 92 of The Road Traffic Act 1988 and driving licences revoked under Section 93 of the Road Traffic Act 1988. The details are given as follows.

	Appeals lodged to magistrates courts in England and Wales	*Appeals lodged to sheriffs' courts in Scotland*	*Total*
April 2003-March 2004	92	41	133
April 2004-March 2005	126	45	171
April 2005-March 2006	127	41	168

Ethanol

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the potential for the widespread use of ethanol as a fuel in the UK. [68222]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government strongly support the use of high quality biofuels in the road transport sector. In the short term, we estimate that bioethanol has the potential to make up some 5 per cent. of total petrol sales in the UK. The Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation (RTFO) which we announced last year is designed to ensure that this happens by 2010, and is

likely to mean that sales of bioethanol will amount to over a billion litres a year by that time.

We have made clear that we intend that biofuels should account for more than 5 per cent. of total transport fuel sales after 2010 so long as infrastructural requirements and fuel and vehicle technical standards allow, and subject to the costs being acceptable to the consumer. We would also want to put in place robust carbon saving and sustainability assurance schemes to ensure that the biofuels sold in the UK were from sustainable sources and were delivering the maximum possible carbon savings.

European Aviation Safety Agency

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects agreement to be reached on a programme of work designed to make the European Aviation Safety Agency fit for purpose. [66170]

Derek Twigg: The Civil Aviation Authority, together with officials in the Department, continues to work closely with the agency, other National Aviation Authorities and the Commission to put in place effective strategies to improve the agency's performance. The work that must be done to help EASA become fully fit for purpose has many different strands.

The EASA management board on 26 April examined the agency's draft action plan for implementing recommendations made by external consultants to improve the agency's financial, administrative and IT processes. The board expects to approve the plan at its next meeting on 2 June.

Railways

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the implications of the First Great Western Trains timetabling proposals for December 2006 for *(a)* intervals in service provision between Cardiff and Swansea during the evening peak time, *(b)* overcrowding on Arriva Trains Wales services and *(c)* train connection options for passengers travelling to Swansea on the proposed 1515 London Paddington to Cardiff service. [60821]

Derek Twigg: The number of other services, operated by Arriva Trains Wales (ATW), between Cardiff and Swansea will remain unchanged. Newer rolling stock is expected to be transferred to this route for December 2006. The Greater Western franchise specification was designed to improve the overall operational and financial performance of the train service and to ensure resources were used to best meet market needs. The timetable on each route, including London to Swansea, is derived from these requirements. The Department is discussing overcrowding with ATW.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on how many occasions within the past three months the Heathrow Express service has been *(a)* delayed by more than 15 minutes and *(b)* cancelled. [68424]

Derek Twigg: Heathrow Express is not a franchise operating company. The Department of Transport does not therefore hold such information.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people are employed by the British Railways Board (Residuary); and what that body's budget was in 2005-06. [68477]

Derek Twigg: BRBR had 21 full-time and 6 part-time employees as at 31 March 2006. In addition during the 2005-06 financial year the company was supported by additional resources from the Strategic Rail Authority and the Department for Transport.

BRBR's budget for 2005-06 was as follows.

Operating costs (stated net of property sales)—£25.6 million

Capital expenditure (relating to lease payments)—£7.8 million.

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the total projected public expenditure is for all forms of national rail services for *(a)* London, *(b)* each of the English Passenger Transport Executive areas and *(c)* each of the English regions in each of the next six financial years; [68658]

(2) what the public expenditure was on all forms of national rail services for *(a)* London, *(b)* each of the English Passenger Transport Executive areas and *(c)* each of the English regions in each of the last 10 years. [68659]

Derek Twigg: The Department of Transport does not hold information on Government spending and investment at a regional level. This is primarily because franchise areas often encompass two or more regions and Network Rail is structured on a route by route basis which also serves more than one region.

Historic Government support to individual franchises is contained in the Annual Reports of the Strategic Rail Authority and in National Rail Trends, copies of which are in the Library of the House.

My right hon. Friend the then Secretary of State, made a written statement to Parliament on 10 February 2005, *Official Report*, columns 93-96WS setting out Government spending plans for rail as a whole to 2008-09.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will reconsider his decision on announcement boards on South-West Trains as a matter of urgency. [69134]

Derek Twigg: Continuing improvements to the availability and reliability of the existing Class 450 Desiro fleet, which have been introduced to replace Class 458s and the Mark One fleet, mean that by the end of July, when the exemption in question expires, there will be no rolling stock availability implications for the ability of South West Trains to deliver their current timetable.

Road Construction

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which construction companies have *(a)* tendered for and *(b)* been awarded road construction contracts by his Department since 1997; and how much each contract was worth. [68097]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* The information requested regarding which construction companies have tendered for road construction contracts with the Highways Agency since 1997 can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

A list of the major road construction contracts over £5 million awarded by the Highways Agency has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the estimated carbon dioxide emissions from each *(a)* motorway and *(b)* trunk road scheme approved since 1997 were in each year of the operation of each such scheme; and what estimate he has made of the annual carbon dioxide emissions from each motorway and trunk road which is being assessed for inclusion in the roads programme. [68107]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* Carbon dioxide emission estimates for the Highways Agency motorway and trunk road schemes, in the Targeted Programme of Improvements, which was first launched in 1998, are given where data is currently available. A copy of the table showing this information has been placed in the Libraries of the House. Schemes that have not yet entered into the Targeted Programme of Improvements (TPI) do not have this information as the proposals are still at an early stage.

Road Schemes (Carbon Impact)

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what requirement there is under the New Approach to Appraisal to quantify the carbon dioxide impact of each road scheme he approves. [68054]

Dr. Ladyman: As part of assessing the impact of new proposals on the environment New Approach to Appraisal (NATA) requires scheme promoters to assess the impact of their proposals on greenhouse gas emissions. As carbon dioxide (CO_2) is considered to be the most important greenhouse gas, changes in CO_2 emissions are used as the key indicator for assessing the impacts of new proposals' on climate change.

For all schemes that cost in excess of £5 million, which must be approved by the Secretary of State, the Department's guidance requires scheme promoters to estimate the level of carbon dioxide emissions in the current year and in the opening year of the scheme, both with and without the scheme in place. The change in carbon dioxide emissions in the opening year of the scheme is then used to provide an overall assessment of the scheme's impact on greenhouse gases. At present only carbon emissions associated with fuel consumption are considered in appraisal.

Speed Cameras

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many of the speed camera sites identified in the Review of Sites 2004 where casualties had not been reduced remain in place; at how many sites the speed cameras have been removed and alternative measures introduced to reduce casualties; and at how many of these sites the camera has been removed and no further action taken. [68759]

Dr. Ladyman: Following the publication of the site lists in 2004, the Department amended its Handbook of Rules and Guidance for the Safety Camera Programme to require safety camera partnerships to review existing sites as well as those areas where new sites might be appropriate.

Sites are selected locally as the right solution to a particular casualty problem and it is therefore appropriate for these reviews to be undertaken locally and the Department is not involved. We do however require sites operated as part of, or removed from, the safety camera programme to be recorded.

From the information held by the Department, 141 safety camera sites have been decommissioned between 1 January 2004 and 31 March 2006. The Department does not hold information relating to why these sites have been decommissioned or whether alternative measures have been introduced at these sites.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport in how many cases speed camera partnerships have had their applications for the siting of speed cameras *(a)* accepted and *(b)* rejected; what average time has been taken to make a decision on an application; for what average number of days cases that have not had a decision have been waiting; in how many cases the decision has been appealed; and how many of these appeals have been (i) successful and (ii) unsuccessful. [68760]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department requires that applications for new speed camera sites comply with the site selection criteria provided in the Handbook of Rules and Guidance for the Safety Camera Programme.

For 2006-07, all sites submitted as proposed camera sites were approved as they fully met the site selection criteria. These sites were submitted during February 2006 and were approved by the end of March 2006.

Transport Improvements (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what transport improvements for which his Department is responsible have there been in Tamworth constituency in the past 12 months; what further improvements are planned; and if he will make a statement. [68356]

Dr. Ladyman: The Tamworth constituency is benefiting from the Burntwood bypass local major road scheme, which was funded by the Department and completed in May 2005. In addition, local highway authorities receive integrated transport block funding which can be used for local highways or public transport capital projects. It is for Staffordshire county council, as the highway authority, to determine how that allocation has been spent, in line with its local transport plan and its priorities.

In the last 12 months, the following Highways Agency schemes have been completed in the area:

A5 Weeford-Fazeley Improvement

A5 Tamworth bypass—replacement of porous asphalt

A38 Milliards Cross to Swinfen—renewal of existing road surfacing

A38 Swinfen—lay-by resurfacing and improvements

A5 through Hints—renewal of anti skid surface

A38/A5148 southbound free-flow link to alleviate congestion

A5 Hints bypass—major new road scheme to improve safety and journey time reliability

A38 Little Hay footbridge—new footbridge constructed as part of Hints bypass

The following Highways Agency schemes are either presently under construction or scheduled to begin in 2006-07:

A38 Bassett's Pole—junction improvement (traffic signals) to improve safety and journey time reliability, including signalisation of the island

A5 Tamworth bypass Phase 2—replacement of porous asphalt surface, including the slip roads at Stoneydelf and Glascote

A38 Swinfen—resurfacing of the northbound entry slip road

A38 Swinfen Gap—closure of the central reservation gaps to improve safety

A5 Tamworth bypass—improvements to the slip roads at Ventura Park and Fazeley to improve safety

A5 Tamworth bypass—ecology improvements to an adjacent drainage area to enhance the habitat for great crested newts

A38 Canwell—installation of interactive signs and other signing improvements to improve safety

The following Highways Agency schemes are also planned:

A38 Weeford Quarry to Canwell—Resurfacing works

Additionally, a number of Section 278 development schemes are being undertaken by external organisations with consent from the Highways Agency. These are as follows:

A38 Swinfen Prison—provision of acceleration lane at prison access

A5 Bitterscote, Tamworth—provision of new roundabout junction at existing Bitterscote junction to access development site

A5 Wall—potential alterations to existing roundabout junction

A38 Weeford—Potential improvements to the access at Blackbrook Farm

On rail, the Trent Valley four tracking scheme on the West Coast Main Line which falls within Tamworth and started in 2003 will provide 19km of an additional two tracks at a cost of £327 million. This is expected to be complete in 2008.

Transport Subsidies

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 713W, on transport subsidies, how much subsidy for public transport was allocated by his Department to *(a)* Hampshire county council, *(b)* Portsmouth city council and *(c)* Southampton city council in each of the last five years in (i) cash and (ii) real terms. [67377]

Dr. Ladyman: The amount of subsidy for integrated transport allocated by the Department to Hampshire county council; Portsmouth city council; and Southampton city council in the last five years is shown in the following tables. Integrated transport funding is used by the local authorities to fund all non-maintenance transport investment schemes costing less than £5 million—small road projects, road safety schemes, bus priority schemes, walking and cycling schemes, as well as transport information schemes. It is for the councils concerned to decide how much should be allocated to public transport.

In addition Hampshire county council and Portsmouth city council have received funding for the A3 bus corridor as shown in the table.

(a)(i) Cash terms

£ million

Nature of funding for Hampshire county council	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
IT Block	13.500	13.204	14.393	15.783	13.492
Bus Subsidy[1]	1.603	2.043	2.143	1.375	1.429
Major Scheme	—	0.750	2.254	7.500	6.600
Total	15.103	15.997	18.790	24.658	21.521

(a)(ii) Real terms

£ million (2005 prices)

Nature of funding for Hampshire county council	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
IT Block	14.957	14.388	15.242	16.231	13.492
Bus Subsidy[1]	1.776	2.226	2.269	1.414	1.429
Major Scheme	—	0.817	2.387	7.713	6.6
Total	16.733	17.431	19.899	25.358	21.521

(b)(i) Cash terms

£ million

Nature of funding for Portsmouth city council	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
IT Block	2.100	3.470	2.282	3.002	2.099
Bus Subsidy[1]	0	0	0	0	0
Major Scheme	1.000	1.200	2.888	—	—
Total	3.100	4.670	5.170	3.002	2.099

(b)(ii) Real terms

£ million (2005 prices)

Nature of funding for Portsmouth city council	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
IT Block	2.327	3.781	2.417	3.087	2.099
Bus Subsidy[1]	0	0	0	0	0
Major Scheme	1.108	1..308	3.058	0	0
Total	3.435	5.089	5.475	3.087	2.099

(c)(i) Cash terms

£ million

Nature of funding for Southampton city council	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
IT Block	2.800	2.727	2.643	2.721	2.799
Bus Subsidy[1]	0	0.755	0	0	0
Total	2.800	2.727	2.643	2.721	2.799

(c)(ii) Real terms

£ million (2005 prices)

Nature of funding for Southampton city council	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
IT Block	3.102	2.972	2.799	2.798	2.799
Bus Subsidy[1]	0	0.823	0	0	0
Total	3.102	3.794	2.799	2.798	2.799

[1] The figures comprise of Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG), and awards made under the Rural Bus Challenge, and Urban Bus Challenge funding.

Vehicle Registration

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate his Department has made of the number of vehicles registered *(a)* with false details and *(b)* to a (i) false and (ii) non-existent address. [61404]

Dr. Ladyman: The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) would refuse to record any details on the basis of information that it knew to be false, and therefore the information requested is not available. However, a recent survey estimated that 97.4 per cent. of vehicles can be traced directly or indirectly from the records held at DVLA.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Byers: To ask the Solicitor-General if he will review the basis on which the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) decides whether to bring a prosecution with a view to encouraging the CPS to be less risk averse when making such decisions. [68925]

The Solicitor-General: Each case the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) receives from the police is reviewed in accordance with the Code for Crown Prosecutors. Application of the Code means that a case is prosecuted when there is sufficient evidence for a realistic prospect of conviction (the 'evidential test') and that the prosecution is in the public interest (the 'public interest test'). The Code is issued by the Director of Public Prosecutions under Section 10 of the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985 and it is periodically reviewed by the CPS. The last review occurred in 2004 and included a public consultation exercise. The current edition of the Code was published in November 2004.

Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSI) reviews CPS performance regarding the application of the Code. HMCPSI's 2004-05 annual report records that CPS average percentage compliance with the evidential test at initial review over the 2002-04 inspection cycle is at 98.6 per cent.; and the equivalent compliance with the public interest test is at 99.9 per cent. There are no current plans for a review of the Code.

DEFENCE

AWOL

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many soldiers on operational tour in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan went absent without leave in each quarter since January 2003. [68523]

Mr. Ingram: There have been no reports of soldiers on operational tour in Iraq or Afghanistan going absent without leave (AWOL) over the period in question. However, this does not include those individuals who may have gone AWOL while returned partway through their tour of Iraq on rest and recuperation or for other reasons. This level of data is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Crown Dependencies

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much has been spent on defence for each of the Crown Dependencies in each of the last 10 years. [67087]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom is responsible for the defence of the Crown Dependencies. There are no military forces specifically allocated to the provision of this task and, therefore, I am unable to identify separately the costs incurred in maintaining their defence.

Deepcut Review

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many service and ex-service personnel were given advice by the Army Directorate of Personal Services on how to handle press inquiries following publication of the Deepcut review; how many individuals attended the lunch and briefing on 29 March; and if he will place a copy in the Library of the letter of invitation signed by Colonel N. C. C. Freeman, dated 20 March. [66931]

Mr. Ingram: A total of 43 service and ex-service personnel received advice from the Directorate of Personal Service (Army) on how to handle media attention following the Deepcut review. Five of these individuals attended the briefing on 29 March 2006. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many individuals face disciplinary action following the report of the Deepcut Review. [66932]

Mr. Ingram: The Army is currently examining the Deepcut Review report and associated documentation to see whether there is any evidence to suggest that a disciplinary offence may have been committed. In addition, the Army is examining the report for any indication of professional misconduct or negligence that might make administrative action appropriate.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost of the Deepcut Review was, broken down by main budget heading. [66933]

Mr. Ingram: The total cost for the Deepcut Review currently stands at £919,718. Further costs are still expected, mainly concerning the recent publication of the report. The expenditure so far can be broken down into the following main areas:

	£
Legal fees	810,309
Facilities/support	85,417
Press costs	23,992

Defence Logistic Organisation

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what consultations there have been with the recognised trade unions on Defence Logistic Organisation collocation proposals; and what responses have been received from the trade unions. [68291]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Logistics Organisation (DLO) meets regularly with industrial and non-industrial national level trade unions for discussions on both a formal and informal basis. Discussions in these forums have included DLO collocation proposals.

Formal Trade Union consultation can only begin once I have made an initial decision on DLO collocation proposals. I expect to be in a position to do this in the summer of this year. The DLO will then begin formal trade union consultation and would expect to receive the trade unions' formal responses as part of that process. The DLO is committed to working with the trade union and has recently offered closer engagement on collocation.

Defence/ACPO Protocol

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the date was of implementation of the September 2005 Protocol between his Department and the Association of Chief Police Officers on the investigation of deaths on lands or premises owned, occupied or under the control of the Ministry of Defence; what the conclusions of the first annual review of the Protocol were; and what subsequent amendments were adopted on the *(a)* content and *(b)* operation of the Protocol. [66937]

Mr. Ingram: The protocol was signed on behalf of my right hon. Friend, the then Secretary of State for Defence and a representative from the Association of Chief Police Officers on 7 November 2005 and was implemented immediately thereafter. The content and application of the protocol will be reviewed 12 months post implementation, in November 2006.

Departmental Publications

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library copies of *(a) The Mole*, *(b) Compass* and *(c)* Lynx publications issued since 2002. [65240]

Mr. Ingram: The *Compass* publication ceased in February 2000 and "Lynx" is an internal MOD website not a publication. To place in the Library copies of *The Mole* issued since 2002 would incur disproportionate cost.

Eurofighter

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what ground attack missile capability the Eurofighter will have. [66608]

Mr. Ingram: The initial ground attack capability being planned for RAF Typhoon will use the Enhanced Paveway precision guided bomb. Integration of subsequent weapons is being considered under the Typhoon Future Capability Programme. From a ground attack missile perspective these include the Storm Shadow cruise missile and the Brimstone air-launched anti-armour weapon.

Hercules Aircraft

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 6-7W, on Hercules aircraft, what his definition is of *(a)* directional infra-red defensive counter-measures and *(b)* lamp infra red counter measure; what the purposes are of each measure; and if he will make a statement. [68737]

Mr. Ingram: The lamp infra red counter measure provides omni-directional protection against infra red guided missiles by projecting broadband jamming energy. The directional infrared counter measure utilises attack warning sensors to focus the jamming system towards the threat.

Iraq

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what delays there have been in delivering Warrior armoured personnel carriers to British forces in Iraq over the last four months; what the reasons were for the delays; and what alternative arrangements have been made to safeguard the security of the troops affected. [67238]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* There have been minor delays over the past few weeks to the delivery of replacement Warrior Armoured Fighting Vehicles for the Operation Telic 8 roulement. This has been due to technical difficulties experienced by the merchant vessel carrying these vehicles while in transit. This delay has had no impact on the security of British forces or Warrior capability in Iraq; existing vehicles were retained in service until the replacement vehicles were ready.

Iraq/Afghanistan

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many times UK personnel have undertaken unarmed aerial vehicles strikes in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan since military operations began; and if he will make a statement. [63805]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 20 April 2006]:* UK personnel have been involved in five unmanned aerial vehicle strikes in Iraq, and one in Afghanistan.

Joint Strike Fighter

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether an *(a)* memorandum of understanding and *(b)* exchange of letters between the United States and the United Kingdom on the joint strike fighter programme includes a provision guaranteeing the transfer of technology. [65958]

Mr. Ingram: The Memorandum of Understanding for the current phase of the programme contains provisions for the exchange of information to enable the participants to meet their respective requirements. In addition the Exchange of Letters (EoLs) signed in 2001 articulates the areas of military and industrial capability that are necessary to satisfy UK sovereign requirements. The EoLs do not contain a provision on guaranteeing transfer of technology. The UK remains committed to working closely with the US administration to resolve the issue of technology sharing and we are optimistic that our ongoing discussions will be successful.

Kieran Heggarty

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the result was of the Royal Military Police investigation into the death of Kieran Heggarty in Moscow Army Barracks on Sunday 19 February 2006. [67687]

Mr. Ingram: The Royal Military Police have not carried out any investigation into the death of Kieran Hegarty at Moscow Camp, Belfast on 19 February 2006 as the Police Service of Northern Ireland has jurisdiction in this matter.

Merchant Fleet

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 16 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 2208W, on the merchant fleet, what the *(a)* year of use and *(b)* type of vessel was in each case. [65526]

Mr. Ingram: The information requested is shown in the following table. The list also shows the financial year in which each vessel was chartered. Some vessels will have been chartered towards the end of one financial year, with use continuing into the following financial year.

Ship name	*Flag*	*Type*
Financial year 2000-01		
Aldebaran	Antigua and Barbuda	Lo-lo
Arneb	German	Ro-ro
Arroyofrio Uno	Spanish	Ro-ro
Baltic Eagle	Isle of Man	Ro-ro
Britta Oden	Swedish	Ro-ro
Cap Afrique	French	Ro-ro
Cidade de Funchal	Portuguese	Ro-ro
Dart 1	Romanian	Ro-ro
Eclipse	French	Ro-ro
Leopold	Cyprus	Lo-lo
Loverval	Luxembourg	Ro-ro
Maersk Teal	Singapore	Ro-ro
Maj Danielsen	Bahamas	Lo-lo
Marianne Danica	Danish	Lo-lo
Mont Ventoux	Bermuda	Ro-ro
Novorossiysk	Maltese	Ro-ro
Puma	Danish	Lo-lo
Saint Brandan	British	Lo-lo
Sea Bird	Danish	Lo-lo
Sochi	Maltese	Ro-ro
Sondos	UAE	Ro-ro
Stena Shipper	British	Ro-ro
Tango	Romanian	Ro-ro
Thor Sofia	Isle of Man	Lo-lo
Tor Anglia	Swedish	Ro-ro
Wloclawek	Maltese	Ro-ro

Ship name	Flag	Type
Financial year 2001-02		
Alblasgracht	Netherlands	Lo-lo
Aleksandrov	Cyprus	Lo-lo
Arcturus	Antigua and Barbuda	Lo-lo
Astra Sea	Cyprus	Lo-lo
Atlantic Crusader	Cyprus	Lo-lo
Baltic Eagle	Isle of Man	Ro-ro
Baltic Link	Dutch	Ro-ro
Bazias 1	Romanian	Ro-ro
BBC Colombia	Antigua and Barbuda	Lo-lo
Blue Moon	Cyprus	Lo-lo
Breant	British	Ro-ro
Brittaoden	Swedish	Ro-ro
Cap Afrique	French	Ro-ro
CEC Cardigan	Bahamas	Lo-lo
Eclipse	French	Ro-ro
Etly Danielsen	Bahamas	Lo-lo
Feedercadet	Portuguese	Ro-ro
Hereford	Bahamas	Ro-ro
Juris Avots	Cyprus	Ro-ro
Marianne Danica	Danish	Lo-lo
Norse Mersey	Italian	Ro-ro
Novorossiysk	Maltese	Ro-ro
Ocean Bird	Antigua and Barbuda	Lo-lo
Pegasus	Antigua and Barbuda	Lo-lo
Puma	Danish	Lo-lo
Sarawak	Singapore	Ro-ro
Sochi	Maltese	Ro-ro
Southern Carrier	Spanish	Ro-ro
Sun Admiral	Maltese	Ro-ro
Tancred	Norwegian	Ro-ro
Thebeland	British	Ro-ro
Tor Anglia	Swedish	Ro-ro
Tor Futura	Danish	Ro-ro
Tor Minerva	Danish	Ro-ro
Tyrusland	British	Ro-ro
Velazquez	Spanish	Ro-ro
Financial year 2002-03		
Adriana	Cyprus	Ro-ro
Aegean Pearl	Greek	Ro-ro
Anna Desagnes	Canadian	Lo-lo
Anna Oden	Swedish	Ro-ro
Arroyofrio Uno (DOS)	Spanish	Ro-ro
Astra Sea	Cyprus	Lo-lo
Atlantic Crusader	Cyprus	Lo-lo
BBC Finland	Cyprus	Lo-lo
BBC Germania	Liberian	Lo-lo
BBC Gibraltar	Gibraltar	Lo-lo
BBC Rheiderland	British	Lo-lo
Beatrixhaven	Maltese	Ro-ro
Birka Forest	Finnish	Ro-ro
Blue Moon	Cyprus	Lo-lo
Brave Merchant	British	Ro-ro
Britta Oden	Swedish	Ro-ro
Calibur	Maltese	Ro-ro
Cervantes	Spanish	Ro-ro
Clipper Cardigan	Bahamas	Lo-lo
Dart 8	Bermuda	Ro-ro
Dart 9	Bermuda	Ro-ro
Fast challenger	Egyptian	Ro-ro
Feedercadet	Portuguese	Ro-ro

Ship name	*Flag*	*Type*
Genova Bridge	St. Vincent and Grenadines	Ro-ro
Hebrides	British	Car ferry
Hereford	Bahamas	Ro-ro
Johnny	Maltese	Lo-lo
Jolly Giallo	Italian	Ro-ro
Kapitan Vaga	Cyprus	Lo-lo
Kaptan Burhanettin	Turkish	Ro-ro
Karincat	Danish	Lo-lo
LA Surprise	Spanish	Ro-ro
Laura	St. Vincent and Grenadines	Ro-ro
Light	Bahamas	Lo-lo
Lince	St. Vincent and Grenadines	Ro-ro
Lyra	Antigua	Ro-ro
Maersk Ramsey	British	Tanker
Magdalena Green	Netherlands	Lo-lo
Mersey Fisher	British	Tanker
NDS Prominence	Cyprus	Ro-ro
Nord 1	St. Vincent and Grenadines	Ro-ro
Novorossiysk	Maltese	Ro-ro
Pacific Winner	Marshall Islands	Ro-ro
Pancaldo	Antigua and Barbuda	Lo-lo
Panthera	Antigua and Barbuda	Lo-lo
Pasewalk	Liberian	Ro-ro
Passat	Antigua and Barbuda	Semi-submersible
Project Europa	Netherlands	[illegible]
Puma	Danish	[illegible]
Roy Maersk	Danish	Tanker
Sea Admiral	Maltese	Ro-ro
Sea Runner	Maltese	Ro-ro
Shippersgracht	Netherlands	Lo-lo
Schackenborg	Cayman Islands	Ro-ro
Skanderborg	Cayman Islands	Ro-ro
Smit Enterprise	Bahamas	Semi-submersible
Sochi	Maltese	Ro-ro
Southern Trader	Bahamas	Ro-ro
Stadiongracht	Dutch	Lo-lo
Stena Shipper	British	Ro-ro
Strada Gigante	Italian	Ro-ro
Thebeland	British	Ro-ro
Thor Falcon	Danish	Lo-lo
Tiger	Danish	Lo-lo
Tobias Maersk	British	Lo-lo
Tor Anglia	Swedish	Ro-ro
Traden	Finnish	Ro-ro
Tychy	Maltese	Ro-ro
Ulusoy 3	Turkish	Ro-ro
Ulusoy 4	Turkish	Ro-ro
Ulusoy 5	Turkish	Ro-ro
Ursula	Marshall Islands	Lo-lo
Velazquez	Spanish	Ro-ro
Vikingland	British	Ro-ro
Wind Admiral	Maltese	Ro-ro
Wloclawek	Maltese	Ro-ro
Financial year 2003-04		
Anna Oden	Italian	Ro-ro
Aqua Star	Antigua and Barbuda	Lo-lo
Atlantic Crusader	Cyprus	Lo-lo
BBC Sweden	Gibraltar	Lo-lo
Blackrock	British	Tanker
CEC Cardiff	Bahamas	Lo-lo
CEC Cardigan	Bahamas	Lo-lo

Ship name	*Flag*	*Type*
CEC Faith	Bahamas	Lo-lo
Danica Sunbeam	Danish	Lo-lo
Dart 10	Bermuda	Ro-ro
Dicksi	Norwegian	Tanker
Longstone	British	Ro-ro
Mersey Fisher	British	Tanker
Pancaldo	Antigua and Barbuda	Lo-lo
Pasewalk	Liberian	Ro-ro
Puma	Danish	Lo-lo
Scan Germania	Isle of Man	Lo-lo
Scan Polaris	Isle of Man	Ro-ro
Stena Foreteller	Swedish	Ro-ro
Tor Anglia	British	Ro-ro
Traden	Finnish	Ro-ro
Vikingland	British	Ro-ro
Financial year 2004-05		
Anglian Prince	UK	Tug
Anna Johanna	Danish	Tanker
Barmouth	British	Tanker
Ben Ellan	Isle of Man	General cargo
Ben Maye	Isle of Man	General cargo
Bore Mari	Finnish	Ro-ro
Bremer Forest	Gibraltar	Lo-lo
CEC Cardiff	Bahamas	Lo-lo
CEC Fighter	Bahamas	Lo-lo
CSO Marianos	Bahamas	Diving support vehicle
Fairplay 22	Antigua and Barbuda	Tug
Forth Fisher	British	Tanker
Hebrides	British	Car ferry
Laura M	UK	Multi-role Vessel
Lesley M	UK	Workboat/multicat
Mary M	UK	Multi-role vessel
Mersey Fisher	British	Tanker
MSV Fennica	Norway	Multi-role Vessel
Pantanal	Antigua and Barbuda	Lo-lo
Patria	Antigua	Lo-lo
Portree II	UK	Multi-role vessel
RRS Ernest Shackleton	UK	Polar research/sub sea support vessel
Sirocco	Panama	Tug
Stena Foreteller	Swedish	Ro-ro
Stevns Pearl	Danish	Lo-lo
Suzanne D	Dutch	Anchor handling vessel
Thorax	Norway	Tug
Financial year 2005-06		
Atlantic Osprey	British	Ro-ro
BBC Denmark	Netherland Antilles	Lo-lo
Bibby Sapphire	Panama	Dive support vehicle
Bourbon Chieftain	NIS—Norwegian Offshore Registry	Anchor handling vessel
CEC Blue	Isle of Man	Lo-lo
Comenda	Portugal	Tug
Condock 1	Netherland Antilles	Ro-ro
Condock 3	Gibraltar	Ro-ro
EMU Surveyor	UK	Survey vessel
Fairplay 22	Antigua and Barbuda	Tug
Korsoer	Antigua and Barbuda	Ro-ro
Looiersgracht	Dutch	Lo-lo

Ship name	Flag	Type
Medway Otter	UK	Workboat
Medway Rhino	UK	Workboat
MSV Fenmica	Norway	Multi-role vessel
Naomi E	Dutch	Multi-role vessel
Portree II	UK	Multi-role vessel
Santa Ines	Antigua and Barbuda	Lo-lo
Sarah Grey	UK	Multi-role vessel
Seastudio	UK	Workboat Targa 37
Severn Fisher	Gibraltar	Tanker
Skaftafell	Gibraltar	Lo-lo
Sloman Commander	Antigua and Barbuda	Lo-lo
Thorax	Norway	Tug
Zetan	Maltese	Ro-ro

[1] To date 13 February 2006
Note:
Lo-lo = Load on-load off
Ro-ro = Roll on-roll off

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost was of chartering merchant vessels for activities connected with *(a)* the Falklands War 1982, *(b)* the Gulf war 1991 and *(c)* the Iraq war 2003. [65525]

Mr. Ingram: The cost of chartering merchant vessels for the initial deployment for Operation Telic was approximately £31 million. Records are no longer held for the charter costs for Operation Corporate (Falklands) and Operation Granby (Gulf).

Military Discipline

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on how many occasions a unit's commanding officer has been overruled by the chain of command on a decision not to prosecute an offence against a member of that unit in each year since 1997. [68094]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* None. When a commanding officer exercises his power to dismiss a charge, that decision is final, it cannot be overruled, and the charge cannot be tried in the military justice system.

Ministerial Cars (Fuel Costs)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the fuel costs were for ministerial cars used by his Department in each of the last five years. [67020]

Mr. Ingram: With the exception of the Secretary of State's vehicle which is provided by the Government Car and Despatch Service, estimated fuel costs for the Ministry of Defence's ministerial cars are between £8,000 and £10,000 per annum over the last five financial years, based on an average mileage of 15,000 and an urban fuel consumption of 25mpg.

Ministry of Defence Stores

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information his Department holds on the value of its stores lodged with its contractors and subsequently found either to be lost or otherwise unavailable for his Department's purposes in each of the financial years since April 1999. [65459]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The only information centrally available over the period since April 1999 is the value of financial recoveries notified to the Ministry of Defence's Asset Accounting Centre. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1650-51W.

Further information is held by asset owners and other branches dispersed throughout the Department but could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Nuclear Waste

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the cost of dealing with nuclear waste arising from defence projects in each of the last five years; and from which budgets these costs are met. [64435]

Mr. Ingram: The following table details the costs incurred against the running cost element of the defence budget in each of the last five years, in dealing with nuclear waste arising from defence projects.

Financial years	Cost (£ million)
2000-01	213
2001-02	201
2002-03	241
2003-04	188
2004-05	253

Porton Down

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which experiments at Porton Down are undertaken only on animals; and if he will make a statement. [66420]

Mr. Ingram: Dstl Porton Down only undertakes research involving the use of animals when other "in vitro", physical and computer modelling methods are unsuitable. All research is conducted in accordance with the principles of the 3R's and under the provisions of the Animal Scientific Procedures Act 1986.

In the last year research involving animals has been undertaken as part of the following areas of the MOD's research programme, novel haemorrhage control; burn protection; treatment of acute lung injury; and medical counter-measures.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many animals have been used in experiments at Porton Down in each of the last five years, broken down by *(a)* breed and *(b)* procedures carried out. [66421]

Mr. Ingram: Dstl Porton Down submits annual returns to the Home Office detailing the number of procedures undertaken which involve the use of animals as defined in the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.

In the years 2000 to 2005 the annual returns to the Home Office, broken down by species are detailed in the following table.

	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Guinea Pig	587	727	644	653	506	661
Ferret	0	0	0	0	42	60
Hamster	24	0	0	70	0	0
Mouse	10,856	11,944	14,874	12,645	14,737	20,016
Pig	106	23	88	131	80	127
Rabbit	19	23	24	22	12	3
Rat	350	125	268	355	320	195
Sheep	9	45	0	0	0	2
Cattle	0	0	0	0	1	0
Non-human primate	34	68	42	23	30	54
Total	11,985	12,955	15,940	13,899	15,728	21,118

Project Hyperion

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will announce his decisions on Project Hyperion. [66975]

Mr. Ingram: Work to consider the benefits of rationalisation and collocation of the two main Army HQs—HQ LAND and HQ Adjutant General is still ongoing. I intend to inform the House about the final size and structure of the new HQ towards the end of this year. I hope that a formal announcement about the future location for the new headquarters may be made in the summer.

RAF

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many combat fighter aircraft are in service use by the RAF, broken down by type. [66605]

Mr. Ingram: The following table shows the number of air defence aircraft that are planned to be in service with the RAF at the end of the present Financial Year.

Aircraft type	*Total fleet*
Tornado F3	82

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many ground attack aircraft are in service with the RAF, broken down by type; and what plans he has to replace them. [66607]

Mr. Ingram: The following table shows the number of offensive support aircraft that are planned to be in service with the RAF at the end of the present financial year.

Aircraft type	*Fleet number*
Jaguar GR	13
Harrier GR	73
Tornado GR	139

These offensive support aircraft will be progressively replaced by Typhoon and the Joint Combat Aircraft over the next two decades.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many RAF *(a)* Harrier GR7 and *(b)* Jaguar aircraft are (i) in service and (ii) fit for purpose. [65446]

Mr. Ingram: The following table shows, for end-March 2006, the numbers of Harrier GR and Jaguar aircraft that were planned to be in service and that were fit for purpose.

Aircraft type	*Total fleet*	*Numbers of aircraft fit for purpose (average Financial Year 2005-06)*[1]
Harrier GR7/9[2]	73	22
Jaguar[3]	45	20

[1] Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.
[2] Harrier GR7 FFP figures are not held separately hence the total fleet and FFP numbers shown are for both GR7 and GR9 aircraft.
[3] Jaguar numbers include training aircraft.

Aircraft are deemed fit for purpose if they are capable of undertaking the required task on a given day. Aircraft are not available for tasking if they are undergoing scheduled maintenance, modification programmes or any other unforeseen rectification work that can arise on a day to day basis. The figures do not reflect the fact that an aircraft assessed as not fit for purpose may be returned to the front line at very short notice to meet the operational need.

Robert Nairac

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will release the full files relating to the death of Robert Nairac in Northern Ireland in 1977. [66347]

Mr. Ingram: Due to the date of this incident the relevant files are stored in archives. It will take some time to identify, retrieve and subsequently consider the material for release. I will write to the hon. Member with an update at the earliest opportunity and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Type 45 Destroyers

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate the naval staff have made of the total number of Type 45 destroyers required by the fleet. [67917]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* Requirements are set by the Ministry of Defence's Central Staff. The 2004 Defence White Paper 'Delivering Security in a Changing World: Future Capabilities' stated our requirement for eight Type 45 destroyers. However, the delivery of this is dependent on industry demonstrating an affordable solution.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Type 45 destroyers would be *(a)* required to relieve and *(b)* likely to be in upkeep in order to sustain the availability of four Type 45 destroyers for front-line service. [67919]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* That would depend on many factors. The 2004 Defence White Paper 'Delivering Security in a Changing World: Future Capabilities' stated a requirement for eight Type 45 destroyers. From a fleet of this size six ships would be available for operations at any one time.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will announce the total number of Type 45 destroyers to be built. [67921]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* In July 2004, my right hon. Friend the then Secretary of State announced plans for a class of eight Type 45 destroyers, of which six are on order. Formal approval, and a subsequent order, for ships seven and eight will be made at the appropriate time.

Warships

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what progress he has made with the disposal of surplus ex-Ministry of Defence vessels; what Government policy is on the disposal of such vessels; and what the position is regarding the disposal of *(a)* HMS Intrepid and *(b)* the (i) Newcastle, (ii) Glasgow and (iii) Cardiff Type 42 frigates; [65086]

(2) what discussions have taken place between his Department and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on facilitating the de-equipping and dismantling of surplus warships in the United Kingdom. [65087]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence officials have had a number of discussions with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the preparation of the UK Ship Recycling Policy. This policy will include clear guidelines for the recycling of ex-MOD vessels and is currently subject to consultation with stakeholders.

Current MOD policy is that once any possibilities for sale for further use have been exhausted, ships are then considered for recycling in accordance with environmental regulations.

At present there are no yards which meet UK Environmental Agency standards for recycling. A number of UK yards have, however, applied for Waste Management licences. The MOD continues to explore options for recycling at yards within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. In the meantime, Intrepid, having been identified as being suitable only for recycling, remains at Portsmouth Naval Base.

A range of disposal options are under consideration for the Type 42 ships Newcastle, Glasgow and Cardiff.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Act of Union

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what activities the Government are planning to mark the 300th anniversary of the Act of Union. [69202]

Mr. Lammy: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has no plans at present to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the Act of the Union.

BBC Licence Fee

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what consideration her Department will give to the interests of the commercial broadcasting sector when examining the BBC's licence fee bid. [68067]

Tessa Jowell: The Government are currently conducting a funding review to determine the level of the television licence fee from April 2007. All relevant issues will be taken into account as part of this review. The process has been designed to include an opportunity for stakeholders, including commercial broadcasters, to comment on the BBC's bid as part of a public seminar on May 5 chaired by Lord Burns, who has served as my independent advisor on Charter Review.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what consultation process will be carried out in advance of her making a decision on the level of the BBC's licence fee; and who will be included in that consultation. [68068]

Tessa Jowell: Lord Burns, the independent adviser on the BBC Charter Review, will be chairing a public seminar on the BBC licence fee on 5 May 2006 to which other broadcasters have been invited including ITV, Channel 4, Five and BSkyB. The debate generated by this seminar will form part of the evidence base for setting the future level of the licence fee. In preparation for this seminar, we have invited written submissions on the future funding of the BBC from interested parties. We are also commissioning survey research on the public's willingness to pay for the BBC.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will invite *(a)* the National Audit Office and *(b)* the Public Accounts Committee to assess the cost-effectiveness of the BBC's licence fee bid. [68072]

Tessa Jowell: In line with the commitment in the Green Paper, "A strong BBC, independent of government", to take independent advice as part of the review of the BBC's future funding needs, the Government commissioned PKF to examine the assumptions underlying the BBC's future funding proposals. On 26 April the Government published PKF's report "Review of the BBC Value for Money and Efficiency Programmes"—subject to genuine issues of confidentiality. We see no need to duplicate that work.

Children's Services

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many nursery and crèche places are provided for people working in her Department; what charges are made for the provision of such services; and what other facilities are provided for children of employees of her Department. [67371]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport provides a range of support for people with childcare needs.

The Department participates in the Westminster Holiday Playscheme, costing £25 per day per child, of which the Department subsidises half. There is not a set number of allocated places to the Department and places for this scheme are offered on a first come, first served basis.

The Department offers childcare vouchers through a salary sacrifice scheme to provide parents with maximum flexibility in choosing the childcare most suited to their needs. DCMS meets the cost of administration which is 5.5 per cent. of the value of vouchers taken by staff. Currently there are nine members of staff who take advantage of this scheme.

The Department has also introduced the Family Life Solutions service for all staff (a free and confidential telephone helpline service offering support to people with caring responsibilities and information on a range of issues, including childcare). The cost of this for the Department is approximately £1,500 per year for 520 staff.

Corporate Hospitality

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on how many occasions she has accepted corporate hospitality in the last 12 months. [67524]

Mr. Lammy: Paragraph 5.28 of the ministerial code sets out the rules on the registration of hospitality.

Departmental Staff

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men are employed in the Department; what the average pay was for (i) women and (ii) men in the Department in (1) 1997 and (2) 2006; what women's average pay is as a percentage of men's average pay; and how many (A) women and (B) men the Department employed in each of the last five years, broken down by grade. [67788]

Mr. Lammy: The following table present the average salary for men and women in DCMS and women's salary as a percentage difference to men's for the years 2002 and 2006. Data for 1997 is unavailable.

Grade	*Men (£)*	*Women (£)*	*Percentage difference*
2002			
SCS Pay band 1[1]	57,188	51,489	90
A(U) (Grade 6)	45,972	48,267	105
A (Grade 7)	39,283	38,842	99
B (HEO/SEO)	27,155	26,291	97
C (EO)	19,517	19,871	102
D (AA/AO)	15,736	15,940	101
2006			
SCS Pay band 1[1]	62,289	62,017	100
A(U) (Grade 6)	53,466	55,950	105
A (Grade 7)	43,725	42,119	96
B (HEO/SEO)	29,569	29,011	98
C (EO)	21,441	21,441	100
D (AA/AO)	17,544	17,968	102

[1] Permanent Secretary and SCS paybands 2 and 3 have been excluded under the Data Protection Act, to avoid identification of individuals where numbers are less than five.

The following table show the breakdown of men and women by grade in each of the last five years:

Grade	*Male*	*Female*
2002		
SCS	16	12
A/A(U) (Grade 6/7)	54	30
B (HEO/SEO)	86	56
C (EO)	53	56
D (AA/AO)	36	70
Total	245	224
2003		
SCS	18	9
A/A(U) (Grade 6/7)	52	31
B (HEO/SEO)	79	60
C (EO)	56	61
D (AA/AO)	33	69
Total	238	230
2004		
SCS	20	6
A/A(U) (Grade 6/7)	53	33
B (HEO/SEO)	89	69
C (EO)	55	65
D (AA/AO)	33	63
Total	250	236
2005		
SCS	20	8
A/A(U) (Grade 6/7)	68	38
B (HEO/SEO)	88	85
C (EO)	59	64

Grade	Male	Female
D (AA/AO)	32	65
Total	267	260
2006		
SCS	21	9
A/A(U) (Grade 6/7)	69	48
B (HEO/SEO)	91	86
C (EO)	58	67
D (AA/AO)	25	43
Total	264	253

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people in her Department have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* dismissed for (i) inappropriate use of the internet while at work and (ii) using work telephones to access premium rate numbers in each of the last five years. [67981]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has not disciplined or dismissed any staff for inappropriate use of the internet at work in the last five years. Access to premium rate numbers is barred.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many *(a)* EU foreign nationals and *(b)* non-EU foreign nationals have been employed in her Department in each of the last five years; what vetting procedures are in place for each category of staff; and whether these include liaison with foreign law enforcement agencies. [68017]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has employed one EU foreign national since September 2004 and one non- EU foreign national since July 2005. Both individuals underwent national security vetting up to counter terrorist check (CTC) level, which includes liaison with foreign law enforcement agencies. In addition identity checks were made on their arrival to the Department.

The non EU-foreign national was appointed under an aliens' certificate under sections 1 (1) (b) and 1 (2) (a) of the Aliens Employment Act 1955, which is valid for five years.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what opportunities exist for people to work beyond retirement age in her Department. [69126]

Mr. Lammy: The minimum retirement age at which all staff can retire with full superannuation benefits is 60, but all staff below the senior civil service may, if they wish, work until age 65. Retirement age for the senior civil service is currently age 60 but heads of Departments have the flexibility to retain staff beyond age 60 if they judge it to be in the public interest.

Football

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with *(a)* the Football Association, *(b)* the Premier League, *(c)* the League Managers' Association, *(d)* the Professional Football Association and *(e)* individual football clubs on tackling homophobia in football. [67200]

Mr. Caborn: Further to my written answer of 20 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 755W, there have been no ministerial discussions with any football authorities or clubs on tackling homophobia in football. The Government believe that there is no place for homophobia in football or in wider society and we fully support the campaign being led by the Football Association against homophobic abuse in football in England.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the Minister for Sport's statement of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 70WH, on football players (behaviour), what her response is to the hon. Member for Nottingham North's proposal on the relaunch of sportsmanship on the first day of the next season. [67562]

Mr. Caborn: I am keen to see all those involved in professional football—football authorities, club chairmen, managers and players—play a part in ensuring that sportsmanship is given the utmost priority both for the remainder of this season and during future seasons.

Although this is ultimately a matter for the football authorities to determine, I will carefully consider whether to write to all 92 Premier and Football League club chairmen, as I have done at the beginning of previous seasons, to remind them of their responsibilities in acting as role models to young football supporters.

Gaming Machines

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether she plans to increase the level of stakes and prizes permitted for gaming machines; and if she will make a statement. [68301]

Mr. Caborn: The maximum stakes and prizes that will apply to gaming machines once the Gambling Act 2005 is implemented were published alongside the draft Bill. These include commitments to increase the maximum stake on Category C gaming machines (currently all cash amusement with prizes machines) from 30p currently to 50p, and to increase the maximum stake on Category B3 and B4 gaming machines (currently jackpot machines in bingo premises and registered clubs respectively) from 50p currently to £1.

Sport Funding

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what central Government funding has been allocated to sport in Tamworth constituency in each of the last eight years. [68355]

Mr. Caborn: Funding for sport is primarily channelled through Sport England and UK Sport, the two DCMS sponsored bodies which award lottery grants and dispense Exchequer funds for sport from DCMS. Not all data by distributing bodies is kept at constituency level.

However Sport England and UK Sport have made a number of grants to the Tamworth constituency since 1997.

Sport England awarded Exchequer funding of £20,000, £20,000 and £17,500 in 2001, 2002 and 2003

respectively. Lottery funding provided by Sport England to the Tamworth area since 1997 includes £10,000 for the Green Spaces programme, 169,183 Awards for All and £403,780 for the development of the Anker Valley.

UK Sport has also provided Exchequer funding for UK Competitors in the Tamworth area: £60,000 in 1999-2000, £40,000 in 2000-01 and £20,000 in 2001-02.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what support her Department has provided to *(a)* football, *(b)* cricket, *(c)* tennis, *(d)* rugby, *(e)* athletics and *(f)* other sports in (i) the Tees Valley and (ii) Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland. [67198]

Mr. Caborn: Financial support for sport from public sources is primarily channelled through Sport England and UK Sport, the two DCMS sponsored bodies which award lottery grants and dispense Exchequer funds for sport from DCMS.

Sport England

The following table summarises the lottery funding which Sport England has awarded to the sports specified in the Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland and Tees Valley areas since 1997.

		Award (£)
Sport	*Tees Valley*	*Middlesbrough South and Cleveland East*
(a) Football	7,068,041	90,450
(b) Cricket	1,044,263	886,348
(c) Tennis	38,059	[1]—
(d) Rugby	775,019	[1]—
(e) Athletics	1,792,008	160,000
(f) Other sports	28,443,215	4,433,570
Total	39,160,605	5,570,368

[1]This information is not available in the format requested.

Note:

Sport England has defined the Tees Valley area as the local authorities of: Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, and Stockton-On-Tees.

It was only possible to identify Space for Sport and the Arts and Green Spaces figures by local authority area which do not coincide exactly with constituency boundaries. As such they are included in the overall Tees Valley figures but not the Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland figures. The report will therefore slightly understate the amount of funding benefiting Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland.

The other sport category includes those projects classified as multi sport. It is likely that some of the individual sports listed in the table also benefited from these awards.

It is not possible for Sport England to determine an amount of Exchequer funding allocated to individual sports in these two areas as its Exchequer funding is awarded to the National Governing Bodies of sports who then distribute this funding to projects in different areas. However, the total Exchequer funding awarded by Sport England to the Tees Valley area since 1997 is £902,928.

For this purpose, Sport England has defined the Tees Valley area as the local authorities of: Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland, and Stockton-on-Tees.

UK Sport

It is not possible for UK Sport to determine an amount of lottery or Exchequer funding allocated to these two areas as its funding is not directed to specific regions. However, UK Sport has identified two athletes with a declared address in the Middlesbrough South & Cleveland East area who have benefited from lottery funded Athlete Personal Awards of approximately £63,000.

Note:

This figure shows the funding awarded since 2001, the date which UK Sport took over management of Athlete Personal Awards from Sport England.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what support her Department has provided to increase *(a)* female and *(b)* ethnic minority participation in (i) football, (ii) rugby and (iii) cricket. [67199]

Mr. Caborn: The Department has a PSA target to increase participation in sport from priority groups by 3 per cent. by 2008. These priority groups include women and ethnic minorities.

Through their Whole Sport Plans and other initiatives, Sport England provides the national governing bodies of football, rugby and cricket with significant funding to contribute towards achieving this target.

Staff Development

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total cost was of *(a)* staff away days and *(b)* staff team building exercises in her Department in each of the last three years. [69125]

Mr. Lammy: The Department encourages Divisions to undertake staff away days and staff team building exercises as part of its commitment to the development of its staff and to improving performance. It does not record the costs of these separately from other forms of training and development.

The Public (West Bromwich)

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps were taken by Arts Council England to prevent the arts organisation The Public in West Bromwich from going into administration. [68421]

Mr. Lammy: Despite efforts to strengthen the organisation's capacity through the provision of an additional £12 million by the funders in June 2005, and the advice of Arts Council England's stabilisation unit, the public informed funders that it was likely to breach its funding envelope in January 2006.

At this point, the Arts Council commissioned a stock take report and options appraisal and the funders agreed upon one of the recommended options and to make short term cash flow funds available.

However, in spite of close working between all stakeholders, the Board of The Public acted on legal advice and registered for insolvency on 3 March 2006 this year.

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps the Arts Council are taking to ensure that the objectives of its charter

are being met in discussions on the future of The Public's arts building in West Bromwich. [68422]

Mr. Lammy: As a result of the administration process for The Public, Arts Council England has been working closely with the administrators to ensure the artistic vision continues and is realised.

All the funders recognise and continue to support the central place of creative activity within this landmark building. The Arts Council is leading on evolving a new artistic model and programme for the dedicated arts spaces within the building. A number of the visitor attraction "exhibits" have been commissioned and it is expected these will be placed within the gallery as originally intended.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Energy Provision

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of UK energy was generated from *(a)* nuclear, *(b)* oil, *(c)* gas, *(d)* coal and *(e)* renewables sources in each of the past 30 years. [68028]

Malcolm Wicks: Data over a 30 year period are only available in terms of fuel used for electricity generation. Percentages calculated from the published data are as follows:

Percentages of total fuel input for electricity generation

	Nuclear	*Oil*	*Natural gas*	*Coal*	*Renewable sources*	*Other fuels*[1]
1976	14.3	16.3	2.4	66.4	0.6	?
1977	15.3	16.4	1.8	65.9	0.5	?
1978	14.3	17.7	1.2	66.1	0.5	0.2
1979	14.1	15.7	0.7	68.8	0.5	0.2
1980	14.3	11.0	0.6	73.4	0.5	0.2
1981	15.4	8.3	0.3	75.2	0.6	0.2
1982	18.0	10.1	0.3	70.9	0.6	0.2
1983	20.3	7.7	0.3	71.1	0.6	?
1984	21.0	33.0	0.6	44.9	0.6	?
1985	23.1	15.9	0.8	59.8	0.5	?
1986	21.9	9.2	0.3	68.0	0.6	?
1987[2]	20.5	7.3	0.3	71.4	0.5	?
1987[2]	19.4	8.5	1.2	69.4	0.5	1.0
1988	21.9	9.3	1.3	65.9	0.6	1.0
1989	23.6	9.4	0.7	64.6	0.5	1.2
1990	21.3	11.0	0.7	65.3	0.9	0.8
1991	22.7	9.8	0.7	65.0	0.8	0.9
1992	24.1	10.5	2.0	61.3	1.0	1.0
1993	28.6	7.7	9.3	52.5	1.1	0.7
1994	28.6	5.6	13.6	50.1	1.4	0.6
1995	27.5	5.4	17.2	47.0	1.3	1.5
1996	27.9	4.9	21.8	42.3	1.2	1.9
1997	28.6	2.6	28.3	36.9	1.6	2.0
1998	28.9	2.1	28.4	36.9	1.8	2.0
1999	27.9	1.9	34.0	32.0	2.2	2.0
2000	24.2	1.9	34.4	35.3	2.3	1.9
2001	24.7	1.7	32.0	37.6	2.4	1.5
2002	24.2	1.6	34.2	35.7	2.8	1.6
2003	23.2	1.4	32.3	37.7	3.0	2.5
2004	21.4	1.3	34.4	37.0	3.7	2.1
2005[3]	21.5	1.7	31.9	37.9	4.3	2.6

[1] Other fuels include coke and breeze, coke oven gas, blast furnace gas and waste products from chemical processes and non-biodegradable wastes.
[2] Data for all generating companies are only available from 1987 onwards, and figures for 1987 to 1989 contain a high degree of estimation. Before 1987 the data are for major power producers, transport undertakings and industrial hydro and nuclear stations only.
[3] 2005 data are provisional.
Source:
Calculated from data published in tables 5.1.1 and 7.1.1 of the internet version of the Digest of United Kingdom Energy Statistics 2005.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what quantity of *(a)* carbon dioxide and *(b)* other emissions were generated by (i) nuclear, (ii) oil, (iii) gas, (iv) coal and (v) renewables generation in each of the past 30 years. [68033]

Malcolm Wicks: Data on carbon and other emissions from electricity generated by major power producers from coal, oil and gas since 1970 are shown in the table. The data have been obtained from the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory. There is no information available on emissions from nuclear or renewable electricity generation.

Thousand tonnes of pollutant

	Carbon			*Carbon monoxide*			*Nitrogen oxide*		
Fuel	*Coal*	*Oil*	*Gas*	*Coal*	*Oil*	*Gas*	*Coal*	*Oil*	*Gas*
1970	47238	11254	87	126	15	0	690	122	0
1971	44254	13143	381	102	18	0	650	145	1
1972	40391	16592	913	88	22	0	594	179	3
1973	46497	14823	413	98	20	0	684	163	1
1974	40587	15473	1428	86	21	1	597	171	5
1975	45137	11646	1244	94	16	0	664	129	4
1976	47073	9129	928	98	13	0	693	101	3
1977	48404	9509	635	101	13	0	712	104	2
1978	48767	10168	367	102	14	0	718	112	1
1979	53728	9779	233	112	13	0	791	108	1
1980	54194	5717	80	113	8	0	797	64	0
1981	52776	4295	0	110	6	0	111	48	0
1982	48542	5698	122	101	8	0	714	63	1
1983	49351	3429	247	103	5	0	726	38	1
1984	32316	17612	356	68	24	0	476	196	1
1985	44737	8490	183	93	12	0	658	95	1
1986	50009	4972	2	105	7	0	736	56	0
1987	52141	3962	2	109	6	0	767	44	0
1988	49895	4534	2	104	6	0	734	51	0
1989	48787	4686	3	102	7	0	720	47	0
1990	49950	5643	4	104	8	0	717	58	0
1991	50186	5103	10	104	7	0	631	45	0
1992	46899	4389	715	97	7	4	612	37	12
1993	39045	3723	3980	81	6	10	492	45	19
1994	36889	2803	5661	86	5	12	449	38	23
1995	34728	2720	7052	84	4	13	424	28	26
1996	32674	2473	9259	80	4	14	373	26	31
1997	27870	1023	11555	31	1	12	289	11	46
1998	28708	750	12092	47	1	10	282	9	49
1999	23990	776	14428	39	1	11	239	10	50
2000	26996	852	14388	45	1	15	269	9	48
2001	30142	865	14002	49	2	10	298	10	42
2002	28410	688	14744	47	1	10	279	8	43
2003	31245	693	14406	50	1	11	315	8	39
2004	30091	935	15360	49	2	12	288	13	41

Note:
In the table, "coal" includes coke; "oil" covers gas oil, fuel oil and orimulsion; "gas" includes natural gas, sour gas and other petroleum gases.
Source:
National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory

Thousand tonnes of pollutant

	Sulphur dioxide			*Volatile organic compounds*			*Particulate matter (PM10)*		
Fuel	*Coal*	*Oil*	*Gas*	*Coal*	*Oil*	*Gas*	*Coal*	*Oil*	*Gas*
1970	2257	662	0	6	1	0	66	3	0
1971	2122	819	0	6	1	0	61	3	0
1972	1939	1055	0	5	2	0	56	4	0
1973	2190	970	0	6	1	0	64	4	0
1974	1911	1020	0	5	2	1	56	4	0
1975	2126	820	0	6	1	0	62	3	0
1976	2217	599	0	6	1	0	65	2	0
1977	2280	592	0	6	1	0	67	2	0
1978	2297	646	0	6	1	0	67	2	0
1979	2615	632	0	7	1	0	74	2	0
1980	2638	374	0	7	1	0	75	1	0
1981	2569	283	0	7	0	0	73	1	0
1982	2408	344	0	6	1	0	67	1	0
1983	2450	184	0	6	0	0	68	1	0
1984	1624	968	0	4	2	0	44	4	0
1985	2163	467	0	6	1	0	62	2	0
1986	2450	276	0	6	0	0	69	1	0
1987	2587	247	0	7	0	0	72	1	0

Thousand tonnes of pollutant

	Sulphur dioxide			*Volatile organic compounds*			*Particulate matter (PM10)*		
Fuel	*Coal*	*Oil*	*Gas*	*Coal*	*Oil*	*Gas*	*Coal*	*Oil*	*Gas*
1988	2488	244	0	6	0	0	69	1	0
1989	2395	249	0	6	0	0	67	1	0
1990	2424	304	0	6	1	0	69	1	0
1991	2313	222	0	6	1	0	68	1	0
1992	2207	196	30	6	0	0	64	1	0
1993	1830	249	3	5	0	1	53	1	0
1994	1549	202	4	5	0	1	47	1	1
1995	1407	174	3	5	0	2	36	1	1
1996	1141	167	5	5	0	3	33	1	1
1997	953	39	8	3	0	2	20	2	10
1998	1016	34	3	1	0	3	22	1	0
1999	720	32	2	1	0	2	17	1	0
2000	772	29	1	1	0	4	20	1	0
2001	699	23	0	1	0	3	15	1	1
2002	643	17	2	1	0	5	7	0	1
2003	644	16	1	1	0	3	6	0	1
2004	479	14	1	1	0	3	7	0	1

Note:
In the table, "coal" includes coke; "oil" covers gas oil, fuel oil and orimulsion; "gas" includes natural gas, sour gas and other petroleum gases.
Source:
National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory

Energy Review

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made as part of the Energy Review of the project to construct a new nuclear power plant in Finland, with particular reference to *(a)* the financial commitment of the state in the project and *(b)* the time taken to construct the station compared to the construction schedule. [68471]

Malcolm Wicks: As part of an assessment of a range of generating technologies, the Energy Review is taking note of experience from other countries.

This includes the example of new nuclear build in Finland, and the costs and time scales involved in the project.

Non-fossil Fuel Obligation Fund

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on what date his Department *(a)* indicated its agreement to HM Treasury that the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation Fund constituted hereditary revenues of the Crown and *(b)* discovered that the fund had been conclusively so determined by HM Treasury; by what means and by whom the Treasury's determination was communicated to his Department; and if he will place copies of all relevant communications in the Library. [67596]

Malcolm Wicks: The DTI and HM Treasury agreed in October 2004 that the element of the Non Fossil Fuel Obligation (NFFO) surplus, representing the profit made by the Non Fossil Purchasing Agency because it is able to auction electricity (together with the associated Renewable Obligation Certificates) for more than it pays for the electricity under the NFFO contracts, should be paid into the Consolidated Fund after receiving legal advice that the monies are hereditary revenues of the Crown.

I am withholding the legal advice requested, as it is confidential and subject to legal professional privilege. There is a strong public interest in Government Departments receiving high quality legal advice to ensure the effective conduct of business, that advice needs to be given in confidence and with a full appreciation of the facts.

Nuclear Power Stations

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list serious breaches of safety procedures in each nuclear power station in each of the past 30 years. [67820]

Malcolm Wicks: The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) publishes quarterly statements for incidents at nuclear installations, which meet ministerial reporting criteria. Quarterly statements of nuclear incidents at nuclear installations from 1 October 2000 are available on the HSE website at: http://www.hse.gov.uk/nuclear/quarterly-stat/index.htm

Hard copies of quarterly statements from 1 April 1977, when ministerial reporting arrangements began, and September 2000 have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Arlene Pearson

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when Mr. Gerry Keenan of the Northern Ireland Social Security Agency will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Upper Bann regarding Arlene Pearson. [68984]

Mr. Hanson: Mr. Keenan replied to the hon. Gentleman's letter on 5 May 2006.

Child Support Agency

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 315W, on the Child Support Agency, what progress has been made in converting all old scheme cases in Northern Ireland to the new system. [69234]

Mr. Hanson: Since 3 March 2003, 17,181 cases previously assessed under child support old rules have been reassessed as new rules cases as a direct result of their link to a new scheme application.

On 9 February 2006 the Great Britain agency's Operational Improvement Plan was announced in Parliament. The Northern Ireland Child Support Agency is now considering its ways of working in light of these proposals. Ministers have considered the findings of the work carried out by the chief executive of the Great Britain agency and have concluded that they should continue to keep the conversion decision under review.

In the meantime, the work to redesign future policy and delivery arrangements for child support has begun. Sir David Henshaw will lead this work and he will deliver his findings to my hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions this summer.

Home Ownership

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many homes were purchased in Northern Ireland through the co-ownership scheme in each of the last three years. [69269]

Mr. Hanson: The information is as follows:

Financial year	*Number of co-ownership purchases*
2003-04	463
2004-05	502
2005-06	504

Housing Executive

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people are employed by *(a)* housing associations and *(b)* the Housing Executive in Northern Ireland. [69187]

Mr. Hanson: The number of staff employed is as follows:

(a) Housing Associations[1]—1,910;

(b) Northern Ireland Housing Executive[2]—3,437

[1] Excludes staff on career break, seconded out or employed through an agency

[2] Excludes temporary, casual and agency staff

Post-primary Education

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland why the ongoing consultation on changes to post-primary education in Northern Ireland is not listed on the Northern Ireland Office website list of current consultations. [46780]

Mr. Hain: I am sorry for the delay in replying, this was due to an administrative error.

A central website exists on which NI Departments register all public consultations past and present. Details of all public consultations are not therefore routinely published on the NIO website. Details of the consultations on changes to post-primary education in Northern Ireland were published on the Department of Education website.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Algeria

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Algeria about the use of torture. [68194]

Dr. Howells: During his visit to Algeria in February, my right hon. Friend the then Foreign Secretary (Jack Straw) discussed regional and bilateral issues with the Algerian Government. In the context of deportation with assurances, the discussions included assurances against ill-treatment.

Biological and Toxin Weapons

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the EU action plan on biological and toxin weapons. [68632]

Dr. Howells: The EU adopted an Action Plan on biological and toxin weapons on 27 February 2006 in parallel with, and to complement, a Joint Action on the same issue. The Action Plan sets out all EU member states' agreement to submit annual Confidence Building Measures (CBM) returns under the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. This is a step towards revitalising this mechanism and will enable the EU to have a firmer base for encouraging other States Party to submit annual CBM returns. The Action Plan also sets out member states' agreement to consider and/or update as appropriate the expertise or use of laboratories that they can volunteer to the United Nations Secretary-General, should he be called upon to undertake an investigation into the alleged use of biological weapons.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will list the countries her Department has classified as having an offensive biological warfare capability in the last 30 years, indicating in each case whether that capability is assessed to be *(a)* current, *(b)* dormant and *(c)* destroyed; and whether, in each case, the country in question is a signatory to the Biological Weapons Convention 1972. [69451]

Dr. Howells: The dual-use nature of virtually all the know-how, materials and equipment used in biology means that most industrialised countries have such a capability.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment she has made of the capacity of Russia to produce biological weapons; and what stores of such weapons she assesses Russia holds, with particular reference to *(a)* smallpox and *(b)* genetically modified smallpox. [69452]

Dr. Howells: The Government keep under review the potential military capability of other States, but it is not our practice to divulge the details.

Colombia

Mr. Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Colombian government regarding its human rights record. [68219]

Dr. Howells: Through our Embassy in Bogota and in contacts with visiting Colombian officials, we make frequent representations to the Colombian government over human rights issues. We also regularly raise specific cases of concern with them. My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, most recently did so with Vice President Santos on 28 November 2005, and our Embassy most recently did so in the week beginning 24 April. Human rights form a significant strand of our policy towards Colombia. We consistently urge the Colombian government to implement recommendations arising from successive annual reports of the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights and have offered to help them to do so.

Iran (Nuclear Programme)

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when she first learnt of the Iranian Government's claim that it had successfully enriched a certain quantity of uranium to 3.6 per cent.; and if she will make a statement. [69168]

Dr. Howells: This claim was first made by Gholamreza Aghazadeh, the head of the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran on 11 April. He said that Iran had

'started enriching uranium to the 3.5 per cent. level, and thus has passed the stage of pilot production'.

President Ahmadinejad repeated the claim later the same day.

In his 28 April report, the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Dr. Mohammed El-Baradei, said that

'on 18 April the Agency took samples at the Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant (in Natanz), the results of which tend to confirm as of that date the enrichment level declared by Iran'.

We understand that the Agency is still investigating. On 2 May, Mr. Aghazadeh said that the highest level to which Iran had enriched was 4.8 per cent.

As my right hon. Friend the then Foreign Secretary (Mr. Straw) has said, Iran's continuation of enrichment-related activities, contrary to repeated requests by the IAEA Board and the United Nations Security Council, is of serious concern. The Security Council is presently discussing next steps.

Iraq (Nuclear Contamination)

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether she has received representations regarding the risk of nuclear contamination affecting civilians in Iraq; and if she will make a statement. [69165]

Dr. Howells: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) on 14 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 327-28W. I have received no recent representations on the issues.

Middle East

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assistance the UK has provided to Israel to obtain a nuclear weapon; and if he will make a statement. [68592]

Dr. Howells: There are a large number of publications available on the history of Israel's nuclear programme. The Government are content that at no time has the United Kingdom breached its international obligations regarding the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* the United States and *(b)* other states on a Middle East nuclear weapons free zone. [68515]

Dr. Howells: The UK continues to support the principle of establishing a Middle East nuclear weapon free zone. Concerns surrounding Iran's nuclear programme have renewed international interest in the establishment of such a zone and, in the context of wider regional security, the issue has formed part of our regular discussions with many countries, including the other permanent members of the UN Security Council. The UK has also raised this issue in numerous high-level bilateral contacts in the run-up to last year's Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

Mockbul Ali

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in what capacity Mr. Mockbul Ali is employed to advise the Foreign Office; what level of security clearance he has; and what vetting procedures were undertaken before he was offered employment. [69286]

Dr. Howells: It is not Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) policy to comment publicly on named civil servants. The level of security clearance each member of the FCO holds is commensurate with the work the officer carries out. Normal vetting procedures are undertaken before employment is offered.

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what advice her Department sought from *(a)* the Cabinet Secretary and *(b)* other senior civil servants on the employment of Mr. Mockbul Ali following his employment by the Labour Party. [69289]

Dr. Howells: It is not Foreign and Commonwealth Office policy to comment publicly on the employment contracts for individual members of staff, nor on advice sought or not sought before offering a member of staff employment. Staff are recruited according to strict guidelines under free and fair, open competitions.

Morocco

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Morocco about the treatment of migrants. [68197]

Dr. Howells: The UK regularly holds discussions at ministerial and official level with the Government of Morocco about migration. For instance, I discussed migration with Taib Fassi Fihri, the Moroccan Minister Delegate to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation during our meeting on 30 March 2006.

The UK Presidency established a framework of action by the EU to better manage migration from Africa and the Mediterranean, including addressing the treatment of migrants. Within that framework, on 10-11 July Morocco will host a regional conference on migration and development, addressing migration flows within countries on the West Africa migratory route. The UK is playing an active role in the preparations for the conference.

Rendition

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 88W, on rendition, whether a state is required to make a separate request for permission for each individual rendition flight through UK airspace or using UK airbases. [68684]

Dr. Howells: Yes. We would expect a state to seek permission for each individual rendition flight through UK airspace and UK airbases, including Overseas Territories. We would decide whether or not to grant permission taking into account all the circumstances. We would not assist in any case if to do so would put us in breach of UK law and our international obligations.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 20 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 86W, on Rendition, if he will list the international obligations with which a request for permission to make a rendition flight must accord if the UK is to grant permission. [68686]

Dr. Howells: The relevant international obligations would depend on the details of each request.

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1184W, on rendition allegations (inquiries), whether Mohammed Rashid has been sentenced. [68300]

Dr. Howells: Mohammed Rashid was sentenced on 24 March 2006 for his part in the bombing of a Pan Am aircraft in 1982. He will remain in prison in the United States until 20 March 2013 and pay restitution to the parents of the teenager killed in the bombing. We learned of the sentence just after publication of my written reply to my hon. Friend on 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1183-84 W.

Small Arms

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials from his Department will be attending the United Nations conference to review progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects taking place in New York from 26 June to 7 July 2006. [67838]

Dr. Howells: UK Ministerial participation at the Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects is currently under consideration. John Duncan, our Ambassador to the UN Conference on Disarmament will lead the team of officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Ministry of Defence and the Department for International Development.

West Bank/Gaza (UK Personnel)

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations she has received regarding the safety of UK personnel operating in the West Bank and Gaza. [69167]

Dr. Howells: We take the safety of UK personnel working in the West Bank and Gaza and visiting British nationals very seriously.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Milton Keynes, South-West (Dr. Starkey) on 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 339-40W. Since then, we have not received any further representations.

Western Sahara

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of oil exploration offshore of Western Sahara on the stability of the region. [68173]

Dr. Howells: There has been limited exploration for oil off the coast of Western Sahara. The Government believe the exploration that has taken place has not affected regional stability.

PRIME MINISTER

Mortgage

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister whether he has made a declaration to the Cabinet Secretary in respect of his mortgage repayments. [68476]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Ribble Valley (Mr. Evans) on 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1674W.

Suicide Bombings (Israel)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions he has had with Arab states about suicide bombings in Israel; what response he has received; and if he will make a statement. [67937]

The Prime Minister: I have regular discussions with leaders of Arab states on a wide range issues, including Israel. My right hon. Friend the then Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Straw) and my hon. Friend the Minister for the Middle East (Dr. Howells) have also raised these matters with leaders of Arab states. Most recently my right hon. Friend the then Foreign Secretary discussed the suicide bombing in Tel Aviv on 17 April in a meeting with the Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Saud al Faisal, during his visit to Saudi Arabia last month.

HEALTH

Choose and Book System

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the latest estimates are for the cost of setting up the *(a)* computer software, *(b)* computer hardware, *(c)* staff, *(d)* other administrative infrastructure and *(e)* other elements of the new Choose and Book system for making hospital appointments. [65774]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* The choose and book computer system was delivered on time and to budget on 2 July 2004. The costs incurred to date by the Department's NHS Connecting for Health agency for software delivery and service changes amount to £26.4 million on a total contract cost of £64.5 million over five years. The costs of hardware, and the prime contractor's staff costs in application development, are included in this amount. The staff and other administrative infrastructure costs of NHS Connecting for Health's choose and book programme team could only be separately identified within those of the agency as a whole at disproportionate cost.

The choose and book system is one of many systems that sends messages through the care record spine. However, the cost of spine services associated with choose and book messaging is not separately identified from that for other spine messages, and to do so would incur disproportionate cost.

Dentistry

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was allocated to Morecambe Bay primary care trust for dentistry services in each year since 1997. [68769]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The main element of national health service dental services are the primary dental care services provided by dentists working within the general dental service (GDS), or personal dental service (PDS) pilots. Until April 2006, when primary care trusts (PCTs) became responsible for commissioning all primary dental care services, the GDS was a non- discretionary service funded from a national budget. Expenditure was mainly determined by the volume of NHS work that dentists chose to undertake. Local budget allocations were not assigned to individual PCTs.

The level of expenditure on hospital and community dental services is decided at local level by PCTs. The tables show the most readily available core data on expenditure on GDS and PDS services for the Morecambe Bay PCT. The difference between gross and net expenditure is the contribution to costs from dental charges collected directly from patients. As the notes explain, this data does not capture certain elements of GDS and PDS expenditure, and reliable local PDS data based on practice level details is only available from the financial year 2004-05. Full data for 2005-06 is not yet available.

Core GDS and PDS dental payments[1, 2, 3, 4]

£ million

	1997-98	*1998-99*	*1999-2000*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Gross GDS	8.025	8.372	8.622	8.983	9.642	9.767	9.799	9.260
Net GDS	5.182	5.356	5.460	5.667	6.081	6.180	6.331	6.140
Gross PDS	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.564

Core GDS and PDS dental payments[1, 2, 3, 4]

£ million

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Net PDS	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.378
Gross GDS and PDS	8.025	8.372	8.622	8.983	9.642	9.767	9.799	10.824
Net GDS and PDS	5.182	5.356	5.460	5.667	6.081	6.180	6.331	7.519

Notes:

1. Gross GDS payments include adult fees, including item of service and continuing care payments, child fees, including item of service and capitation payments, commitment payments and point of treatment check payment training (in 2001 only), seniority payments, maternity/paternity/adoptive leave payments, long term sick leave payments, continuing professional development allowances including travel hours, reimbursement of business rates, vocational training grants and clinical audit payments. The following costs are excluded from this data: employer's superannuation costs, vocational trainee salaries and national insurance contribution costs, clinical audit convenors, clinical audit secretarial support costs and travel expenses, and costs associated with any salaried general dental practitioners and emergency dental services.
2. PDS payment data is included for 2004-05 only and relates to baseline payments or the agreed regular monthly payments made to PDS practices. Reliable PDS data at practice level are not available prior to 2004-05. The data cannot identify the cost of any PDS services that are directly managed by local NHS trusts, such as certain dental access centres.
3. Payments are assigned to areas on the basis of practice postcode data.
4. Net payments represent the balance of payments due after taking account of NHS dental charge income collected from patients by dental practices.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what basis her Department calculates the amount of funding allocated to primary care trusts each year for dentistry services. [68770]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Under the new dental service framework which took effect on 1 April 2006, primary care trusts (PCTs) received revolved budgets to support the commissioning of local primary dental services. These services were previously provided as general dental services (GDS), for which expenditure was demand-led, that is depending on the volume of national health service work that dentists chose to do, and personal dental services (PDS) pilots.

Allocations for 2006-07 were based on the costs of all GDS and PDS services delivered between October 2004 and September 2005 (the most recently available data for each area), adjusted where necessary to reflect the full year costs of newly opened contracts, together with provision for approved growth plans for local schemes proposed by PCTs. Appropriate upratings to fully reflect annual earnings adjustments as recommended by the doctors and dentists review body were also considered.

These allocations reflected the commitment that all dentists previously providing NHS services were entitled to maintain their previous level of earnings in return for an agreed level of NHS commitment. This was intended to provide a smooth transition to the new contract arrangements and to provide a stable base for the future development of dental services.

PCTs may direct additional funding to dentistry from their general NHS resources if they judge this to be an appropriate local priority.

Eye Tests

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to review the eye examination sight test fee payable by the NHS to registered opticians for *(a)* under-16s, *(b)* those in full time education, *(c)* those on income support, *(d)* those over 60 and *(e)* others. [67615]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 4 May 2006]:* Negotiations on the sight test fee for 2006-07 are under way.

Hospital Transport

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what obligations her Department places on *(a)* acute hospital trusts, *(b)* GP practices, *(c)* primary care trusts and *(d)* strategic health authorities to ensure that patients are able to access transport from their home to NHS appointments; and how much was spent by the NHS on support for such transport in the last year for which figures are available. [68237]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 4 May 2006]:* The publication "Ambulance and other patient transport services: Operation, use and performance standards" provides guidance on the eligibility criteria for patient transport services (PTS) and is available in the Library. This document states that medical need for non-emergency patient transport must be determined by a doctor, dentist or midwife and will depend upon the medical condition of the individual patient, the availability of private or public transport and distance to be travelled. The principle which should apply is that each patient should be able to reach hospital in a reasonable time and in reasonable comfort, without detriment to their medical condition.

Primary care trusts (PCTs) are responsible for ensuring that there is provision of ambulance services, which could include patient transport services, to such extent as they consider necessary to meet all reasonable requirements. Therefore, it is for the local national health service to decide who provides patient transport services for eligible patients in their area. PCTs should apply the principles outlined in the aforementioned publication to consider each case on its merits or to develop local criteria for patient transport services use. The White Paper "Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services" signals our intent to broaden eligibility to patients referred for treatment in and out of hospital settings and during 2006-07 we will update guidance on eligibility for PTS to reflect the changes outlined in the White Paper.

PCTs are responsible for ensuring that patients who travel to receive their traditional hospital care receive reimbursement of reasonable travel expenses where the patient can prove they require financial assistance. "Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services" also signals our intent to extend

eligibility for the hospital travel costs scheme (HTCS) to include people who are referred by a health care professional for treatment in a primary care setting, providing that they meet the existing low-income criteria.

For 2004-05, NHS ambulance trust expenditure on non-emergency PTS was approximately £228 million. Itemised data on expenditure by other NHS organisations on non-emergency patient transport is not available centrally. Information on HTCS expenditure is not collected centrally.

Infant Formula

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had on the European Union Directive on infant formula and follow-on formula. [67414]

Caroline Flint: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has represented the views of the United Kingdom during discussions within the European Commission's infant formula working group as it has policy responsibility for the directive. The FSA has regularly consulted and updated the Department about progress and Ministers have been kept informed. The draft revised directive will be submitted to the standing committee on the food chain and animal health for further discussion and a possible vote in June. If the committee adopts the draft directive, it will become European Union law and will subsequently be implemented in UK legislation.

Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will ensure that the views of local people are taken into account when she makes her decision about the new primary care trust boundaries within the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority area. [68931]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In managing the local consultation on primary care trust (PCT) reconfiguration in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, the strategic health authority (SHA) consulted a wide range of stakeholders in the region. This included local Members of Parliament, national health service staff, NHS organisations, local clinical committees, voluntary organisations and trade unions.

The consultation included 80 stakeholder meetings, of which 16 were open to the public, and were attended by over 900 people. The SHA received 539 letters, 1,609 completed questionnaires and 10,934 petition signatures in response to the consultation.

It was made explicitly clear to all SHAs that when preparing the summary of consultation responses, all views generated as a result of the consultation had to be taken into account.

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will ensure that the formal integration of adult social care into the NHS primary care trust structure in Peterborough is taken into account when deciding on the new primary care trust boundaries within the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire strategic health authority area. [68927]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In managing the local consultation on primary care trust (PCT) reconfiguration in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, the strategic health authority (SHA) consulted a wide range of stakeholders in the region including those in social care.

In making decisions about the optimum configuration of PCTs to recommend, the SHA will have considered the eight 'Commissioning a Patient-Led NHS' criteria which include improving coordination with social services through greater congruence of PCT and local Government boundaries.

Primary Care Trusts (Portsmouth)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses and *(c)* other staff were employed in each primary care trust covering Portsmouth in each of the last three years; what the planned figures are for (i) 2006-07 and (ii) the next three financial years; and if she will make a statement. [67374]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is shown in the table.

All national health service staff for selected organisations by main staff group, as at 30 September 2003-05

Number (headcount)

	2003	*2004*	*2005*
Portsmouth City Teaching Primary Care Trust	2,084	2,076	2,222
All doctors[1]	159	157	159
Health and community health service doctors[1]	46	43	40
All general medical practitioners[2]	113	114	119
Nurses	496	457	474
Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	403	379	397
General practitioner (GP) practice nurses	93	78	77
Other NHS staff			
Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff	298	331	355
Support to clinical staff	524	508	563

All national health service staff for selected organisations by main staff group, as at 30 September 2003-05

Number (headcount)

	2003	2004	2005
NHS infrastructure support	291	285	339
Practice staff other than practice nurses[3]	316	338	332

[1] Excludes medical hospital practitioners and medical clinical assistants, most of whom are also GPs working part time in hospitals.
[2] General medical practitioners includes contracted GPs, general medical service others, personal medical service others, GP registrars and GP retainers.
[3] Practice staff other than practice nurses includes direct patient care, administrative and clerical and other.
Sources:
1.
The Information Centre for health and social care, non-medical work force census
2. The Information Centre for health and social care, medical and dental work force census
3. The Information Centre for health and social care, general and personal medical services statistics

It is the responsibility of PCTs and strategic health authorities to analyse their local situation and develop plans, in liaison with their local NHS trusts and primary care providers, to deliver high quality NHS services and take action to recruit the appropriate staff required to deliver these services.

WALES

Children's Services

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many nursery and crèche places are provided for people working in his Department; what charges are made for the provision of such services; and what other facilities are provided for the children of employees of his Department. [67368]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office is a small organisation, with 54 staff based in Cardiff and London. It draws its staff from other bodies, namely the National Assembly for Wales and Department of Constitutional Affairs. While it is not practical for the Wales Office to provide its own on-site crèche or nursery places, staff can access subsidised childcare places or childcare vouchers through their employing bodies.

These schemes support parents' own choices about what child care they want for their child.

Corporate Hospitality

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales on how many occasions he has accepted corporate hospitality in the last 12 months. [67521]

Mr. Hain: Paragraph 5.28 of the Ministerial Code sets out the rules on the registration of hospitality.

Equal Pay

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men are employed in the Department; what the average pay was for (i) women and (ii) men in the Department in (A) 1997 and (B) 2006; what women's average pay is as a percentage of men's average pay; and how many (1) women and (2) men the Department employed in each of the last five years, broken down by grade. [67783]

Mr. Hain: Staff serving in the Wales Office are either on loan from the National Assembly for Wales or employed by the Department for Constitutional Affairs. Their pay is set by their employing bodies rather than by the Wales Office. Information on staff pay by gender is not avnilable, and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The Wales Office Departmental Report 2005 (CM6545) provides data on staff including staff numbers, ethnic groups, grades and gender. A copy of the report can be obtained from the Library of the House.

Home Working

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many people in his Department have been enabled to work from home in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [67994]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office is committed to improving work/life balance. It values diversity and accommodates different work patterns including home working.

Over the past three years a number of staff have followed a flexible working pattern, working the occasional day or half day at home, either to suit personal circumstances or to assist in the completion of a specific task. Information on the number of staff that have worked form home in the last three years is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

One member of Wales Office staff has a more formal arrangement for home working.

Occupational Pensions

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with Ministers in the Welsh Assembly Government on the number of pensioners in Wales potentially affected by the recommendations of the Parliamentary Ombudsman on occupational pensions. [68051]

Mr. Hain: Responsibility for occupational pensions lies with the UK Government and information is collected at UK level only.

On this basis, an estimated 125,000 people in the UK are covered by the Ombudsman's recommendations on occupational pensions.

Wind Farms

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has received on the environmental impact of the construction and operation of the Scarweather Sands offshore wind farm on breeding harbour porpoises; what discussions his Department has had with the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on this subject; and if he will make a statement. [67601]

Mr. Hain: I have had no such representations. I refer the hon. Lady to the answer the Under-Secretary of State for Wales, my hon. Friend the Member for Carmarthen, West and South Pembrokeshire (Nick Ainger) gave to her on 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1630W.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum/Immigration

Mr. Tom Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum applicants whose applications have been rejected were detained pending removal from the UK but subsequently released before removal in the last three years for which figures are available. [67891]

Mr. McNulty: The exact information requested is not available; it would only be available by examination of individual case files. Period statistics covering those leaving from detention during July to September 2005 have been published. This information has been broken down by the reasons for leaving detention, which includes removed from the UK, granted leave to enter/remain, granted temporary admission/release, bailed and other. Statistics on the total number of persons leaving detention during this period are published in the Quarterly Asylum bulletin. It is not possible to say which stage of the asylum process people are at when they are detained. Published editions of this bulletin and other information on immigration and asylum are available on the Home Office's Research Development and Statistics website at:http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum applicants whose applications and subsequent appeal rights have been exhausted have fresh applications being considered by his Department. [68125]

Mr. McNulty: We are progressing the cases of approximately 6,000 failed asylum seekers who have submitted further representations which they claim amount to a fresh asylum application, following exhaustion of all their appeal rights. This information is based on internal management information and as such is not published within official statistics.

Mr. Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* exceptional leave to remain, *(b)* asylum and *(c)* indefinite leave to remain applications under consideration by his Department are the subject of involvement by hon. Members. [68126]

Mr. McNulty: Statistics are not routinely recorded on the numbers of each type of application to the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) which are under consideration and which are also the subject of inquiries by right hon. and hon. Members.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of families with children have absconded while awaiting removal following the failure of their asylum applications in each of the last five years. [68224]

Mr. McNulty: The number of families with children that have absconded while awaiting removal following the failure of their asylum applications is not readily available. This information could be obtained by examination of individual case files only at disproportionate cost.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of families with children have been detained prior to removal following failed asylum applications over the last five years. [68225]

Mr. McNulty: The data on the number of families with children that have been detained prior to removal following failed asylum applications over the last five years is not readily available. This information could be obtained by examination of individual case files only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many EU citizens settled in the UK in *(a)* 2005 and *(b)* 2004. [67694]

Mr. McNulty: Statistics on EU nationals issued residence documentation showing settled status in 2004 were published in table 4.3 of the Command Paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2004". This publication is available from the Libraries of the House and from the Home Office website http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html2005 data are due to be published in August. EU nationals are not obliged to seek documentation in order to reside lawfully in the United Kingdom; the figures relate to those who chose to do so and do not represent the total number of EU nationals remaining permanently in the UK.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions he has had with EU counterparts in controlling illegal immigration into the EU; and if he will make a statement. [67307]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* The Home Secretary regularly discusses illegal immigration with his EU counterparts. Since January 2005, he has attended numerous meetings, specifically eight EU Justice and Home Affairs Councils at which this issue has been raised. In addition, he has also had numerous bilateral meetings with his EU counterparts, in smaller groups, and non EU counterparts in the margins of these meetings and in visits they have made to the UK at which discussion of illegal immigration has played a prominent part. More particularly during the UK Presidency in the second half of 2005, he ensured that specific EU attention was given to illegal immigration including organised immigration crime. An EU action plan on human trafficking was agreed as well as a new approach to migration, both legal and illegal, with

partner countries and regions, in particular Africa, which the European Council endorsed. Implementation of both of these programmes of work has begun and the UK is playing its full part in ensuring the EU delivers against the commitments made. The presidency also focused on measures to strengthen the EU's borders and, as part of work to strengthen the security of EU travel documents, reached intergovernmental agreement on non-binding common minimum security standards and issuing procedures in ID cards.

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many illegal immigrants are thought to be in the UK. [67460]

Mr. McNulty: No government has ever been able to produce an accurate figure for the number of people who are in the country illegally. By its very nature it is impossible to quantify accurately, and that remains the case. Although it is impossible to determine accurately how many people are in the UK illegally, the Home Office published a report which included an estimate of the size of the illegal migrant population in the UK in 2001. A copy of the RDS On-line report 29/05 Sizing the unauthorised (illegal) migrant population in the United Kingdom in 2001 can be found at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/notes/june_summaries.html#rdsolr2905.

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people living in the UK are seeking permission to remain because they do not have up to date paperwork granting them residence. [67461]

Mr. McNulty: IND is currently meeting its service standards for in-country applications for leave to remain. These are shown on the IND website. We do not keep records of individual reasons for applications.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what definition of audited accounts he uses in relation to stipulations for indefinite leave to remain as a business person in the United Kingdom. [67496]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 1 May 2006]:* Under the Immigration Rules an applicant applying for indefinite leave to remain in the United Kingdom as a person established in business is required to submit audited accounts. For operational purposes these are defined as business accounts that have been officially inspected by an independent qualified accountant.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information is given to spouse applicants for entry into the UK on *(a)* their legal rights and *(b)* their entitlement to recourse to public funds. [67903]

Mr. McNulty: Information about the requirements for leave to enter as a spouse is available on the IND and UK visas websites and from entry clearance posts abroad. No information is provided to applicants about their legal rights in the UK. Applicants granted leave to enter on the basis of marriage are required to demonstrate that they are able to maintain and accommodate themselves without recourse to public funds and will be given a visa stating that they have no recourse to public funds. They will only be entitled to access public funds once they have been granted indefinite leave to remain.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department under what circumstances public funds are made available to support a spouse entrant to the UK within the probationary period who alleges domestic abuse or violence. [67904]

Mr. McNulty: There is provision under the Immigration Rules for a person subject to immigration control whose marriage has broken down during the probationary period due to domestic violence to apply for indefinite leave to remain. Whilst their application is pending, an applicant will not be entitled to access public funds. However, local authorities may be able to provide financial support and can assess such cases under Section 47 of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 or Section two of the Local Government Act 2000 or, if they have children, under the Children Act 1989 to determine whether they are eligible for Community Care assistance.

Sandra Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children have been detained in each UK immigration detention centre in each of the last five years; and for how long each was detained. [68079]

Mr. McNulty: This information is not available. The accompanying table shows the number of minors detained solely under Immigration Act powers who were removed or released from detention during the third quarter of 2005, broken down by length and place of detention. Period statistics covering those leaving detention during July to September 2005 have been published. Statistics on the total number of persons under 18 years of age at the time of leaving detention during this period, broken down by length of detention are published in the Quarterly Asylum bulletin. Published editions of this bulletin and other information on immigration and asylum are available on the Home Office's Research Development and Statistics website at:http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Minors recorded as being removed or released from detention (excluding Oakington) in the United Kingdom solely under Immigration Act powers, quarter three 2005, by length and place of detention[1,2]

		Of which:					
		Last detained in					
Length of detention[3,4]	*Total minors[4,5]*	*Colnbrook long term*	*Colnbrook short term*	*Dungavel*	*Port of Dover*	*Tinsley House*	*Yarl's Wood*
Seven days or less	310	?	•	•	10	45	250
Eight to 14 days	50	?	?	?	?	5	45
15 to 29 days	70	•	?	?	?	•	65
One month to less than two months	25	?	?	?	?	?	25
Two months to less than three months	5	?	?	?	?	?	5

Minors recorded as being removed or released from detention (excluding Oakington) in the United Kingdom solely under Immigration Act powers, quarter three 2005, by length and place of detention[1,2]

Length of detention[3,4]	*Total minors*[4,5]	*Colnbrook long term*	*Colnbrook short term*	*Of which: Last detained in Dungavel*	*Port of Dover*	*Tinsley House*	*Yarl's Wood*
Three months to less than four months	*	?	?	?	?	?	*
Total	455	*	*	*	10	50	390

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5, with ? = 0, * = 1 or 2, may not sum due to rounding and exclude those whose parent(s) are detained under both criminal and immigration powers.
[2] Relates to current period of sole detention only.
[3] Two months is defined as 61 days; four months is defined as 122 days.
[4] People recorded as being under 18 at the end of their period of detention. Figures are likely to overstate because applicants aged 18 or over may claim to be younger on arrival in the United Kingdom.
[5] Some detainees may be recorded more than once if, for example, they are both bailed and subsequently removed in the time period shown.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many families detained at Yarl's Wood were referred to a health visitor in *(a)* 2005 and *(b)* the first quarter of 2006. [68226]

Mr. McNulty: One family detained at Yarl's Wood was referred to a health visitor in 2005 and two families in the first quarter of 2006.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons the Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules, HC 974, has been withdrawn from the Vote Office of the House. [67265]

Mr. McNulty: The Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules, HC 974, was withdrawn in order to be replaced by HC 1016. The replacement Statement of Changes included all of the key policy changes in the previous statement, but with a couple of minor amendments. As explained in the Explanatory Memorandum, there were two main amendments that needed to be made. These were as follows:

The existing arrangement was preserved whereby applicants coming to the UK under ancestry provisions are given leave to enter for the entirety of the settlement qualifying period rather than being granted one period of two years and having to apply for a three-year extension before qualifying for settlement (as required in the first statement);

Prospective students hoping to remain in the UK as a student must obtain an entry clearance prior to entry (this requirement was inadvertently omitted from the first statement); since the statement was being re-laid, we took the opportunity to clarify the provisions for postgraduate doctors and dentist to make it clear that an applicant seeking leave to enter in this capacity need not have completed their degree in the previous 12 months if they have been granted leave in this capacity on an earlier occasion.

British Citizens

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people became British citizens in the 2005 calendar year. [67766]

Mr. McNulty: The requested information is due to be published on 23 May in the Home Office Statistical Bulletin "Persons granted British Citizenship United Kingdom, 2005". It will be available from the Libraries of the House and from the Home Office website http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Business Rates/Council Tax

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions there have been for offences in relation to the non-payment of *(a)* business rates and *(b)* council tax in each year since 1997. [56295]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

Non-payment of council tax or business rates is not a criminal offence. If the appropriate reminder notices have been sent and a debt remains unpaid, a local billing authority may apply to the magistrates court for a Liability Order which formally establishes that there is a debt. The Liability Order enables enforcement action to be taken.

The Government do not collect information on the number of taxpayers against whom billing authorities take enforcement action for non-payment of council tax or business rates.

Colnbrook and Harmondsworth Detention Centres

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action his Department has taken to ensure the adequate treatment of detainees with tuberculosis in *(a)* Colnbrook and *(b)* Harmondsworth detention centres. [67759]

Mr. McNulty: Any detainee at Colnbrook and Harmondsworth diagnosed as having a confirmed case of tuberculosis will be referred to Hillingdon hospital chest clinic for management relating to drug treatment. The detainee would then be nursed in isolation in the centre's healthcare unit for a two week period. Once this period is over, the detainee would be returned to their normal location. Regular follow up would be undertaken at Hillingdon hospital on their instructions. All removal centres liaise and work with their local health authorities who would provide any necessary advice and support in the event of a major health risk in a centre.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many detainees have gone on hunger strike in *(a)* Colnbrook and

(b) Harmondsworth detention centres since January 2005; how many are on hunger strike; and what action has been taken to address the grievances of those who are on hunger strike. [67760]

Mr. McNulty: After the evening meal on 3 May 2006, there were five detainees recorded at Colnbrook as not having eaten the meals provided for three days or more and one such detainee at Harmondsworth.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times since January 2004 have external units been deployed in (a) Colnbrook and *(b)* Harmondsworth detention centres to deal with disturbances by detainees. [67761]

Mr. McNulty: Since January 2004, no external units have been deployed at Colnbrook to deal with disturbances by detainees. External units have been deployed on one occasion at Harmondsworth since January 2004. This was on 19 July 2004 when there was a serious disturbance at the centre.

Correspondence

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Director of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will reply to the letter of 7 February 2006 from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood on behalf of Gertrude Chiduku, Home Office reference C1083301, acknowledgement reference B3690/6. [67767]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood on 3 May 2006.

Deportations

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights about the use of Memoranda of Understanding in respect of the return of deportees to certain countries. [68223]

Mr. McNulty: My right hon. Friend, the former Home Secretary, has met the High Commissioner, including a bilateral meeting on 16 February this year at which they discussed the difficulties faced in balancing the prevention of terrorist attacks with the maintenance individual human rights. They did not discuss deportation Memoranda of Understanding specifically. My right hon. Friend did discuss the matter with the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture last October. The issue was also discussed when senior officials met the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights who visited the UK in November. My right hon. Friend is, of course, also aware of the High Commissioner's statement on this subject, issued on Human Rights' day last year.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Child Support Agency

16. **Tony Lloyd:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on progress with his plans for reform of the Child Support Agency. [68283]

Mr. Plaskitt: Reform of the Child Support Agency is progressing along two tracks. The agency published its Operational Improvement Plan in February 2006 which sets out how the agency will make significant improvement to performance over the next three years. In the meantime Sir David Henshaw is developing a redesign of the child support system for the longer term and has been asked to deliver his findings to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions before the summer recess.

22. **Mr. Willis:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the latest estimate is of the backlog of cases at the Child Support Agency. [68289]

Mr. Plaskitt: As published in the Quarterly Summary of Statistics, as of March 2006 the agency has 333,000 uncleared potential applications across both the old and new child support schemes.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many absent parents in the past year the Child Support Agency has threatened with legal action involving a possible custodial sentence for non-payment of maintenance; and how many were convicted and given a custodial sentence. [65908]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is the matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many absent parents in the past year the Child Support Agency has threatened with legal action involving a possible custodial sentence for non-payment of maintenance; and how many were convicted and given a custodial sentence.

Commitment to prison or disqualification from holding a driving licence is the ultimate sanction available to the Agency for recovery of arrears of Child Support maintenance. The power to withdraw driving licences was brought into effect on 2 April 2001 (under the Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000). If the non-resident parent is found guilty of willful refusal or culpable neglect the court will decide which of the available sanctions is the most appropriate.

Prior to the Secretary of State making an application to the court, a warning letter is issued to the non-resident parent advising of the intention to apply to the courts for committal to prison or disqualification from holding or obtaining a driving licence.

During the year ending 31 March 2006 the Agency issued 1,155 warning letters to non-resident parents. Of these it was necessary to make 920 applications to court for committal or disqualification proceedings.

The information provided below relates to the number of cases for which applications were made to court for committal or disqualification from holding or obtaining a driving licence proceedings. These numbers may include multiple actions against individual non-resident parents who continually fail to pay.

Therefore, although several applications can be made in respect of individual debts the Court will incorporate these into the same hearing with one outcome.

The following table details the number of cases referred to court and the outcomes for committal and disqualification proceedings over the same period.

Committal and disqualification proceedings year ending 31 March 2006	*Cases*
Total of cases prepared for court with initial hearing date set	920
Number of suspended committal sentences	376
Number of actual committal sentences	15
Number of suspended driving licence disqualification sentences	35
Number of actual driving licence disqualification sentences	5

Notes:
1. Of the 920 cases prepared for court with an initial hearing date set, in a small number of hearings, the actual hearing date will occur after 31 March 2006.
2. The fact that the number of suspensions and actual penalties is less than half the number of referrals is explained by the number of debtors who enter into agreements to pay rather than attend court. Similarly, only a very small number of debtors actually go to prison or lose their driving licences because the courts normally suspend a sentence on condition that the defendant commits to pay.

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average application processing time was for *(a)* disability living allowance, *(b)* income support and *(c)* the Child Support Agency in the last period for which figures are available. [66849]

Mrs. McGuire: Details of the average actual processing times for disability living allowance claims are in the table.

Disability living allowance (DLA) average actual clearance times (AACT)

	March 2006	*2005-06*
DLA (normal rules) claims	33.1	34.5
DLA (special rules) claims	5.1	5.5
DLA renewals	33.0	31.5
DLA reconsiderations	31.4	29.1
DLA supervisions	50.0	43.6
DLA appeals	34.7	31.8

In March 2006, income support claims were processed in an average of 12.2 days. For the full operational year from April 2005 to March 2006 the figure was 11.3 days.

Information on processing times for child support applications can be found in the Agency's Quarterly Statistical Summary (QSS), published on 27 April 2006; a copy of which is available in the House of Commons Library.

Pensions

18. **Mr. Amess:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on his plans to reform the pension system. [68285]

Mrs. McGuire: The Government have welcomed the Pension Commissions' report and believes it has provided the right framework for delivering a long-term settlement for tomorrow's pensioners.

The key to delivering sustainable reform must be that any change promotes personal responsibility, introduces greater simplicity, and is fair, affordable and sustainable.

That is why we have taken steps to build consensus through the National Pensions Debate, engaging with all interested parties and individuals in communities across the country.

We will publish our proposals for pension reform by the end of the month.

19. **Mr. Mackay:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his response is to the Parliamentary Ombudsman's report on occupational pension funds; and if he will make a statement. [68286]

Mr. Plaskitt: I refer to my reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock (Sandra Osborne) on 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1603W.

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the basis was of his calculations of the cost of fulfilling the requirements of the recommendations of the parliamentary ombudsman's report on pension schemes. [69373]

Mr. Timms: We will publish a full, formal response to the parliamentary ombudsman's report shortly. As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State explained during the debate in this House on 16 March, the response will set out the details of our costings for implementing the measures suggested in the report.

Post Office Card Account

21. **Mr. Gray:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners use a Post Office Card Account to receive their pension. [68288]

Mr. Plaskitt: Around 2.3 million.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps were taken by his Department to inform the public that the Post Office card account was time-limited; and if he will make a statement. [68032]

Mr. Plaskitt: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Clwyd, West (Mr. Jones) on 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 721W.

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what consultation he has conducted with customers and sub-postmasters on the ending of the use of the Post Office card account for payment of pensions and benefits. [68276]

Mr. Plaskitt: We will be holding discussions about our payment strategy with customer representative groups.

We know that many of our customers want the option of still being able to collect their benefit or pension at the Post Office and others like being able to use easy to operate accounts. And they will be able to do both these things—25 or so bank accounts can already be used at the Post Office, and we hope there could be more in future. Post Office Ltd. has already introduced one new savings account, and is developing other savings and banking products which are likely to be more attractive to many of its customers than the current Post Office card account.

Sub-postmasters are agents of Post Office Limited. Officials have met with Colin Baker—the General Secretary of their National Federation—on a number of occasions, and I will be meeting Mr. Baker in the summer.

All of these discussions will be informed by evidence gathered in the recent pilots.

Carers Benefits

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the levels of carers' benefits were as a proportion of average income in 1997; what they were in the last period for which figures are available; and what changes in the level of carers' benefits have occurred since 1997. [68734]

Mrs. McGuire: Depending on their personal circumstances, carers have access to the full range of social security benefits. In 1997-98, the average weekly amount of income maintenance benefits paid to working age carers entitled to carer's allowance was £59.74[1] or 22.6 per cent. of median income[2] in that year. In 2004-05, the latest year for which information is available, the corresponding figure was £82.08[1], or 23.5 per cent. of median income[2].

We have increased the benefits available to carers in line with the movement in prices in every year since 1997-98. In 2001, we increased the carer premium in income support, and other income-related benefits, by an extra £10 a week. We have also increased the availability of carer's allowance by abolishing, in 2002, the age limit which precluded carers aged 65 and over from claiming carer's allowance. This change also gives older carers access to the additional amount for carers in pension credit. By linking the carer's allowance earnings limit to the level of the national insurance lower earnings limit , we have significantly increased the amount carers entitled to the benefit can earn from paid employment.

[1] Estimates based on the Family Resources Survey 1997-98 and 2004-05.

[2] Estimates based on Family Resources Survey data and are before housing costs.

Corporate Hospitality

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on how many occasions he has accepted corporate hospitality in the last 12 months. [67516]

Mr. Hutton: Paragraph 5.28 of the ministerial code sets out the rules on the registration of hospitality.

Financial Inclusion

Mr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures he is taking to promote financial inclusion. [68279]

Mrs. McGuire: We continue to promote financial inclusion through improved access to banking and the supply of affordable credit as well as money advice.

The £36 million allocated to the Growth Fund, which DWP is administering, will result in more affordable credit becoming available via, for example, local credit unions to people who might otherwise turn to "doorstep lenders" and loan sharks charging exorbitant rates of interest.

Health and Safety at Work

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will take steps to make individual *(a)* directors and *(b)* senior managers legally responsible (i) for health and safety and (ii) in cases when an employee is killed due to negligence by such an individual; and if he will make a statement. [66422]

Mrs. McGuire: Individual directors and senior managers are already liable under the existing law of manslaughter, where their gross negligence has led to the death of an employee, and under existing health and safety law. The Government have asked the Health and Safety Commission to undertake further evaluation to assess the effectiveness and progress of the current measures in place, legislative and voluntary, on directors' responsibilities for occupational health and safety. The Health and Safety Commission is due to discuss the issue at their May 2006 meeting, following which the Commission will provide advice to Ministers.

Health and Safety Executive

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the Health and Safety Executive has issued guidelines on carrying cans of paint on buses. [66378]

Mrs. McGuire: No. HSE sees no safety reason why an odd can of emulsion should not be carried on a public bus.

Housing

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the Answer of 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 717W, whether current problems sorting out administration remains the reason for not taking forward the options for simplifying non-dependant deductions set out in paragraph 10.54 of The Way Forward for Housing; and if he will make a statement. [67216]

Mr. Plaskitt: As with all aspects of the benefit system, the provisions for non-dependants in housing

benefit will continue to remain under review. Indeed, changes to the non-dependant deduction rules were made both in October 2003 and April 2005.

Our Green Paper "A New Deal for Welfare: Empowering People to Work" (Cm 6730) was published on 24 January 2006. The consultation period ended on 21 April 2006 and we are considering carefully the responses we have received on how best to reform housing benefit to meet with our wider welfare reform objectives.

Older People (Cross-Government Strategy)

Mr. David: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress he is making on the cross-Government strategy for older people. [68269]

Mrs. McGuire: Opportunity Age, the Government's strategy for older people and an ageing society, was published last March. Since then we have:

legislated against age discrimination in employment—the law will come into force in October 2006. Age Positive week, launched 8 May 2006, will raise awareness of the changes that need to be made;

rolled out Link Age services: joining up local services and increasing benefit take up;

prepared for the launch of the Link Age Plus pilots, part of the wider Link Age programme. These pilots aim to build a robust evidence base for the case for joined up services delivering better outcomes for older people. From July, up to eight locations will be selected as pilots to test ways of delivering fully integrated local services for older people: from health and leisure to work and learning. The pilots will draw on the approach in the Social Exclusion Unit's report, A Sure Start to Later Life: Ending Inequalities for Older People published on 26 January 2006. The report proposes a new model for delivering services to older people based on the Sure Start model for children and families. The Department for Work and Pensions project team will work with key partners and older people themselves to develop and deliver these holistic services. The programme will run over two years with funding of up to £10 million for the project;

extended from April 2006, the existing statutory minimum requirement to guarantee people aged 60 and over in England free off-peak travel on their local area bus services, with no charge for the pass. This will benefit an estimated nine million people. The Government are providing an extra £420 million to implement this measure;

published on 19 April 2006 A new ambition for old age, setting out plans to promote the dignity of older people in care and hospital settings as well as a programme of work to promote 'Active Ageing' to keep people healthy for longer;

piloted individual budgets for disabled people and older people in 13 local authorities. The central idea behind individual budgets is to place users of care and support services, at the centre of the process and to give them the power to decide the nature of their own services; and

supported people who want to work longer—for example, by improving pension deferral options from April 2005, and from October 2006 making it unlawful for employers to require someone to retire before 65 unless it can be shown to be appropriate and necessary. The legislation will create a default retirement age of 65, but will also create a right for employees to request working beyond a compulsory retirement age which employers will have a duty to consider.

We will publish our White Paper on pensions reform by the end of the month.

This is a major programme of action which will make a real difference to the wellbeing of older people and address the challenges of the ageing society.

Workplace Health Connect Scheme

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress has been made in establishing the West Midlands pathfinder of the Workplace Health Connect scheme. [66277]

Mrs. McGuire: Workplace Health Connect, including Workplace Health Connect West Midlands (the West Midlands 'pathfinder) launched on 23 February 2006 and is now up and running. The service provides free, impartial and practical advice and support on workplace health, safety and return to work issues to smaller businesses.

The collaborative service, set up in partnership with the Health and Safety Executive offers an adviceline for England and Wales, and workplace visits from qualified Workplace Health Connect advisers. The workplace visits are available now, in the West Midlands and also the North East, North West, South Wales and Greater London.

Human Focus Return to Work Limited operates Workplace Health Connect West Midlands and they have begun carrying out the workplace visits. They have also established a Regional Stakeholder Council which includes among others, representatives of small business, trade unions, the insurance industry, local authorities and a primary care trust.

The West Midlands Stakeholder Council met for the first time on 24 February. The area covered by Workplace Health Connect West Midlands includes all unitary authorities and county districts as defined by the Government Office Region for West Midlands.

93 per cent. of callers to Workplace Health Connect say they are satisfied or very satisfied with the service they have received. Smaller businesses (those with between five and 250 workers) and their workers can access the service by calling the adviceline on 0845 609 6006.

Further information on the service can be found at: www.workplacehealthconnect.co.uk and www.hse.gov.uk/workplacehealth

TREASURY

Broadcasting

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the contribution to the economy of each public sector commercial broadcaster. [68081]

John Healey: HM Treasury has made no assessment of the contribution to the economy of the public sector commercial broadcasters.

Council Tax

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the net revenue from council tax receipts was in *(a)* England and *(b)* Great Britain in each year since 1997-98; and if he will estimate what the revenue will be in 2006-07. [66453]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The net revenue receipts (in £ million) from council tax in England each year since 1997-98 are shown in the following table.

	Net receipts (£ million)
1997-98	9,562
1998-99	10,596
1999-2000	11,493
2000-01	12,410
2001-02	13,359
2002-03	14,624
2003-04	16,574
2004-05	17,592
2005-06	18,354
2006-07	19,067

The data for the net revenue receipts from council tax in Wales and Scotland are available from the Welsh Assembly Government and the Scottish Executive respectively.

The data for 1997-98 to 2004-05 are taken from QRC4 forms and are outturn figures; this is gross council tax due less council tax benefit paid.

The data for 2005-06 and 2006-07 are taken from BR1, BR2 and BR3 forms and are budget figures for council tax requirement less the amount council tax benefit expected to be paid in the year.

Home Working

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in his Department have been enabled to work from home in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [67978]

John Healey: The Treasury encourages home working in appropriate circumstances and many staff work from home from time-to-time. Information relating to the number of staff who have worked from home is not available.

Income Tax

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost would be to the nearest £100 million of raising the personal tax allowance to £10,000 per annum. [68045]

Dawn Primarolo: The cost of increasing to £10,000 all personal allowances, including age-related personal allowances, in 2006-07 is £28.0 billion.

The income tax information is based upon the 2003-04 Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI) and projected forward to 2006-07 in line with 2006 Budget HM Treasury assumptions.

The figures exclude any estimate of behavioural response to the tax change which could be significant given the scale of the change.

Markets (Developing Nations)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent discussions he has had with the *(a)* International Monetary Fund and *(b)* World Bank on its policy on opening up markets in developing nations. [68535]

Ed Balls: As the Chancellor set out in his statement to the International Monetary and Financial Committee on 22 April 2006, the international community must grasp the opportunity presented by the Doha Development Agenda of world trade talks to achieve an ambitious outcome, by the end of 2006, that will make a real contribution to poverty reduction. Concrete action is needed to provide significant increases in market access for developing countries. Effective special and differential treatment for developing countries is key to increasing growth in developing countries, integrating the most vulnerable countries into the world economy, and maintaining the credibility of the multilateral trading system.

And as the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for International Development set out in their joint statement to the Development Committee on 23 April 2006, developing countries should have the flexibility to decide, plan and sequence trade reforms within their own plans for development and poverty reduction.

Additional support is also needed to help developing countries to build the physical, human and institutional capacity to trade. There is a key role for the Bank, working jointly with the Fund, in taking this agenda forward.

Treasury Ministers and officials have conversations and discussions with a wide range of organisations and individuals as part of the process of policy development, analysis and delivery, including with the IMF and the World Bank.

Tax Debts

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the merits of using private debt collection agencies to collect written off tax debts. [68041]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has no power to outsource the recovery of written off tax debts to private debt collection agencies. However, HMRC will always consider wider developments and compare its recovery operations against best practice in the private sector and other Government Departments.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what criteria the Valuation Office Agency uses to decide whether or not to classify a domestic residence as a composite hereditament. [66234]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The criteria applied by valuation officers of the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) are set out in the council tax manual published by the VOA on its website at www.voa.gov.uk.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations the Valuation Office Agency has received on whether the London congestion charge zone *(a)* represents a national change in circumstances for the valuation of and *(b)* justifies amended valuations of inner London businesses for business rate purposes. [66260]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I have been asked to reply.

Valuation officers of the Valuation Office Agency in central London have received approximately 10,500 proposals from ratepayers or their agents to alter the rating lists, making representations that the Congestion Charge Zone has affected the rating valuation of their business premises.

Whether a reduction in rateable value is justified will depend on the facts and circumstances of individual cases. These are matters for the valuation officers or—in the absence of agreement—for the independent valuation tribunal or ultimately for the courts to decide.

Most of the proposals made have been withdrawn with no amendment made to the assessments.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations the Valuation Office Agency has received on whether the acts of terrorism of 7 July 2005 *(a)* represent a material change in circumstances for the revaluation of and *(b)* justify amended valuations of inner London businesses for business rate purposes. [66771]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

Valuation officers of the Valuation Office Agency in central London have received approximately 400 proposals from ratepayers or their agents to alter the rating lists on the grounds that they consider the terrorist bombings of 7 July 2005 to have affected the rating valuation of their business premises. However whether any reductions in rateable value are justified will depend on the facts and circumstances of individual cases. These are matters for valuation officers or—in the absence of agreement—for the independent valuation tribunal or ultimately the courts to decide.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Burial Spaces

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what guidance she plans to issue to local authorities in the sustainable communities growth areas on the provision of adequate burial spaces; and if he will make a statement. [66648]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

The need for guidance for all local authorities on the provision of burial space is one of the matters we are considering in the course of our current review of burial law and practice. As I explained in my statement on 7 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 3WS, the Government will inform the House of its plans to bring forward proposals for burial law reform later this year.

Business Growth (Staffordshire)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much *(a)* Tamworth borough council and *(b)* Staffordshire county council received under the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive in 2005-06; and what proportion of the amount retained by each local authority has been allocated to supporting business growth to date. [68366]

Mr. Woolas: Tamworth borough council received £284,163 and Staffordshire county council received £1,091,656 under the Local Authority Business Growth Incentives scheme (LABGI) in 2005-06.

All monies awarded under the LABGI scheme are not ring-fenced and we do not hold information on their use. It is for local authorities to decide how their LABGI reward is spent. Some may invest in further business growth while others may choose to invest in better public services for their communities or to keep down council tax pressures.

Children's Services

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many nursery and crèche places are provided for people working in his Office; what charges are made for the provision of such services; and what other facilities are provided for the children of employees of her Office. [67363]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is a member of the Westminster Holiday Playscheme that runs every school holiday. The ODPM funds 50 per cent. of the cost of places and the cost to staff is £12.50 per child. For the latest scheme (30 May 2006 to 2 June 2006) 42 places were available for the entire scheme although the number allocated to OPDM staff has not yet been confirmed. For previous schemes the following number of places were allocated:

	Places
Easter 2005	13
June 2005	8
Summer 2005	16
October 2005	3
December 2005	7
April 2006	7

The ODPM also runs a Childcare Vouchers Scheme. Full time staff are eligible to receive vouchers to a maximum value of £23 per week (part time staff will receive vouchers pro rata in relation to the numbers of hours they work). To be eligible for these vouchers staff must be employed by the Crown and work as a civil servant in ODPM on a permanent or fixed-term contract. Unless they are a single parent or their partner is disabled or in full time education, the member of staff's partner must be in full time employment The member of staff or their partner must not be receiving support for the same child from another employer or another government department.

The child that they are claiming child care vouchers for must:

(a) Be living with the member of staff

(b) Be under five years old

(c) Not be in full time education;

The child carer must be registered.

Council Tax

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many households pay council tax, excluding those on 100 per cent. council tax benefit. [66391]

Mr. Woolas: The number of chargeable dwellings liable for council tax in England as at November 2005 was 21,267,000. This figure includes any dwellings entitled to discounts but excludes any exempt dwellings. 401,000 of these chargeable dwellings were either second homes or long-term empty homes.

In 2004, the latest date for which figures are available, there were an estimated 3,148,500 households in England receiving council tax benefit for 100 per cent. of their council tax liability.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much the average council tax per dwelling in each Government office region was in England in each year since 1997-98. [66443]

Mr. Woolas: The requested information is tabled as follows:

Average council tax per dwelling in England

£

Government office region	*1997-98*	*1998-99*	*1999-2000*	*2000-1*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*	*2006-07*
North East	534	576	613	645	676	735	801	851	891	928
North West	[1]591	[1]636	[1]653	698	732	772	840	881	918	961
Yorkshire and the Humber	514	550	590	622	663	712	786	836	876	917
East Midlands	600	548	631	672	713	784	859	916	932	994
West Midlands	490	548	632	670	718	111	855	901	939	979
East of England	542	524	667	714	762	842	970	1,036	1,079	1,129
London	597	627	669	713	764	819	969	1,035	1,078	1,128
South East	601	573	714	760	809	887	1,026	1,098	1,147	1,201
South West	539	600	658	704	745	823	938	1,008	1,054	1,107
Merseyside[2]	587	669	719	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

[1] Excludes Merseyside.
[2] Included in North West from 2000-01.
Note:
Amounts shown for average council tax per dwelling include amounts funded from council tax benefit.
Source:
BR and CTB1 returns

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will list *(a)* the websites operated by her Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65202]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information is as follows.

(a) The websites operated by the Office of the Deputy Prime are listed as follows:

www.odpm.gov.uk
www.neighbourhood.gov.uk
www.socialexclusion.gov.uk
www.bvpi.gov.uk (Best value performance indicators)
www.frsonline.fire.gov.uk
www.spkweb.org.uk (Supporting people programme)
http://www.gos. gov.uk/national/ (Government office for the regions)
www.localegov.gov.uk
www.homeinformationpacks.gov.uk
www.info4local.gov.uk
www.firekills.gov.uk (Fire safety campaigns)
www.renewal.net
www.cleanersafergreener.gov.uk
www.iggi.gov.uk (Intra governmental geographic information)
www.planningportal.gov.uk
www.futureleadership.gov.uk
www.spdirectory.org.uk (Supporting people directory of services)
www.nlud.org.uk (National land use directory)
www.firesafetytoolbox.org.uk
www.firelink.org.uk
www.localvisionforum.net
www.bmespark.org.uk (Black minority ethnic supporting people)
www.xoq83.dial.pipex.com (Local government pension scheme)

(b) The following reports were published on the internet during March 2006. The list indicates whether print versions have been made available. In addition we operate a print on demand facility for all web only publications.

Document title	*Print version available*	*Web only (i.e. PDF)*
A Decision Document on the Scope of Development Control Powers to be Conferred on the West Northamptonshire Development Corporation	No	Yes
A Final Report to ODPM Building Regulations Division Under the Building Operational Performance Framework	No	Yes

Document title	Print version available	Web only (i.e. PDF)
Alternative Approaches to Neighbourhood Management: Seven case study summaries—Research report 27	No	Yes
Alternative Approaches to Neighbourhood Management: Six full case study reports	No	Yes
An Exploratory Assessment of the Economic Case for Regeneration Investment from a National Perspective	No	Yes
Approved Document F: Ventilation (2006 edition)	Yes	No
Approved Document L1A: Conservation of fuel and power (New dwellings) (2006 edition)	Yes	No
Approved Document L1B: Conservation of fuel and power (Existing dwellings) (2006 edition)	Yes	No
Approved Document L2A: Conservation of fuel and power (New buildings other than dwellings) (2006 edition)	Yes	No
Approved Document L2B: Conservation of fuel and power (Existing buildings other than dwellings) (2006 edition)	Yes	No
Approved Document P: Electrical safety—Dwellings (2006 edition)	Yes	No
Assessing the Impact of Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Interventions: Displacement issues	No	Yes
Asthma/Dust Mite Study: Final report	No	Yes
Building Operational Performance Framework: Development of acoustic performance standards for robust details—Final report	No	Yes
Changes to Planning Regulations for Casinos: Circular 02/06	Yes	No
Changes to the Use Classes Order for Casinos: Full regulatory impact assessment	No	Yes
Codes of Practice for Student Accommodation: Responses to consultation on approved codes	No	Yes
Community Management and Ownership of Assets: Final report from the work group to the neighbourhoods project board	No	Yes
Consent Regimes: Reducing unnecessary bureaucracy	No	Yes
Design Coding in Practice: An evaluation—Urban research summary 22	Yes	No
Development of Commercial and Industrial Vacancy Statistics: Technical report	No	Yes
English House Condition Survey 2003: Annual report—Decent homes and decent places	Yes	No
English House Condition Survey 2004: Headline report—Decent homes and decent places	Yes	No
English House Condition Survey: Summary of the 2003 annual report—Decent homes and decent places	No	Yes
English Regional Governance in 2004	No	Yes
English Regional Governance in 2004: Quantitative study of baseline data	No	Yes
Ex-Post Evaluation of the English, Scottish and Welsh Objective 5b Programmes	No	Yes
Fire Control Governance Arrangements: Consultation on detailed proposals	No	Yes
Fire Service Emergency Cover Toolkit Review Manual	No	Yes
Guidance For New Home Occupiers: Final report	No	Yes
Guidance on New Financial Arrangements for Firefighter Pensions with Effect from April 2006	No	Yes
Home Save Product Testing: Qualitative research findings	No	Yes
Houses in Multiple Occupation and Selective Licensing Draft Regulations: Response to consultation	No	Yes
Implementing Electronic Government 6: Proforma document for national para authorities	No	Yes
Innovative Products and Building Regulations	No	Yes
Listed Buildings Casework: A consultation paper	Yes	No
Local Area Agreements: Guidance for round three and refresh of rounds one and two	No	Yes
London Aggregates Working Party: Annual Report 2005	Yes	No
Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Programme Baseline Report: Summary—Research report 26	No	Yes
Neighbourhood Management: At the turning point? Research report 23	Yes	No
New Firefighters' Pension Scheme Guidance Templates	No	Yes
ODPM Evidence Innovation Strategy 2005-08: Consultation paper	No	Yes
ODPM's Sustainable Development Action Plan	No	Yes
Part L and Approved Document F, 2006: Regulatory impact assessment	Yes	No
Planning Delivery Grant Final Allocations 2006-2007	No	Yes
Planning for Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: A guide to good practice	Yes	No
Planning Inquiries into Major Infrastructure Projects: Economic impact reports: Circular 04/06	Yes	No
Potential Further Developments of Fire Service Emergency Cover	No	Yes

Document title	Print version available	Web only (i.e. PDF)
Provisions on Empty Dwelling Management Orders: Regulatory impact assessment	No	Yes
Research into the Effectiveness of Youth Training and Diversion Schemes	No	Yes
Review of the Code of Best Practice on Mobile Phone Network Development: Final report	No	Yes
Rolling Out Neighbourhood Management: A theme report from the Pathfinder Programme National Evaluation—Research report 25	No	Yes
Sanitation Research Framework Agreement Supporting the Building Regulations Research Programme	No	Yes
Small Firms Impact Test: New proposals for Part L of the Building Regulations	No	Yes
State of the English Cities	Yes	No
Summary of Responses on Changes to Planning Regulations for Casinos	No	Yes
Sustainable Communities: Settled homes; changing lives—One year on—Policy briefing 14	Yes	No
Take-Up Campaign and Implementing Electronic Government Submission Letter	No	Yes
The Building Regulations and the Building (Approved Inspectors etc) Regulations 2000: ODPM circular 03/2006	Yes	No
The Guide to the Right to Manage: Consultation paper	Yes	No
The National Evaluation of Single Local Management Centres: Research report 22	Yes	No
The Planning Delivery Grant Determination 2006 No. 31/286	Yes	No
The Production of Smoke and Burning Droplets from Products Used to Form Wall and Ceiling Linings	No	Yes
Ventilation and Indoor Air Quality in Schools: Guidance report 202825	No	Yes
Total	22	42

Deprivation (Somerset)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will list the local authority wards in *(a)* Yeovil constituency and *(b)* Somerset which are in the top 30 per cent. of wards in England by multiple deprivation indicators; and if she will make a statement. [68496]

Mr. Woolas: The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004 (IMD 2004) was constructed at lower layer super output area (SOA) level and not at ward level. The new geographical unit was introduced to overcome the problems associated with wards—frequent boundary changes and differences in population sizes. With an average population of 1,500 people, SOAs are far better than wards at picking up small pockets of deprivation.

The following table includes the list of SOAs in Yeovil constituency and Somerset that fall within the 30 per cent. most deprived SOAs in England. The data shows that of the 74 SOAs in Yeovil constituency only seven (9.5 per cent.) fall within the 30 per cent. most disadvantaged SOAs in England and all seven of these are located in the borough of South Somerset. In total there are 327 SOAs in the local authorities that make up Somerset (including Yeovil). Of these 40 (12 per cent.) are among the 30 per cent. most deprived in England. The most deprived SOA (E01029106) is located in Bridgwater Sydenham in Sedgemoor.

SOA code	Local authority name	Government office region	Rank of IMD[1]
E01029046	Mendip	South West	4,318
E01029062	Mendip	South West	5,071
E01029042	Mendip	South West	8,270
E01029048	Mendip	South West	8,944
E01029106	Sedgemoor	South West	2,580
E01029100	Sedgemoor	South West	4,344
E01029132	Sedgemoor	South West	4,545
E01029109	Sedgemoor	South West	5,611
E01029107	Sedgemoor	South West	5,982
E01029112	Sedgemoor	South West	6,755
E01029111	Sedgemoor	South West	7,280
E01029095	Sedgemoor	South West	7,321
E01029110	Sedgemoor	South West	7,717
E01029098	Sedgemoor	South West	7,947
E01029099	Sedgemoor	South West	8,588
E01029105	Sedgemoor	South West	8,959
E01029097	Sedgemoor	South West	9,086
E01029096	Sedgemoor	South West	9,310
E01029116	Sedgemoor	South West	9,513

SOA code	Local authority name	Government office region	Rank of IMD[1]
E01029131	Sedgemoor	South West	9,605
E01029234	South Somerset[2]	South West	5,363
E01029247	South Somerset[2]	South West	5,715
E01029239	South Somerset[2]	South West	5,855
E01029236	South Somerset	South West	7,883
E01029233	South Somerset	South West	8,442
E01029170	South Somerset	South West	8,974
E01029237	South Somerset	South West	9,065
E01029293	Taunton Deane	South West	3,349
E01029297	Taunton Deane	South West	4,923
E01029292	Taunton Deane	South West	4,928
E01029299	Taunton Deane	South West	7,840
E01029311	Taunton Deane	South West	8,606
E01029280	Taunton Deane	South West	8,623
E01029286	Taunton Deane	South West	9,112
E01029307	Taunton Deane	South West	9,628
E01029344	West Somerset	South West	7,397
E01029339	West Somerset	South West	8,303
E01029341	West Somerset	South West	8,835
E01029326	West Somerset	South West	9,504
E01029333	West Somerset	South West	9,655

[1] Where one is most deprived.
[2] All in Yeovil Parli.

Disability Equality

Roger Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what advice she has issued to local authorities on how they should implement their disability equality duty under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. [68590]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not issued advice to local authorities on how to implement their disability equality duty—that is a matter for them. The Disability Rights Commission has produced a code of practice on how to implement the duty.

E-Government

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what targets the Government have set local authorities in each Implementing Electronic Government round with regards to the *(a)* National Land and Property Gazetteer and (b) Local Land and Property Gazetteer; and what the outturn results have been in each relevant year. [66224]

Mr. Woolas: There are no statutory Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) targets for the National Land and Property Gazetteer and Local Land and Property Gazetteer, although information is collected through the IEG return to inform national policy. In December 2005, 87 per cent. of local authorities in England had established a regularly-maintained link from their Local Land & Property Gazetteer (LLPG) to the National Land & Property Gazetteer (NLPG), with 13 per cent. in the process of implementing this link.

Fire Stations

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will list the fire stations where *(a)* closures and *(b)* appliance reductions are currently planned, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [68500]

Jim Fitzpatrick: These are matters decided locally through a fire and rescue authority's integrated risk management plan and as Ministers have no role to play in the determination of appropriate fire cover and the level of service in any fire and rescue authority, this information is not held centrally.

GLA Precept

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what was the Greater London Authority precept, and its predecessor fire/police precepts in London, on an average band D property in each year since 1996-97; and what the figure is for 2005-06. [60132]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Greater London Authority precept, and its predecessor fire/police precepts in London, on an average band D property since 1997-98, are shown in the following table.

	Metropolitan police	London Fire and Civil Defence	£ GLA
1996-97	56	21	—
1997-98	63	25	—
1998-99	76	26	—
1999-2000	83	28	—
2000-01	—	—	123
2001-02	—	—	151
2002-03	—	—	174
2003-04	—	—	224
2004-05	—	—	241
2005-06	—	—	255

The data are as reported on BR2 and BR3 forms submitted by the respective authorities to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister each year.

Homelessness

Margaret Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many homeless households were accepted by local authorities as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need in the East of England in 2004-05; and how many such households contained *(a)* (i) one, (ii) two and (iii) three or more children and *(b)* an expectant mother but no other children. [60204]

Yvette Cooper: The total number of households accepted during 2004-05 by local authorities in the East of England Government office region as being eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need was 10,150, of which 5,020 contained dependent children. Of these 5,020, 2,820 had one child, 1,370 had two children and 830 had three or more children. An additional 1,410 households contained an expectant mother, but no other dependent children.

Local Government (Representation)

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment has been made of the merits of introducing single member wards in the metropolitan districts in England. [67255]

Mr. Woolas: We have launched a public debate about the governance arrangements for local areas. We are listening to all views on governance arrangements, some of which may have implications for electoral arrangements in local authorities. We plan to publish a White Paper on the future of local government in the summer.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what consideration has been given to altering the elections by thirds pattern of democracy in the metropolitan districts of England. [67667]

Mr. Woolas: We have launched a public debate about the governance arrangements for local areas. We are listening to all views on governance arrangements, some of which may have implications for electoral arrangements in local authorities. We plan to publish a White Paper on the future of local government in the summer.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much additional income has been raised as a result of local authorities using their discretionary power to abolish the council tax discount on empty homes since 2004; to whom has this additional income been allocated; and on what it has been spent. [66286]

Mr. Woolas: The amount of additional revenue raised by local authorities using their discretionary powers to reduce the council tax discounts on long-term empty homes was:

£49 million in 2004-05; and

£72 million in 2005-06.

This additional revenue raised is retained by local authorities. The increase in council tax base is taken into account in calculating formula grant. Any net increase in revenue for a local authority is not ring-fenced for spending on any particular activity.

These figures are estimates based on information reported by local authorities on the CTB1 and CTB1 (S) forms.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the average council tax per *(a)* dwelling and *(b)* Band D in each local authority in England was in each year since 1997-98. [66308]

Mr. Woolas: Details of the average council tax per dwelling and Band D in each local authority in England are published on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website. The details can be found under "Information For Taxpayers" at "Council Taxes" at: http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/ct.htm.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government which billing authority has the *(a)* highest and *(b)* lowest Band D council tax in England for 2006-07. [66323]

Mr. Woolas: Details of the Band D council tax in each local authority in England in 2006-07 are published on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website. The details can be found under "Information For Taxpayers" at "Council Taxes" at: http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/ct.htm.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much and what percentage of *(a)* council tax and *(b)* business rates was not collected by each of the 10 metropolitan districts in the county of Greater Manchester in each of the past five years; and if she will make a statement. [67247]

Mr. Woolas: The following tables provide amounts of *(a)* council tax and *(b)* non-domestic rates in each of the last five years not collected in-year, and expressed as a percentage of the amount collectable in year.

Amount of council tax not collected and as percentage of amount collectable

	2000-01		2001-02		2002-03		2003-04		2004-05	
	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%
Bolton	3,860	6.4	3,433	5.3	3,252	4.8	3,080	4.1	3,153	4.1
Bury	1,713	4.0	1,431	3.1	1,342	2.7	1,451	2.6	1,512	2.7
Manchester	3,863	5.8	4,171	5.8	10,020	12.1	9,370	10.5	9,192	9.7
Oldham	2,030	4.2	2,334	4.4	2,881	5.2	2,637	4.2	2,358	3.6

Amount of council tax not collected and as percentage of amount collectable

	2000-01		2001-02		2002-03		2003-04		2004-05	
	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%
Rochdale	2,199	5.0	2,157	4.6	1,960	3.9	1,806	3.3	1,966	3.5
Salford	2,879	6.0	5,958	11.2	5,179	9.3	5,256	8.6	5,993	9.4
Stockport	3,104	3.7	3,576	4.0	4,063	4.3	4,201	4.2	3,754	3.6
Tameside	1,536	3.2	1,586	3.1	1,508	2.8	1,628	2.9	1,605	2.7
Trafford	1,895	3.9	2,060	4.0	2,144	3.9	2,233	3.6	2,411	3.5
Wigan	2,874	4.2	2,739	3.7	2,563	3.3	2,732	3.2	2,708	3.1

Amount of national non-domestic rates not collected and as percentage of amount collectable

	2000-01		2001-02		2002-03		2003-04		2004-05	
	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%
Bolton	2,028	3.6	912	1.5	1,120	1.7	1,982	3.0	1,140	1.7
Bury	710	2.2	553	1.6	515	1.5	392	1.1	694	2.0
Manchester	5,145	3.1	5,690	2.9	9,206	4.3	10,232	4.8	9,615	4.5
Oldham	1,530	3.8	995	2.3	1,250	2.9	1,207	2.7	1,348	2.9
Rochdale	1,462	3.3	1,555	3.2	990	2.0	629	1.3	754	1.5
Salford	2,585	4.3	2,683	4.2	2,637	3.8	2,075	3.0	2,196	3.2
Stockport	2,243	3.5	1,916	2.8	2,311	3.3	1,661	2.4	1,591	2.2
Tameside	212	0.6	937	2.5	576	1.5	432	1.1	529	1.3
Trafford	4,396	4.4	4,567	4.3	3,224	2.9	2,420	2.2	3,043	2.7
Wigan	1,504	2.9	1,666	2.9	1,405	2.4	1,379	2.3	1,456	2.4

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much was spent on average in real terms by *(a)* district councils and *(b)* shire county councils on employing staff in (i) 1998 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [67400]

Mr. Woolas: Average expenditure on employees by district councils and shire county councils in England in 1998-99 and 2004-05 at 2004-05 prices are shown in the following table.

£ million

	District councils	*Shire county councils*
1998-99	8.4	304.5
2004-05	11.3	448.5

Total expenditure on employees is reported by local authorities to ODPM on Revenue Outturn (RO) forms. This includes all direct and indirect employee expenses and contributions to employee-related provisions, including national insurance contributions, pensions and employee related expenses.

The 1998-99 prices have been re-valued at 2004-05 prices using the latest ONS/HMT GDP deflators.

The large difference in employee expenditure between district and shire county councils is due to the different responsibilities different types of councils have.

Figures for 2004-05 are not directly comparable with figures for 1998-99. This is because the outturn data for 1998-99 have been calculated on a non-FRS (Financial Reporting Standard) 17 basis while the outturn data for 2004-05 have been calculated on a FRS 17 basis.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the total expenditure of local authorities was in each of the last five years. [67836]

Mr. Woolas: Total revenue expenditure of local authorities in England in each of the last five years can be found in table 4 of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Statistical Release: "Local authority revenue expenditure and financing England: 2004-05 final outturn". This release is on the ODPM website at: http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/stats/natstats.htm#rev.

Figures in this table are presented on a non-financial reporting standard 17 (FRS17) basis.

Local Referendums

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether *(a)* fire authorities, *(b)* police authorities, *(c)* parish councils and *(d)* the Greater London Authority have powers to organise and hold local polls or referendums on local issues. [66300]

Mr. Woolas: Fire authorities and police authorities have no powers to hold local referendums. Parish councils do not have powers to organise and hold local referendums, but electors can demand a referendum on a question arising at a parish meeting, which is carried out by the district council. The Greater London Authority has powers to organise and hold referendums on local issues.

Local Strategic Partnerships

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) whether members of local strategic partnerships are subject to the Local Government Code of Conduct; [68044]

(2) whether a local authority is permitted to provide information to a local strategic partnership which it has not given to local councillors; [68046]

(3) what provision there is for local councillors to put *(a)* oral and *(b)* written questions to the local strategic partnership; [68047]

(4) whether there is a requirement for local strategic partnerships to report *(a)* verbally and *(b)* in writing to the local authority. [68048]

Mr. Woolas: Outside of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund areas local strategic partnerships are currently voluntary partnerships governed by non-statutory guidance issued in 2001, as such there is no requirement for the partnership collectively to report verbally or in writing to the local authority or a centrally-specified formal mechanism for local councillors to put *(a)* oral and *(b)* written questions to the local strategic partnership.

The 2001 guidance 'Local Strategic Partnerships' states that

> 'Individual local authorities working within LSPs need to determine which elected members are involved and what role they should play'.

The guidance also states that:

> 'It should be ensured that councillors are properly included in the process'.

It is therefore for each area to determine the way in which LSPs and councillors interact.

The local Government Act 2000 provides for a code of conduct to apply to members and co-opted members of every relevant authority. The Standards Board of England policies this code. Non-local authority members would conduct themselves with reference to their own professional or corporate code of conduct and comply with any advice that accompanies this.

We have recently consulted on the future role of LSPs and are considering responses to this.

Local Vision Forum Website

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many unique visitors the http://www.localvisionforum.net/ website has received in each month since its establishment. [66264]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The visitor statistics for www.localvisionforum.net are as follows.

	2006	
	March	*April*
Visits to the forum homepage	2,052	2,270
Unique visitors to the forum	977	1,194

As at 25 April 2006, 538 individuals have registered to use the forum, who between them have made 114 written contributions to the consultation through the forum.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much the Government spent on creating the http://www.localvisionforum.net/ website. [66265]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was not charged for the local vision forum. It was created as part of the DCA-funded Digital Dialogues project, evaluated by the Hansard Society, to investigate Government use of ICT to promote digital democracy.

Non-domestic Hereditaments

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many non-domestic hereditaments were shown in the rating list for England, under the description of communication stations, in the local authority area of *(a)* Brentwood and *(b)* Epping Forest in (i) 1998 and (ii) 2005. [66304]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the answers given to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) on 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2836W, and 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2836W.

Ordnance Survey

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government with what work on intelligent speed adaptation technology on roads Ordnance Survey is assisting. [66253]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Ordnance Survey data is being used in a pilot of intelligent speed adaptation technology in London. The pilot involves co-operative working between organisations from government and the private sector.

Police Precept

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the police precept is on Band D bills in each police authority in *(a)* 1997-98 and *(b)* 2006-07. [66324]

Mr. Woolas: The council tax precepts levied by each police authority on Band D properties in 1997-98 and 2006-07 are shown in £s in the following table.

		£
	1997-98	*2006-07*
Avon and Somerset Police Authority	52	138
Bedfordshire Police Authority	53	118
Cambridgeshire Police Authority	51	142
Cheshire Police Authority	51	108
Cleveland Police Authority	55	151

	£	
	1997-98	*2006-07*
Cumbria Police Authority	58	163
Derbyshire Police Authority	51	135
Devon and Cornwall Police Authority	50	126
Dorset Police Authority	64	149
Durham Police Authority	52	101
Essex Police Authority	54	111
Gloucestershire Police Authority	51	171
Greater Manchester Police Authority	54	111
Hampshire Police Authority	52	119
Hertfordshire Police Authority	52	124
Humberside Police Authority	52	142
Kent Police Authority	52	116
Lancashire Police Authority	53	113
Leicestershire Police Authority	52	132
Lincolnshire Police Authority	69	125
Merseyside Police Authority	67	121
Metropolitan Police Authority	63	211
Norfolk Police Authority	51	154
North Yorkshire Police Authority	50	180
Northamptonshire Police Authority	71	162
Northumbria Police Authority	53	72
Nottinghamshire Police Authority	50	132
South Yorkshire Police Authority	53	113
Staffordshire Police Authority	55	153
Suffolk Police Authority	51	131
Surrey Police Authority	45	163
Sussex Police Authority	52	116
Thames Valley Police Authority	53	133
Warwickshire Police Authority	52	139
West Mercia Police Authority	51	150
West Midlands Police Authority	53	88
West Yorkshire Police Authority	53	112
Wiltshire Police Authority	55	133

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what revenue was raised from the police precept on council tax in 1997-98 in each police authority in England and Wales; and what the forecast is for 2006-07. [66325]

Mr. Woolas: The police precepts levied in 1997-98 and 2006-07 for each police authority in England are shown in £000s in the following table.

We do not hold data for police authorities in Wales; the data are available from the Welsh Assembly Government.

	£000	
	1997-98	*2006-07*
Avon and Somerset Police Authority	25,562	74,378
Bedfordshire Police Authority	9,502	23,381
Cambridgeshire Police Authority	11,706	36,725
Cheshire Police Authority	17,123	39,432
Cleveland Police Authority	8,595	25,136
Cumbria Police Authority	9,229	28,314
Derbyshire Police Authority	15,094	43,121
Devon and Cornwall Police Authority	26,296	74,183
Dorset Police Authority	16,604	42,843
Durham Police Authority	8,882	18,375
Essex Police Authority	29,275	69,094
Gloucestershire Police Authority	10,047	36,692
Greater Manchester Police Authority	40,168	85,790
Hampshire Police Authority	31,760	79,278
Hertfordshire Police Authority	17,586	53,433
Humberside Police Authority	13,435	39,924
Kent Police Authority	28,699	70,894
Lancashire Police Authority	22,860	52,278
Leicestershire Police Authority	14,504	40,463
Lincolnshire Police Authority	13,398	27,957
Merseyside Police Authority	27,025	51,479
Metropolitan Police Authority	181,828	607,418
Norfolk Police Authority	13,026	44,024
North Yorkshire Police Authority	12,993	52,165
Northamptonshire Police Authority	13,422	35,954
Northumbria Police Authority	21,251	30,464
Nottinghamshire Police Authority	14,917	42,586
South Yorkshire Police Authority	18,867	42,295
Staffordshire Police Authority	17,712	53,360
Suffolk Police Authority	11,300	31,976
Surrey Police Authority	15,039	78,662
Sussex Police Authority	29,062	70,990
Thames Valley Police Authority	40,616	110,771
Warwickshire Police Authority	9,171	27,019
West Mercia Police Authority	19,658	64,289
West Midlands Police Authority	39,556	67,997
West Yorkshire Police Authority	31,837	73,219
Wiltshire Police Authority	11,778	31,609

Public Relations/Marketing Agencies

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what *(a)* public relations, *(b)* marketing and *(c)* communication agencies her Department (i) employs, (ii) plan to employ and (iii) have employed in the last 12 months; and if she will state the purpose of each such employment. [66320]

Jim Fitzpatrick: In the last 12 months the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have employed the following Public Relations agencies:

The Central Office of Information—working on Fire Safety

Blue Rubicon - working on the Local E-Gov take up campaign and the Tenancy Deposit Scheme awareness campaign.

Band and Brown—working on the awareness campaign for Home Information Packs

Amazon—working on Houses of Multiple Occupancy Property Licence, and the Housing Heath and Safety Rating System.

The marketing and communications agencies used by the Office over the last 12 months are as follows.

Carat and COI—media buying

Euro RSCG—working on Fire Safety advertising, and Houses of Multiple Occupancy Property Licence, Tenancy Deposit Scheme and Fire Order Reform

Leo Burnett—Home Information Pack advertising

Rainey Kelly—Fire Service recruitment advertising

All future work will be tendered through the COI agency roster or by open competition.

Rate Relief (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many businesses have received small business rate relief in the Tamworth borough council area since it was introduced. [68367]

Mr. Woolas: This information is not held centrally and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Social Exclusion Unit

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what funds have been allocated to the Social Exclusion Unit for each of the last eight years. [67014]

Mr. Woolas: The expenditure of the Social Exclusion Unit for the last eight years is set out as follows.

	£
1998-99	681,119
1999-2000	1,570,000
2000-01	2,246,247
2001-02	2,156,000
2002-03	2,676,418
2003-04	2,931,192
2004-05	3,442,100
2005-06	2,697,300

Social Services Funding

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what account is taken in local government social services funding formulae of the proportion of *(a)* over-65s, *(b)* over-75s and *(c)* over-85s in the local population. [68391]

Mr. Woolas: The basic amount for the social services for older people relative need formula is based on the number of household and supported residents aged 65 years and over. A further top-up is provided based on the proportion of such residents aged 90 and over. The full formula is described in section 4 of the Local Government Finance Report (England) 2006-07.

Supporting People Programme

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much was paid to each relevant local authority in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes in *(a)* 2004-05 and *(b)* 2005-06 under the Supporting People programme; how much she plans to allocate to each in (i) 2006-07, (ii) 2007-08 and (iii) 2008-09; and if he will make a statement. [67664]

Mr. Woolas: Supporting People is administered through top-tier local authorities and, for the area in question, the relevant authorities are Buckinghamshire county council and Milton Keynes council. The grants paid or due to those authorities for the years 2004-05 to 2007-08 are as set out in the following table.

	2004-05	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*
Buckinghamshire county council				
Supporting People Programme Grant	5,882,637	5,586,354	5,489,753	5,215,265
Supporting People Administration Grant	331,994	265,595	265,595	265,595
Milton Keynes council				
Supporting People Programme Grant	5,616,818	5,333,923	5,241,687	4,979,603
Supporting People Administration Grant	211,126	143,301	143,301	143,301

In line with my announcement of 5 December 2005, the programme grant allocations given in the aforementioned table for each authority for 2007-08 are minimum allocations, set at 95 per cent. of the allocations for 2006-07. This approach has been taken to allow us to consider, following the recent consultation on the development of a Supporting People strategy, how best to approach future programme grant allocations. Full programme grant allocations for all Supporting People authorities will be confirmed before the 2006 summer recess.

Similarly, the administration grant allocations given in the table for each authority for 2007-08 are indicative allocations, and allocations will be confirmed before the 2006 summer recess.

Allocations for all authorities for 2008-09 to 2010-11 will be set following the conclusion of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will place in the Library a copy of the letter written by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) to local authority chief executives on their statutory obligations referred to in the Summary of VOA and Authorities Liaison Group Meeting of 2 July 2003. [66314]

Mr. Woolas: The letter referred to in the Summary of VOA and Local Authorities Liaison Group meeting of 2 July 2003 was a draft prepared by the VGA's head office. It was made available on 4 July 2003 for local valuation officers to send to chief executives of those local authorities that were not fully undertaking their

statutory obligations to supply information to valuation officers. It reminded them of their responsibilities and sought meetings to improve co-operation. A copy of the draft letter has been placed in the Library as requested.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the Valuation Office Agency's policy is on the council tax or business rates liability of live-work units; and what changes have been made to this policy since 1997. [66390]

Mr. Woolas: The criteria applied by valuation officers of the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) are set out in the Council Tax Manual published by the VOA on its website at www.voa.gov.uk. The guidance was last updated on 4 March 2004 to reflect the decision of the Lands Tribunal in the case of Tully *v.* Jorgensen (VO) 2003 RA 233.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 8 May 2006

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Armed Forces (Inquests)

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many inquests remain to be heard in relation to members of the armed forces who *(a)* lost their lives as a result of military duties in Iraq since 2003 and *(b)* lost their lives as a result of such duties in *(i)* 2004 and *(ii)* 2005; and in how many such cases an inquest has not been concluded a year after death. [66543]

Ms Harman *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* Bodies from military personnel who died in Iraq are returned to the UK via RAF Brize Norton within the jurisdiction of the Oxfordshire coroner. I understand from the Oxfordshire coroner that 31 inquests remain to be heard from 2003, nine from 2004 and seven from 2005. Information about the number of such inquests being concluded within 12 months of the death is not available.

Children's Legal Centre

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much has been paid in legal aid to the Children's Legal Centre in each of the last three years. [67206]

Ms Harman: The legal aid paid to the Children's Legal Centre in each of the last three years is as follows

	£
2005-06	279,983
2004-05	183,023
2003-04	98,896

These figures represent payments to the Children's Legal Centre for legal services provided to publicly funded clients.

Civil Courts (Enforcement of Judgments)

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what progress her Department has made in drafting a Bill to improve enforcement of judgments in the civil court system; when she expects the Bill to be ready to introduce into Parliament; and what measures her Department is planning to include in the Bill. [67145]

Ms Harman: The Bill is currently being drafted and we are hoping to publish in draft this session.

The Bill will then be formally introduced when Parliamentary time allows, and will include provisions for charging orders, attachment of earnings and information sharing.

Community Justice

Mr. Allen: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps the Crown Prosecution Service is taking in order to facilitate the creation of community courts and community justice panels in Nottingham and elsewhere; and if she will make a statement. [66200]

Ms Harman: In Nottingham the Chief Crown Prosecutor has held discussions with local agencies about developing the concept of Community Justice.

Elsewhere the CPS is involved in two Community Justice projects—the Community Justice Centre, North Liverpool and the Salford Community Justice Initiative. Both of which were launched at the end of last year.

We will consider the lessons learned from the Liverpool and Salford projects and work with local agencies to determine ways the concept can be applied elsewhere.

Court Funds

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs which classes of *(a)* litigants and *(b)* former litigants are entitled to have money in the Court Fund Special Account; and if she will make a statement. [67309]

Ms Harman: Those entitled to have money in the Special Account are:

Adults who lack mental capacity whose funds are either controlled by the Court of Protection or who have had monies awarded to them which are held under the jurisdiction of a county court, the High Court or a district registry

Children who have received an award as a result of litigation

There are also a very small number of instances where monies were placed in the Court Funds Special Account prior to 1 April 1983 and have not yet been paid out or transferred to the Unclaimed Balances account. The main component of these is widows' funds. There are twenty-nine widows' accounts remaining and most of these result from industrial fatal injury cases originating in the 1950s and 1960s where the judges paid the money into court rather than direct to the surviving spouse.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the possible alternatives to the Court Fund Special Account available to litigants and Court of Protection clients; and if she will make a statement; [67310]

(2) what the cost was of the *(a)* consultants and *(b)* departmental staff used to conduct the investment and banking review within her Department; and if she will make a statement; [67312]

(3) what representations she has received on the future of the Court Funds Office and the Court Fund Special Account; and if she will make a statement; [67314]

(4) when she expects to publish the outcome of her Department's Investment and Banking Review; and if she will make a statement; [67323]

(5) who conducted her Department's Investment and Banking Review; how he was appointed; what qualifications he holds; when he reported to Ministers; and if she will make a statement; [67324]

(6) what plans she has to change the Court Funds Special Account; and if she will make a statement. [67385]

Ms Harman: A review of the Banking and Investment activities within the Department for Constitutional Affairs was completed in October 2003. Within this report the role of the Court Funds Office was considered. The review was carried out by an independent reviewer who is a Member of the Securities Institute. They were engaged as a result of a requirement to provide expert advice for a review of DCA's investment and banking operations that was not available 'in house'. The review required detailed knowledge of the regulation of financial services and the investment market and they were selected for their comprehensive knowledge of the investment and banking industry.

The report was commissioned at a cost of £60,000 which included all departmental staff costs.

The Department has in place an Investment and Banking Programme. The Programme is looking at the operations of the Court Funds Office, its constituent parts and any alternatives, within the context of Departmental policy and priorities. This work is still in progress and propositions for change may be developed. If that is the case the Government will engage with interested parties.

There are no plans to publish the internal report which has informed Government policy and other than the activity described in this question I have received no representations about the future of the Court Funds Office and the Court Funds Special Account.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many accounts on behalf of *(a)* individual litigants and *(b)* clients of the Court of Protection are held in the Court Funds Special Account; what the average balance was of the fund over the last 12 months; how many transactions the Account administered in that period; and if she will make a statement. [67376]

Ms Harman: The average balance of funds held in the CFO Special Account for 2005-06 was £3.12 billion. There are 83,195 accounts held on behalf of individual litigants and 18,895 accounts held on behalf of clients of the Court of Protection. During the course of the last year there have been 912,075 transactions.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what rate of interest has been payable on the Court Funds Special Account over the last 12 months; how much above base rate this rate was; and if she will make a statement. [67386]

Ms Harman: The Special Account has paid interest at a rate of 6 per cent. throughout the last 12 months. The base rate set by the Bank of England was at 4.75 per cent. from March until August 2005 when it changed to its present rate of 4.50 per cent. Interest rates on Court Funds accounts are kept under regular review.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans she has to upgrade the IT available to the Court Funds Office; and if she will make a statement. [67313]

Ms Harman: The IT infrastructure for the Court Funds Office is kept under regular review. The processing power of the system is currently being upgraded at minimal capital cost.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many staff are employed in the Court Funds Office; what the *(a)* salary and *(b)* on-costs are; and if she will make a statement. [67318]

Ms Harman: The Court Funds Office staffing level has remained constant over the past reporting year with 195 staff employed as of 31 March 2006. The salary cost for staff for the financial year 2005-06 was £4.96 million, and on-costs were £0.6 million. The total cost for staff was therefore £5.52 million.

Courts

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the *(a)* magistrates courts, *(b)* Crown courts and *(c)* county courts which have closed in each year since January 1995, broken down by parliamentary constituency; and what (i) the date of and (ii) reason for each closure was. [66861]

Ms Harman: The information available to my Department on the county, Crown and magistrates courthouses that have closed since 1995 (broken down by parliamentary constituency) is set out in the following tables.

It has not been possible to include individual reasons for closure against each building. However, the reasons for closures include:

under-utilisation
cost effectiveness
lack of secure custody facilities to meet Human Rights Act requirements
lack of separate waiting area for witnesses and victims away from defendants
facilities being outdated and not meeting Disability Discrimination Act requirements
alternative, improved provision of access to justice (including where the courthouse is being replaced with a new building containing modern and fit for purpose facilities)

Since 1995 a number of new courthouses have been built which has improved the standard of facilities provided to court users.

Magistrates courts

	Courthouse closed	*Date of closure*	*Constituency*
1995	Nottingham (Guildhall)	30 November 1995	Nottingham, South
1995	Nottingham (Sand Field House)	30 November 1995	Nottingham, South
1995	Bala	31 December 1995	Meirionnydd Nant Conway
1995	Hunstanton	31 December 1995	Norfolk North-West
1995	Pembroke	31 December 1995	Carmarthen, West and Pembrokeshire, South
1995	Tywn	31 December 1995	Meirionnydd Nant Conway
1995	Whitminster	31 December 1995	Stroud
1996	Bromley (South Street)	28 February 1996	Beckenham
1996	Mansfield (Commercial Street)	28 February 1996	Mansfield
1996	Hornsea	31 March 1996	Beverley and Holderness
1996	Howden	31 March 2006	Haltemprice and Howden
1996	Market Weighton	31 March 2006	Yorkshire East
1996	Old Street	12 July 1996	Hackney, South and Shoreditch
1996	Halstead	31 August 1996	Saffron Walden
1996	Biddulph	30 September 1996	Staffordshire Moorlands
1996	Kidsgrove	30 September 1996	Staffordshire Moorlands
1996	Cheadle	30 September 1996	Cheadle
1996	Tonbridge	31 October 1996	Tonbridge and Malling
1996	Amlwch	31 December 1996	YNS Mon
1996	Colwyn Bay	31 December 1996	Clwyd, West
1996	Bedale	31 December 1996	Vale of York
1996	Easingwold	31 December 1996	Vale of York
1996	East Dereham	31 December 1996	Norfolk Mid
1996	Bleanau Festiniog	31 December 1996	Blaenau Gwent
1996	Ingleton	31 December 1996	Skipton and Ripon
1996	Leyburn	31 December 1996	Richard (Yorks)
1996	Llangollen	31 December 1996	Clwyd, South
1996	Thirsk	31 December 1996	Vale of York
1997	Ellesmere Port	31 March 1997	Ellesmere Port and Neston
1997	Hampstead	31 March 1997	Hampstead and Highgate
1997	Marylebone	31 March 1997	Cities of London and Westminster
1997	Otley	31 March 1997	Leeds, North-West
1997	Seaham	31 March 1997	Easington
1997	Bromsgrove	31 May 1997	Bromsgrove
1997	Ledbury	31 May 1997	Leominster
1997	Hebburn	5 June 1997	Jarrow
1997	South Shields (Keppie Street)	5 June 1997	South Shields
1997	Chippenham (Market Place)	30 June 1997	North Wiltshire
1997	Ashton-under-Lyne (Manchester Road)	31 August 1997	Ashton-under-Lyne
1997	Duckinsfield	31 August 1997	Denton and Reddish
1997	Thorne	31 August 1997	Doncaster, North
1997	Pontardawe	9 October 1997	Neath
1997	Braintree	31 December 1997	Braintree
1997	Stokeley	31 December 1997	Richmond (Yorks)
1997	Clacton on Sea	31 December 1997	Harwich
1997	Bargoed	31 December 1997	Caerphilly
1997	Monmouth	31 December 1997	Monmouth
1997	Pontlttyn	31 December 1997	Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney
1997	Pontypool	31 December 1997	Torfaen
1998	Malton	6 February 1998	Ryedale
1998	Marlborough Street	31 March 1998	Cities of London and Westminster
1998	Bishop's Stortford	31 March 1998	Hertford and Stortford
1998	Hatfield	31 March 1998	Welwyn Hatfield
1998	Hitchin	31 March 1998	Hitchin and Harpenden
1998	Market Rasen	31 March 1998	Gainsborough
1998	Chertsey	31 March 1998	Runnymede and Weybridge
1998	Farnham	31 March 1998	South-West Surrey
1998	Oxted	31 March 1998	East Surrey
1998	Lutterworth	31 July 1998	Halborough
1998	Ripon	1 August 1998	Skipton and Ripon
1998	Barnard Castle	31 December 1998	Bishop Auckland
1998	Clerkenwell	31 December 1998	Islington, South and Finsbury
1998	Sheerness	31 December 1998	Canterbury
1998	West Malling	31 December 1998	Tonbridge and Malling
1998	Lytham	31 December 1998	Flyde
1998	Diss	31 December 1998	South Norfolk
1998	Corwen	31 December 1998	Clwyd, South
1998	Felixstowe	31 December 1998	Suffolk Coastal
1998	Haverhill	31 December 1998	Clwyd, South
1998	Saxmundam	31 December 1998	Suffolk Coastal
1998	Stowmarket	31 December 1998	Bury St. Edmonds
1998	Newmarket	31 December 1998	West Suffolk

Magistrates courts

	Courthouse closed	*Date of closure*	*Constituency*
1998	March	31 December 1998	North-East Cambridgeshire
1998	Saffron Walden	31 December 1998	Saffron Walden
1999	Christchurch	31 March 1999	Christchurch
1999	Abingdon	31 March 1999	Oxford, West and Abingdon
1999	Henley on Thames	31 March 1999	Henley
1999	Windsor	31 March 1999	Windsor
1999	Morley	31 March 1999	Morley and Rothwell
1999	Pudsey	31 March 1999	Pudsey
1999	Stow on the Wold	30 June 1999	Stroud
2000	Ampthill	1 January 2000	Mid Bedfordshire
2000	Biggleswade	1 January 2000	North-East Bedfordshire
2000	Dunstable	1 January 2000	Mid Bedfordshire
2000	Leighton Buzzard	1 January 2000	Bedfordshire, South-West
2000	Lichfield	31 March 2000	Tamworth
2000	Keighley	1 April 2000	Keighley
2000	Keswick	30 April 2000	Workington
2000	Windermere	31 May 2000	Westmorland and Lonsdale
2000	Wigton	31 May 2000	Penrith and the Border
2000	Appleby	31 May 2000	Penrith and the Border
2000	Gravesend	9 June 2000	Gravesham
2000	Wootton Bassett	2 October 2000	North Wiltshire
2000	Abergele	31 December 2000	Clwyd West
2001	Alfreton	1 January 2001	Amber Valley
2001	Ashbourne	1 January 2001	West Derbyshire
2001	Bakewell	1 January 2001	West Derbyshire
2001	Matlock	1 January 2001	West Derbyshire
2001	Leigh	31 March 2001	Leigh
2001	Middleton	31 March 2001	Heywood and Middleton
2001	Leek	31 March 2001	Staffordshire Moorlands
2001	Worcester	31 March 2001	Hereford and Worcester
2001	Warrington Patten Hall	1 April 2001	Warrington, South
2001	Macclesfield Park Green	1 April 2001	Macclesfield
2001	Bideford	30 April 2001	Torridge and West Devon
2001	Exmouth	30 April 2001	East Devon
2001	Kingsbridge	30 April 2001	Totnes
2001	South Molton	30 April 2001	North Devon
2001	Teignmouth	30 April 2001	Teignbridge
2001	Tavistock	30 April 2001	Torridge and West Devon
2001	Axminster	4 May 2001	East Devon
2001	Tiverton	4 May 2001	Tiverton and Honiton
2001	Newquay	30 June 2001	North Cornwall
2001	Southampton (Commercial Road)	31 August 2001	Southampton Itchen
2001	Womborne	1 September 2001	Staffordshire, South
2001	Gillingham	30 September 2001	North Dorset
2001	Bridlington	9 November 2001	East Yorkshire
2001	Brough	9 November 2001	Haltemprice and Howden
2001	Driffield	9 November 2001	East Yorkshire
2001	Hull (Guildhall)	9 November 2001	Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle
2001	Hull (Lowgate)	9 November 2001	Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle
2001	Pocklington	9 November 2001	East Yorkshire
2001	Withernsea	9 November 2001	Beverley and Holderness
2001	Arundel	1 December 2001	Arundel and South Downs
2002	Bridgenorth	31 January 2002	Ludlow
2002	Leominster	31 January 2002	Leominster
2002	Fakenham	1 May 2002	North Norfolk
2002	Tunbridge Wells	2 June 2002	Tunbridge Wells
2002	Beaconsfield	1 July 2002	Beaconsfield
2002	Buckingham	1 July 2002	Buckingham
2002	Evesham	30 November 2002	Mid Worcestershire
2003	Thame	31 January 2003	Henley
2003	Droitwich	21 March 2003	Mid Worcestershire
2003	Machynlleth	21 March 2003	Meirionnydd Nant Conwy
2003	Chester Le Street	21 March 2003	North Durham
2003	Rugeley	21 May 2003	Cannock Chase
2003	Lampeter	9 June 2003	Ceredigion
2003	Tenby	30 June 2003	Carmarthen, West and South Pembrokeshire
2003	Camberley	30 June 2003	Surrey Heath
2003	Trowbridge	30 September 2003	Westbury
2003	Whitchurch	3 October 2003	North Shropshire
2003	Long Sutton	31 October 2003	South Holland and the Deepings
2003	Caistor	31 December 2003	Gainsborough
2003	Horncastle	31 December 2003	Louth and Horncastle County

Magistrates courts

	Courthouse closed	*Date of closure*	*Constituency*
2004	Richmond	31 March 2004	Richmond (Yorks)
2004	Stourbridge	23 June 2004	Stourbridge
2005	No closures		
2006	Wetherby	7 March 2006	Elmet

(A) Crown courts

Other than the closure of the satellite courts highlighted in the following table there have been no other Crown court closures.

	Courthouse closed	*Date of closure*	*Constituency*
1997	Surbiton Sessions House (a satellite of Kingston-upon-Thames Crown court) crown court sittings ceased when the new building Kingston-upon-Thames Crown court opened at The Bittoms, Kingston.	1997 (unable to confirm exact date)	Kingston and Surbiton
1999	Wellington Town Hall (a satellite of Croydon combined court) was handed back to the landlord and Crown court sittings ceased in 1999.	1999 (unable to confirm exact date)	Carshalton and Wallington

(B) County courts

	Court	*Date of closure*	*Constituency*
1995	Amersham	9 January 1995	Chesham and Amersham
1995	Wisbech	29 September 1995	Cambridgeshire, North-East
1995	Market Drayton	27 October 1995	Shropshire, North
1995	Brentwood	29 December 1995	Brentwood and Ongar
1995	Bargoed	29 December 1995	Caerphilly
1995	Barry	29 December 1995	Vale of Glamorgan
1995	Cardigan	29 December 1995	Ceredigion
1995	Llandrindod Wells	29 December 1995	Brecon and Radnorshire
1996	Otley	2 January 1996	Leeds, North-West
1996	Alfreton	16 February 1996	Amber Valley
1996	Ilkeston	16 February 1996	Erewash
1996	Matlock	16 February 1996	Derbyshire, West
1996	Sleaford	16 February 1996	Sleaford and North Hykeham
1996	Spalding	16 February 1996	South Holland and the Deepings
1996	Dover	29 March 1996	Dover
1996	Folkestone	29 March 1996	Folkestone and Hythe
1996	Newton Abbot	29 March 1996	Teignbridge (court was amalgamated with Torquay)
1996	Sittingbourne	29 March 1996	Sittingbourne and Sheppey
1996	St. Austell	29 March 1996	Truro and St. Austell
1996	Chippenham	30 April 1996	Wiltshire, North
1996	Goole	4 November 1996	Brigg and Goole
1997	Ammanford	27 March 1997	Carmarthen, East and Dinefwr
1997	Andover	30 June 1997	Cotswold
1997	Braintree	1 December 1997	Braintree
1997	Bishop's Stortford	1 December 1997	Hertford and Stortford
1997	Alnwick	15 December 1997	Berwick upon Tweed
1997	Blyth	15 December 1997	Blyth Valley
1997	Berwick upon Tweed	15 December 1997	Berwick upon Tweed
1997	Bridlington	24 December 1997	Yorkshire, East
1998	Rochdale	7 September 1998	Rochdale
1998	Holywell	7 September 1998	Delyn
1998	Camborne and Redruth	24 December 1998	Falmouth and Camborne
1998	Hemel Hempstead	24 December 1998	Hemel Hempstead
1998	West Bromwich	24 December 1998	West Bromwich, East
1998	Loughborough	31 December 1998	Loughborough
1999	Corby (local sittings on trial basis to July 1999)	1 March 1999	Corby
1999	Bridgwater	20 December 1999	Bridgwater
2000	Great Yarmouth	31 January 2000	Great Yarmouth
2000	Grays Thurrock	31 January 2000	Thurrock
2000	Lichfield	3 July 2000	Lichfield
2000	Caerphilly	30 November 2000	Caerphilly (unable to confirm)
2001	Workington	2 January 2001	Workington
2002	Chepstow	1 April 2002	Monmouth
2002	Monmouth	1 April 2002	Monmouth

Deaths in Custody

Ms Keeble: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what legal aid is available to the families of people who die in state custody. [67266]

Ms Harman: Any party who qualifies for legal aid under the standard means and merits criteria can obtain legal advice and information on a variety of matters under the Legal Help scheme. In addition although most civil claims arising from death are outside the scope of civil legal aid, funding can be provided for claims concerning serious wrongdoing by a public authority or significant breach of human rights.

Legal aid for the family of the deceased for representation at an inquest is not normally available, but it can be granted in exceptional circumstances, subject to strict criteria. The Lord Chancellor also has the power to waive the legal aid financial eligibility limits in cases where Article 2 ECHR is likely to require it, providing it is reasonable to do so in all the circumstances of the case.

Disabled People

Tom Levitt: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps the Department has taken to meet its statutory obligation as a public body in promoting the rights of disabled people. [65813]

Bridget Prentice: The Department for Constitutional Affairs is mindful if its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. It has put into place a programme to establish a Disability Equality Scheme which will be operative by December 2006. General action plans are in preparation for the Department for Constitutional Affairs and regional action plans are being prepared regarding specific duties. The Department has sought assistance from the Disability Rights Commission and Greater London Authority regarding its Disability Equality Scheme.

In order to obtain views from disabled staff on the Disability Equality Scheme, questionnaires were sent to all staff with a disability seeking their views/ suggestions as to what should be included in the Scheme. The Disability Rights Commission has yet to define the Secretary of State's areas of responsibility for reporting on the Disability Equality Duty.

The Department's Disability Network has been influential, in conjunction with Human Resources, in arranging a specific training course for frontline staff designed to assist customers with disabilities to access its services more effectively. The Network has put together a step-by-step guidance manual for m: agers and staff detailing how the Department's services might be utilised.

Elections

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many elections there were in each ward of *(a)* the Vale of Clwyd and *(b)* Denbighshire in each of the last 10 years. [67813]

Bridget Prentice: This information is not held centrally. The local authorities in question will have details of the local elections held in their area.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many elections there were in each *(a)* county and *(b)* constituency in each of the last 10 years. [67814]

Bridget Prentice: The information is as follows:

(a) This information is not held centrally.

(b) The following parliamentary constituency elections were held in the past 10 years:

	Number
1997	659 + 4 by-elections
1998	0
1999	5 by-elections
2000	8 by-elections
2001	659 + 1 by-election
2002	1 by-election
2003	1 by-election
2004	3 by-elections
2005	646 + 2 by-elections
2006	1 by-election to date

Electoral Registers (Incomplete)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list all marked electoral registers found to be missing *(a)* in whole or *(b)* in part since the Answer given on 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 642W. [64463]

Bridget Prentice: The information is as follows:

(a) The constituency of Woking remains the only constituency where the marked register from the 2005 General Election is missing in full.

(b) As of 23 January 2006, the following constituencies have parts of their 2005 General Election marked registers missing:

Ashton Under Lyne
Bassetlaw
Beverley and Holderness
Bolton West
Bristol North West
Bristol South
Broxtowe
Bury North
Canterbury
Cardiff North
Carmanthan West
Carshalton and Wellington
Chesterfield
Chipping Barnet
Cities of London and Westminster
Cleethorpes
Copeland
Corby
Crawley
Derby North
Devizes
Doncaster Central
Ellesmere Port and Neston
Enfield North

Erewash
Fareham
Folkestone and Hythe
Gainsborough
Gloucester
Grantham and Stamford
Harlow
Harrow West
Hornchurch
Huntingdon
Hull West and Hessle
Lancaster and Wyre
Leeds Central
Leyton and Wanstead
Liverpool Riverside
Liverpool Walton
Makerfield
Manchester Central
Manchester Gorton
Mid Norfolk
Milton Keynes South West
Monmouth
Newark
Newbury
Normanton
North Dorset
North East Hampshire
North East Hertfordshire
North West Hampshire
Norwich North
Norwich South
Portsmouth North
Preston
Rugby and Kenilworth
Saffron Walden
Selby
Sevenoaks
Sheffield Central
South West Norfolk
South West Surrey
Stone
Surrey Heath
Tamworth
Taunton
Torridge and West Devon
Wallasey
Wansdyke
Warrington South
Waveney
Weaver Vale
Wells
Chelmsford West
West Worcestershire
Wokingham
Wolverhampton South East
Wyre Forest

European Small Claims Procedure

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what progress has been made in negotiations with other EU member states on the European Small Claims Procedure in relation to *(a)* the proposed €2,000 limit and *(b)* the rule that the losing party would have to pay the losing party's costs. [67138]

Bridget Prentice: While the Government would prefer the limit in the European Small Claims Procedure to be higher than €2,000, we recognise that different member states with varying costs of living have different needs. Although a fixed limit remains on the table, other options have also been raised. They include a range within which each member state will be able to set its own limit. The question has not yet been settled and negotiations continue.

The principle that the losing party normally pays their own costs as well as those of the winner has been agreed by member states. The Government have secured agreement that costs should be proportionate and discussions continue as how this is to be achieved.

Gender Recognition Act

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much has been spent on implementation of the Gender Recognition Act 2004. [67092]

Bridget Prentice: The Gender Recognition Act received Royal Assent in July 2004, and came into force in April 2005. During that period, a team in the Department for Constitutional Affairs oversaw the implementation process, including the setting up of the statutory Gender Recognition Panel. Other departments and agencies, including particularly the Office for National Statistics, also worked on the implementation process. As accounting structures do not precisely equate expenditure to individual Bills, and because of this multi-agency effort, I cannot provide precise figures for the implementation process; I can however provide these indicative numbers.

The budget for the Gender Recognition Project for financial year 2004-05, including costs to other departments, was £908,000; however, this also included the later stages of the parliamentary passage of the Gender Recognition Bill. Of this, between £300,000 and £400,000 was allocated for policy administration and staff costs. In the start-up budget for the Gender Recognition Panel, administrative start-up costs were estimated at £81,000,capital start-up costs were estimated at £128,000, programme start-up costs were estimated at £51,000, and rent start-up costs were estimated at £9,000.

The estimated cost for implementation by the Office for National Statistics was £200,000; this includes the establishment of the statutory Gender Recognition Register and preparing for the issue of new birth certificates to successful applicants as required by the Act. Costs to the Court Service were estimated at £34,000; this includes updating computer and other systems to allow for the new grounds for the annulment

of marriages and the issue thereafter of full Gender Recognition Certificates, as well as appeals to the High Court against decisions of the Gender Recognition Panel. These amounts are included in the total.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the salaries are of each of the individuals who sit on the Gender Recognition Panel. [67093]

Bridget Prentice: The President of the Panel is His Honour Judge Harris, who is also President of Appeal Tribunals. The Deputy President is Mr. Jeremy Bennett, who is a Regional Chairman of Appeal Tribunals. Legal members of the Panel are salaried District Chairmen of Appeal Tribunals. None of these office holders receives any additional salary on account of his or her responsibilities in connection with the Panel. Medical members of the Panel are remunerated at the rate of £340 per day.

Hague Convention 1996

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs which Government Ministers have had discussions with Spanish Ministers on the ratification of the Hague Convention of 1996 on the International Protection of Children; and on what dates such discussions took place. [62847]

Ms Harman: My right hon. Friend the then Foreign Secretary raised the matter in a letter to the current Spanish Foreign Minister, Miguel Angel Mbratinos, on 12 October 2004.

In addition to this, my right hon. Friend the Member for Rotherham (Mr. Macshane) raised the issue in a meeting with the then Spanish Europe Minister on 13 November 2003, when Minister for Europe. On 24 November 2003 Baroness Scotland also discussed the issue with Ana Palacio, the then Spanish Foreign Minister.

High Sheriffs

Mr. Beith: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the process is for appointing county selection panels for the selection of High Sheriffs in England and Wales. [67375]

Bridget Prentice: All Counties are encouraged to have Consultative Panels to provide consistency and continuity in the selection of future High Sheriffs. The panels are non-statutory. Guidance on membership is issued by the Association of High Sheriffs of England and Wales.

Inquests

Ms Keeble: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the criteria are by which a decision is taken as to whether an inquest should be heard by a senior judicial office-holder. [67278]

Ms Harman: Any decision whether to appoint a judicial officer as assistant deputy to hear a particular inquest is entirely a matter for the individual coroner.

Juvenile Detention

Dr. Vis: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the role is of magistrates in achieving the Youth Justice Board target of reducing the use of custody for juveniles by 10 per cent. [68120]

Ms Harman: Magistrates deal with young people convicted of crime within the statutory sentencing framework which Parliament has set. They also have regard to relevant decisions of the higher courts, guidelines issued by the Sentencing Guidelines Council, and, where these have been prepared, pre-sentence reports by Youth Offending Teams. Sentencing decisions have a bearing on the Board's targets but the role of magistrates is to sentence within the framework described.

Legal Aid

Mrs. James: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether complaints have been received at her Department about legal aid claimants who *(a)* are suspected of and *(b)* have been convicted of benefit fraud. [65077]

Ms Harman: The Department does receive some complaints about claimants' entitlement to legal aid but they are referred to the Legal Services Commission for investigation. However, information is not collected by the Legal Services Commission specifically about legal aid claimants who have been convicted of benefit fraud.

Party Funding

Lady Hermon: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list leaders of political parties represented at Westminster to whom the Lord Chancellor has written seeking views on elements of a reporting regime of loans received further to the Lord Chancellor's statement in the House of Lords on 20 March. [68781]

Bridget Prentice: The following leaders of political parties represented in Westminster were written to on 20 March: The Rt. Hon. David Cameron MP Leader of the Conservative Party, The Rt. Hon. Sir Menzies Campbell MP Leader of the Liberal Democrat Party, Gerry Adams MP Leader of Sinn Fein, Mark Durkan MP Leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, George Galloway MP Leader of Respect the Unity Coalition, Elfyn Llwyd MP Leader Plaid Cymru, The Rt. Hon. Ian Paisley MP Leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, Lord Rogan Leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, Alex Salmond MP Leader of the Scottish National Party and Richard Taylor MP Independent Kidderminster Hospital and Health Concern.

The Lord Chancellor also wrote at the same time to Lord Beaumont of Whitley of the Green Party.

Personal Injury Cases

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when her Department will

publish its response to the consultation findings on damages in personal injury cases. [68090]

Bridget Prentice: The Law Commission published a number of reports on issues relating to the civil law on damages, including Claims for Wrongful Death, Liability for Psychiatric Illness, and Damages for Personal Injury: Medical, Nursing and Other Expenses; Collateral Benefits. The Government intends to publish a consultation paper on the proposals contained in these reports and other issues relating to the law on damages in summer 2006.

Small Claims

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps are being taken to expand the type of small claims hearings that can be dealt with by telephone. [67146]

Bridget Prentice: Telephone hearings are already used on a limited basis for civil hearings in respect of certain applications in England and Wales.

From April 2006, the scope of hearings that can be dealt with by telephone has been extended to cover many of the preliminary stages of the proceedings in civil cases, including e.g. allocation hearings, listing hearings and case management hearings. This provision includes small claims preliminary hearings.

Hearings that could result in the final determination of the whole or part of the proceedings, such as small claims final hearings, cannot be dealt with by telephone hearing.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 9 May 2006

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal Welfare

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list her Department's *(a)* advisory bodies and *(b)* committees concerned with animal health and welfare; and if she will make a statement. [67178]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA is the Department with the lead responsibility for animal health and welfare. Partnership working with animal owners, the farming industry and others is at the heart of the approach set out in the Government's Animal Health and Welfare Strategy.

The current advisory bodies and committees are:

Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens
Advisory Committee on Organic Standards
Cattle Compensation Advisory Group
Defra Antimicrobial Resistance Co-ordination Group
England Implementation Group for the Animal Health and Welfare Strategy for Great Britain
Farm Animal Welfare Council
Human and Animal Infections and Risks Surveillance Group
Independent Scientific Group on Cattle Tuberculosis
Science Advisory Council
Bovine Tuberculosis Vaccine Programme Advisory Group
Bovine Tuberculosis Vaccine Steering Group
UK Zoonoses Group
Veterinary Products Committee
Veterinary Residues Committee
Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee
Surveillance Group on Diseases and Infections in Animals
Zoos Forum

Avian Influenza

Albert Owen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the impact on the poultry industry of cases of avian influenza being identified in the UK. [68542]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* We are monitoring the effect of these cases closely but it is too early to say what the wider impacts on industry will be. Our present objective is to manage the situation effectively and to minimise adverse impacts by encouraging wide public understanding of the issues and an evidence-based and proportionate response.

At present the disease is confined to three premises. Unless there is a significant spread of disease we do not expect a significant impact on local economies. Trade from the UK to other member states can carry on as normal and we are continuing to work with exporters and British embassies regarding imminent exports of poultry to third countries.

Albert Owen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what support has been given to assist the poultry industry in the UK to deal with the effects on sales as a result of avian influenza. [68547]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The Government are working closely with the poultry industry to respond effectively to the challenges posed by avian influenza.

Market impacts of animal disease are a risk carried by the industry. But the Government seek to minimise that risk by encouraging wide public understanding of the issues and an evidence-based and proportionate response. In particular, the Food Standards Agency, the Health Protection Agency, the chief medical officer and the chief veterinary officer have all made clear statements to the effect that avian influenza does not pose a food safety risk for domestic consumers.

Biological Diversity

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 24 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 813-4W, on biological diversity, what contribution she expects the UK to make towards each of the recommendations; what her timetable is for the delivery of such contributions; and if she will make a statement. [66985]

Barry Gardiner: The Government were closely involved in developing many of the initiatives agreed upon at the Eigth Conference of Parties (COP 8) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), including in it's EU presidency role in the latter half of 2006. We will continue to support the EU in forthcoming international negotiations, including on the conservation of marine biodiversity and genetic resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction, and on the development of an international regime on Access and Benefit Sharing of Genetic Resources.

Many of the decisions from the conference include a call for regional responses and we expect these to be discussed at the next meeting of the Working Party on International Environmental Issues (Biodiversity) in June.

Once the definitive versions of the Decisions taken at COP 8 are available on the website of the Convention on Biological Diversity, my officials will review with other Departments the devolved Administrations and the Nature Conservation Agencies how to ensure that the decisions taken, including the new programme of work on Island Biodiversity, and the decisions on climate change and biodiversity, invasive alien species, business and biodiversity, forest biological diversity and agricultural biodiversity are reflected in our policies, programmes and research for the United Kingdom. This exercise will be completed over the next six months.

One of the key delivery mechanisms for these policies are the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), required under article 6 of the Convention. The COP decision to review the

implementation of NBSAPs is opportune in the light of plans already in place within the UK to refresh the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, which is both a delivery mechanism for the CBD and a link from CBD to the devolved country biodiversity strategies.

The decision on business and biodiversity arose from a joint UK Brazil initiative in partnership with the Secretariat of the CBD, Insight Investments and ILJCN—the World Conservation Union. We will be discussing with these and new partners how to take forward the elements of the decision requiring international development.

I will be discussing the integration of biodiversity into official development assistance with the DFID Under-Secretary of State at the next meeting of the Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Biodiversity.

We will continue to work closely with colleagues in Europe and the Secretariat to the CBD to support work on indicators and the development of improved outcome focussed reporting.

Elements of some decisions will be implemented through existing EU measures, for example the recently concluded Regulation on Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade which strengthens efforts to promote sustainable forest management. In addition, existing EU legislation, in particular directive 2001/18/EC, already ensures a precautionary! Approach to the use of Genetically Modified Organisms (including Genetically Modified Trees and Genetic Use Restriction Technologies).We will continue to provide additional financial resources to support countries rich in biodiversity in the implementation of the CBD through the UK's substantial contribution to the Global Environment Facility (currently £118 million for 2002-2006, of which approximately 30 per cent. goes to Biodiversity projects) and through the Darwin Initiative.

We will also support capacity building efforts over the inter-sessional period leading up to COP 9 in 2008 through DEFRA's World Summit on Sustainable Development Implementation Fund and through DEFRA's support for the Convention's Trust Funds. We will be focusing such efforts particularly on Africa and on support for implementation, particularly through national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

Game Rearing Farms

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 16 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 553W, on game rearing farms, what the reasons are for the difference between the figure for the number of game rearing farms given in that answer and that given in the partial draft regulatory impact assessment on the control of avian influenza. [65430]

Barry Gardiner: Figures provided in the answer of 16 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 553W, represent the industry's own best estimate for the UK as a whole; no specific figures are held. That answer also referred to 200 established game farms, while the partial RIA drew on the Game Conservancy Trust's estimate that there are more than 10,000 holdings where pheasants are reared. The use of these different classifications accounts for the difference in the figures quoted.

More recently, DEFRA has established the Great Britain Poultry Register to gather essential information about certain species of birds only held on commercial premises in Great Britain. This is to support rapid communication with poultry keepers and help to manage disease outbreaks by targeting resources where they are needed most. Further information can be found on the DEFRA website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/vetsurveillance/poultry/index.htm

John Pointon and Sons

Charlotte Atkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which body is responsible for regulating the activities of animal rendering plants, with particular reference to John Pointon and Sons, Felthouse Lane, Cheddleton near Leek, Staffordshire. [67580]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* If the aggregated net thermal rated input of the appliances on a rendering site exceeds 50 MW, the rendering plant falls under part A(1) of section 1.1 of schedule 1 to the Pollution Prevention and Control (England and Wales) Regulations 2000 (PPC Regulations) and thereby is regulated by the Environment Agency. This is the case with the rendering plant operated by John Pointon and Sons near Leek. Rendering plants with less than 50 MW aggregated net thermal rated input falls under part A(2) of section 6.8 of part 1 of schedule 1 of the PPC Regulations and thereby is regulated by the relevant local authority.

The Animal By-Products Regulation (EC) No. 1774/2002 requires all premises on which animal by-products are handled or processed to be officially approved or authorised. In England the implementing Regulations (the Animal By-Products Regulations 2005) prescribe the Secretary of State as a 'competent authority' for the purpose of granting animal by-product approvals. The Secretary of State fulfils this role via the state veterinary service. Approval is only granted or maintained if the competent authority is satisfied that the regulation is complied with.

Natural England

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of hectares of land which would be owned by Natural England; what percentage of this land is dedicated for open air recreation under section 16 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; and what plans exist for dedicating the remaining land. [69530]

Barry Gardiner: We envisage that the majority of Natural England's land holding will comprise National Nature Reserves (NNRs). NNRs cover approximately 89,800 hectares, of which 62,300 hectares are managed by English Nature, the remainder being managed by Approved Bodies. Of the land managed by English Nature, 19,641 hectares are owned and hence qualify for owner-dedication under section 16 (s16) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Some

27,935 ha of all NNRs (whether managed by English Nature or by an Approved Body) are already mapped as access I and under the CRoW Act. No NNRs are currently dedicated under s16 of CRoW, although the first such dedication will follow shortly, prior to the vesting of Natural England. The board of Natural England has not yet considered its policy on s16 dedication.

Poultry Farmers (Subsidies)

Albert Owen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions he has had with his EU counterparts on financial support for poultry farmers in other EU countries; and if he will make a statement. [68543]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* A proposal to extend the current provision for exceptional measures in the eggs and poultry market was adopted at the EU Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 25 April. This allows exceptional market support measures to be taken where there is serious market disturbance because of concerns about avian influenza. Member states would need to specifically request any individual measures, and these would need to be 50 per cent. co-financed. The Commission has made clear that measures adopted by member states before 25 April may be considered for co-financing on a case-by-case basis, and that serious market disturbance is defined at EU—not member state—level.

The UK view is that these kind of measures must be directly linked to exceptional circumstances and must not be used to distort the normal competitive nature of the EU market. It is long-standing UK policy that public funds should not be used to underpin changes as a result of normal market evolution.

Voluntary Shops

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what Government support is available to develop voluntary shops in village communities. [67772]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* Village shops are important to rural communities in providing goods and services, as well as crucial social contact. An increasing number of village shops are operating as social enterprises and able to sustain the business through volunteer action and earned income.

For social enterprises generally, local Business Links are a good source of advice and support. The Business Link website includes a selection of useful sources of information and business support. More specifically, DEFRA's rural enterprise scheme, which is part of the England rural development programme (ERDP), can provide support to social enterprise projects such as community run shops, where they have strong community backing and a business plan which establishes the need for a grant. The current ERDP ends on 31 December 2006 and the rural enterprise scheme will close to new applications on 30 June 2006. DEFRA is currently consulting on priorities for the new rural development programme for England.

The Government have also assisted local services by extending mandatory rate relief at 50 per cent. to include sole village public houses, petrol stations and village food shops under the village shop scheme. Qualifying premises are entitled to a 50 per cent. reduction in their business rates bills, and local authorities have the discretion to top-up all other non-domestic premises up to 100 per cent. provided the rateable value is £14,000 or less.

TREASURY

1921 Census

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer under what statutory authority the Registrar General retained the 1921 decennial census for England and Wales in his Department between 1 January 1959 and 16 January 1985; and if he will make a statement. [67180]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell dated 9 May 2006:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking under what statutory authority the Registrar General retained the 1921 decennial census for England and Wales in his Department between 1 January 1959 and 16 January 1985. (67180)

In 1958 the Public Records Act was passed and Section 3(4) specified a requirement to transfer records to the Public Record Office not later than 30 years after their creation. However advice received at that time was that the statutory prohibition on disclosure prescribed by the Census Act 1920 overcame the requirement.

Subsequently the Registrar General wished the retention of the returns in his custody to be covered by formal approval and this was obtained from the Lord Chancellor in 1985.

Birth Statistics

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what forecast he has made of the number of live births per 1,000 of population in *(a)* East Sussex and *(b)* Eastbourne in each of the next five years. [68389]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question regarding the forecast of the number of live births per 1,000 of population in (a) East Sussex and (b) Eastbourne in the next 5 years. (68389)

The attached table provides the projected crude birth rate in East Sussex and Eastbourne from 2005 to 2010. These projections are based on mid-2003 population estimates and are the latest projections available. They assume that local trends in fertility, mortality and migration over the reference period 1999 to 2003 will continue into the future.

Table 1: Projected birth rates in East Sussex and Eastbourne, 2005 to 2010

	Births per 1,000 population	
	Eastbourne	East Sussex
2005	9.8	9.5
2006	9.6	9.3
2007	9.4	9.0
2008	9.2	8.9
2009	9.1	8.8
2010	9.0	8.7

Notes:
1. Based on the 2003-based sub-national population projections, the latest set of projections currently available.
2. These population projections show an increase in the size of the population and increasing ageing of the population. These factors lead to a projected decrease in birth rates per 1,000 population.
3. All detailed numbers on which rates are based are available on the National Statistics website.

Source:
Office for National Statistics.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many live births per 1,000 of population there have been in *(a)* East Sussex and *(b)* Eastbourne in each of the last 10 years. [68390]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 9 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about how many births per 1,000 population there were in (a) East Sussex and (b) Eastbourne in each of the last 10 years. (68390)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2004; the table below shows the requested figures from 1995 to 2004.

Live birth rates per 1,000 population 1995-2004, Eastbourne CD and East Sussex

	Eastbourne	East Sussex[1]
1995	10.4	10.5
1996	9.3	10.1
1997	11.1	10.6
1998	10.7	10.5
1999	9.9	10.0
2000	9.7	9.6
2001	9.9	9.3
2002	9.4	9.2
2003	10.8	9.6
2004	10.7	9.7

[1] In 1997 Brighton CD and Hove CD ceased to form part of East Sussex. To aid comparability they have been excluded throughout the table

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* live births and *(b)* still births have occurred at (i) Eastbourne district general hospital and (ii) the Conquest hospital, Hastings, in each of the last 10 years. [68399]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 9 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question regarding the forecast of the number of live births per 1,000 of population in *(a)* East Sussex and *(b)* Eastbourne in the next 5 years. (68399)

The attached table provides the projected crude birth rate in East Sussex and Eastbourne from 2005 to 2010. These projections are based on mid-2003 population estimates and are the latest projections available. They assume that local trends in fertility, mortality and migration over the reference period 1999 to 2003 will continue into the future.

Table 1: Projected birth rates in East Sussex and Eastbourne, 2005 to 2010

	Births per 1,000 population	
	Eastbourne	East Sussex
2005	9.8	9.5
2006	9.6	9.3
2007	9.4	9.0
2008	9.2	8.9
2009	9.1	8.8
2010	9.0	8.7

Notes:
1. Based on the 2003-based subnational population projections, the latest set of projections currently available.
2. These population projections show an increase in the size of the population and increasing ageing of the population. These factors lead to a projected decrease in birth rates per 1,000 population.
3. All detailed numbers on which rates are based are available on the National Statistics website.

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Bowel Cancer

Jim Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* incidence and *(b)* survival rate was for bowel cancer in each (i) goverment office region and (ii) strategic health authority area in each of the last three years, broken down by sex and age. [68704]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell dated 9 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what the (a) incidence and (b) survival rate was for bowel cancer in each (i) government office region and (ii) strategic health authority area in each of the last three years, broken down by sex and age. [68704]

The most recent available figures for newly diagnosed cases of colorectal (bowel) cancer registered in England are for the year 2003. Incidence rates by Government Office Region and by sex, in each year between 2001 and 2003, are published in Table 5 of the Annual Reference Volume, Cancer statistics: Registrations, Series MB1. These are available on the National Statistics website:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=8843&Pos=1&ColRank=2&Rank=272

Numbers of newly diagnosed cases and indirectly standardised ratios (SRRs) are available by Strategic Health Authority and by sex for the years 1993 to 2002. These can be found on the Clinical and Health Outcomes Knowledge Base website:

http://www.nchod.nhs.uk/.

The latest available one-year and five-year survival rates by Government Office Region and Strategic Health Authority for cancer of the colon, are for adult patients diagnosed during 1995-1997 and followed up to the end of 2002. These were published on the National Statistics website on 21st April 2005, and are available at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=11991&Pos=4&ColRank=1&Rank=272.

Figures are not available for colorectal (bowel) cancer or cancer of the rectum. Figures by age are only available at England level.

Finance (No.2) Bill

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what *(a)* research and *(b)* other information was used to inform his conclusions regarding the number of people affected by Clause 157 and Schedule 20 of the Finance (No. 2) Bill; [68157]

(2) if he will place in the Library the cost impact assessment of Clause 157 and Schedule 20 of the Finance (No. 2) Bill prepared by his Department. [68212]

Dawn Primarolo: The Red Book contains estimates of the Exchequer consequences of Budget proposals.

HMRC Premises

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what requirements have been placed on HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) in relation to accessibility of its customer-facing offices to public transport; and what assessment HMRC made of the number of buses passing within 100 yards of *(a)* the existing St. James's street office and *(b)* the proposed St. Cross office each hour during the working day in respect of the transfer of the Newport, Isle of Wight, office to new premises. [69483]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC considered—and balanced—a number of factors when considering the new location for the Newport, Isle of Wight inquiry centre. Among the factors considered were accessibility for customers and the availability of suitable accommodation.

Pensions (Public Sector)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many public sector employees were covered by final salary pension schemes in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2005. [69457]

Mr. Timms: We do not have data for the exact years requested. However, for the years 1995 and 2004, the number of employees covered by public service final salary schemes, which include the civil service, NHS employees, teachers, armed forces, police officers, fire fighters and local government employees were 3.9 and 5 million respectively. These figures do not include employees in public corporations, as information about their schemes is not centrally held.

Increases in public sector employment have been concentrated in priority areas and focused on frontline delivery. However, there are other factors such as increases in the proportion of part-time employees opting to join public service schemes.

Prostate Cancer

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his estimate is of the number of cases of prostate cancer in each English county for each year from 1990-91 to 2006-07; and if he will make a statement. [68495]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 9 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what the estimate is of the number of cases of prostate cancer in each English county for each year from 1990-91 to 2006-07. [68495]

The most recent available figures for newly diagnosed cases of prostate cancer registered in England are for the year 2003. I am placing a table in the House of Commons Library, which gives figures by local authority for the years 1990-2003.

Reptiles

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many reptiles were imported into *(a)* the UK and *(b)* the EU each year between 2000 and 2005; and how many were of (i) wild-caught, (ii) captive-bred, (iii) ranched and (iv) farmed origin in each year. [67040]

Barry Gardiner: I have been asked to reply.

Data are only available for imports of species listed under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). Under CITES, there is no source defined as farmed; only wild-caught, captive-bred and ranched.

The following number of wild-caught, captive-bred and ranched live reptiles were imported into the UK under CITES:

	Wild-caught	*Captive-bred*	*Ranched*
2000	3,157	2,089	1,600
2001	2,618	4,013	2,164
2002	3,544	1,393	2,356
2003	5,149	1,988	5,347
2004	4,793	2,925	5,436
2005	3,636	2,382	7,527

Member states release data about the previous year's CITES imports annually in June. Until the June 2006 reporting round is complete, data for imports into the EU are only available up to 2004. The available data show that the following numbers of wild-caught, captive-bred and ranched live reptiles were imported into the EU under CITES:

	Wild-caught	*Captive-bred*	*Ranched*
2000	41,374	143,735	34,405
2001	51,642	123,217	34,611
2002	43,885	155,561	46,637
2003	57,753	192,541	54,999
2004	46,198	176,383	49,617

Staff Discipline

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in his Department have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* dismissed for (i) inappropriate use of the internet while at work and (ii) using work telephones to access premium rate numbers in each of the last five years. [67977]

John Healey: Prior to 2005, the Treasury only kept records of disciplinary cases that were proven. Information on disciplinary cases that were initiated

but not proven is not available. The number of people who were *(a)* disciplined for inappropriate use of the internet while at work in each of the last five years was as follows:

	Disciplined
2001	1
2002	—
2003	—
2004	2
2005	[1]2

[1] The employees concerned resigned during the disciplinary investigation.

No employees were dismissed for this reason.

The number of people who have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* dismissed for using work telephones to access premium rate numbers in each of the last five years is nil.

Suicide

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people have committed suicide in each year since 1997, broken down by method used. [68637]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 9 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many people have committed suicide in each year since 1997, broken down by method used. (68637)

The most recent year for which figures are available is 2004. The attached table shows the number of deaths with a verdict of suicide or undetermined intent, by method of injury in England and Wales for the years 1997 to 2004.

Number of deaths from suicide[1] and injury of undetermined intent[2] by method of injury[3], England and Wales, 1997 to 2004[4]

Method of injury	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Hanging, strangulation and suffocation	1,663	2,028	2,079	1,999	1,877	1,994	1,921	2,057
Drug-related poisoning	1,455	1,355	1,352	1,278	1,248	1,129	1,159	1,150
"Other" poisoning[5]	721	607	570	435	375	353	326	252
Drowning	253	291	283	270	262	257	249	235
Jumping from a high place	139	144	128	158	150	164	166	154
Firearms and explosives	115	125	130	122	111	102	111	95
Contact with sharp object	77	90	86	99	88	105	126	128
Other and unspecified	558	514	560	561	594	561	601	533
Total	4,981	5,154	5,188	4,922	4,705	4,665	4,659	4,604

[1] The cause of death for suicide was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes E950-E959 for 1997 to 2000 and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes X60-X84 for the years 2001 to 2004.
[2] The cause of death for undetermined intent was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes E980-E989 excluding E988.8 for the years 1997 to 2000 and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes Y10-Y34 excluding Y33.9 pending verdicts for the years 2001 to 2004.
[3] The methods of injury were defined using the ICD-9 and ICD-10 codes in the following list and were taken from an article published in Health Statistics Quarterly 20*:
Hanging, strangulation and suffocation, *ICD-9* E953, E983 *ICD-10* X70, Y20
Drug-related poisoning, *ICD-9* E950.0-E950.5, E980.0-E980.5, *ICD-10* X60-X64, Y10-Y14
"Other" poisoning, *ICD-9* E950.6-E950.9, E951-E952, E980.6-E980.9, E981-E982, *ICD-10* X65-X69, Y15-Y19
Drowning *ICD-9* E954, E984 *ICD-10* X71, Y21
Jumping from a high place *ICD-9* E957, E987 *ICD-10* X80, Y30
Firearms and explosives *ICD-9* E955, E985 *ICD-10* X72-X75, Y22-Y25
Contact with sharp objects *ICD-9* E956, E986 *ICD-10* X78, Y28
[4] Figures are for deaths occurring in each calendar year.
[5] Includes motor vehicle exhaust gas.
* Brock A, Griffiths C (2003) Trends in suicide by method in England and Wales, 1979 to 2001. Health Statistics Quarterly 20, 7-18.

Vehicle Excise Duty

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of vehicle excise duty collected was spent on *(a)* the maintenance of roads and *(b)* public transport in each of the last five years. [67187]

John Healey: The Government do not hypothecate revenue from vehicle excise duty into transport expenditure.

Details of Government expenditure on roads and public transport is available on the Department for Transport website http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_transstats/documents/page/dft_transstats041489.pdf

White Papers

Lynne Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many White Papers were published by his Department in 2005; and if he will make a statement. [68248]

John Healey: A list of Command Papers published by the Treasury is to be found on the website of the Office of Public Sector Information (www.opsi.gov.uk). Information relating specifically to White Papers and to Green Papers—terms which are not formally defined—is not available.

PRIME MINISTER

Journalists' Air Travel

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Prime Minister (1) pursuant to the answer of 4 May 2006 to question 67852, how charges to journalists are calculated for their air travel when accompanying him on overseas trips; [69570]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 4 May 2006 to question 67853, if he will list the names of the journalists who have accompanied him on each foreign visit since 2001; and which news organisations have been invited to accompany him on such visits. [69571]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to the answer I gave the hon. Member on Wednesday 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1675W.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Centre for the Development of Enterprise

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the establishment of the Centre for the Development of Enterprise. [68633]

Hilary Benn: The Centre for Development Enterprise (CDE) was established over 25 years ago under the terms of the Partnership Agreement between the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and the European Community and its member states. The CDE's mission is to foster socio-economic development by providing advisory and non-financial services to companies and businesses in ACP countries.

The CDE employs 57 staff. It is primarily funded from the European Development Fund (EDF) which has provided €108 million for 2000-06. The United Kingdom contributes 12.67 per cent. of that amount. Additional funding comes from donors including Sweden, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Portugal, Italy and Spain.

Developing Countries (Corruption)

Anne Moffat: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to tackle corruption in developing countries. [68670]

Hilary Benn: DFID is committed to tackling corruption. It is a problem in most countries, and is a result of failures in governance and accountability. The best check against corruption is to strengthen governance, supported by regular monitoring. We need to focus on building policies and institutions that prevent and deter corruption before it undermines development. DFID programmes include support for a range of governance reforms which are aimed primarily at improving accountability, transparency and the improved financial management of public resources. DFID is also promoting work internationally to develop better indicators that will help track progress over time.

A key part of DFID's work with developing country governments is to support the improvement of strategic planning and public financial management. For example, DFID supports public-financial management reform in Zambia, Rwanda, Malawi, Ghana, Tanzania, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Lesotho and the Gambia. Procurement reform is particularly important and DFID works closely with other bilateral donors and multilateral institutions (especially the World Bank) to improve countries' procurement capacity. Many DFID programmes are also supporting reform of public service pay, conditions and performance management, in order to reduce the incentives for public officials to act corruptly.

DFID also provides support to a wide range of institutions in developing countries, working to tackle corruption and improve the effectiveness of aid and domestic resources to maximise service delivery and benefits to poor people DFID has provided technical and financial support to dedicated anti-corruption commissions, for example in Sierra Leone, Malawi, Uganda and Zambia. In addition work is under way to help improve citizens' capacity to hold governments to account for the way funds are used, by strengthening institutions such as parliaments, parliamentary committees and supreme audit institutions.

Corruption is not just a developing country problem. Developed countries carry an equal responsibility. The UK Government are strongly committed to combating overseas corruption and have taken a number of steps including action to reform the UK domestic legal framework and providing support to developing countries to strengthen their own systems. DFID, working with other government departments, has launched the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative to improve the transparency of oil and mineral revenues. The UK also played an important role in negotiations to develop the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), the first global agreement on the action that needs to be taken to combat corruption. The UK formally ratified the convention on 9 February this year and became only the second G8 country to have done so.

Family Planning

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with the US Administration about *(a)* condom use, *(b)* maternal health, *(c)* access to safe abortion and *(d)* its Mexico City policy on family planning assistance in developing countries. [68243]

Mr. Thomas: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development has not had recent discussions with the US Administration on these issues. The UK does have a different view from the US in a number of areas, including on promoting condom use, and on access to safe abortion. But we do, as we always have, continue to work with the US as closely and constructively as we can to promote country-led, evidence based and effective approaches to sustainable development.

The UK and the US are the largest bilateral donors involved in the supply of condoms and have a shared view on a range of key issues. We are working closely

together, for example with the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition to help develop long-term sustainable responses to reproductive health commodity needs.

DFID and the US have regular discussions on maternal health, and we both support for example, the recently launched Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, as well as joint research on improving ways to measure maternal health.

The US is fully aware of our views on the Mexico City policy; that we do not agree with it.

Malaria

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being made by his Department *(a)* to treat and *(b)* to reduce the incidence of malaria in developing countries. [68229]

Mr. Thomas: UK support to malaria control is provided through global partnerships, multilateral agencies, and bilateral country programmes. Most of these channels support both treatment of malaria and reduction of incidence including through more widespread use of insecticide treated mosquito nets (ITNs). DFID also supports public-private partnerships for the research and development of new tools and technologies (PDPs).

The UK is a key donor to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and malaria (GFATM), and has pledged £359 million to the fund through to 2008. Approximately 27 per cent. of GFATM funds go to malaria treatment and prevention?including both treatment (through provision of anti-malarial drugs) and prevention. DFID has provided £48.5 million from 1998-2005 to the global Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Partnership, who work at global level, including by running the malaria medicines and supplies service which works to support countries to access supplies of effective malaria drugs and ITNs. DFID also provides core funding to the World Health Organisation (£12.5 million in 2004-05), and funds the World Bank and European Commission who also provide support to malaria treatment and prevention.

At country level DFID supports malaria control through bilateral programmes. Our priorities for malaria control focuses on giving support to countries to develop strong and sustainable health systems that are able to scale up the coverage of treatment including artemisinin combination therapy (ACT) and ITNs. In Kenya?DFID has committed £47.4 million to social marketing of ITNs. The aim is to increase the use of nets among pregnant women and children under five. DFID has also committed £8.5 million to develop a sustainable market for ITNs in Mozambique, through community-based and public health centres and retail shops.

DFID has pledged £10 million over five years (2005-10) to the Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV), which aims to discover, develop and deliver new affordable anti-malarial drugs. This is a joint commitment with the Wellcome Trust, who will match our support. DFID will also give £6.5 million over the next three years to the Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi), which includes funding for work on developing a more effective artimisinin combination drug for treatment of malaria.

Palestinian Territories

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on increased funding to the Palestinian territories through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. [68893]

Hilary Benn: DFID provided £15 million to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in April 2006. This will help UNRWA continue to provide health, education, job creation and other essential programmes for Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, Gaza, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. We provided a similar level of assistance through UNRWA in 2005.

Since 2004, DFID has provided a total of £47.2 million for UNRWA's work to support the basic needs of Palestinian refugees.

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the merits of *(a)* non-governmental organisations and *(b)* private sector initiatives funding as a means of sustaining international aid to the Palestinian territories. [68898]

Hilary Benn: Supporting the basic needs of the Palestinian people is a high priority for DFID's programme of assistance. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector play a vital role in meeting the needs of some Palestinians. However, NGOs and the private sector do not have the capacity to substitute for the Palestinian Authority (PA) which, together with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), provides the vast majority of basic services to people in the West Bank and Gaza. We hope that the new Palestinian government will comply with the Quartet principles. If this happened, DFID funding would continue through the PA.

DFID and Her Majesty's Treasury are continuing work that began before the Palestinian elections to take forward the Chancellor of the Exchequer's initiative on the contribution of private sector development and growth to sustained peace in the region. The business environment is clearly very difficult, but we are assessing what opportunities there might be.

Pygmies (Congo Basin)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken by his Department to provide support for pygmies in the Congo basin who have been affected by conflict. [68232]

Hilary Benn: In 2005-06, DFID provided £29.5 million in assistance to meet humanitarian needs in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) out of a total programme of £55 million. We do not earmark our assistance specifically for particular ethnic groups so cannot say what proportion of this would have benefited pygmies. In addition to humanitarian assistance, the majority of our programme is focused on successful completion of the transition process and peace-building activities aimed at reducing the risks of conflict. These activities along with a major diplomatic effort are aimed at seeing a permanent end to the

conflict in the DRC that has had such a devastating impact on the people including pygmies.

In 2004-05, we also provided £500,000 in assistance to meet humanitarian needs in the Republic of Congo (Congo Brazzaville), also not targeted to any particular ethnic groups.

Recruitment

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on recruitment, search and selection agencies in each of the last five years. [68338]

Mr. Thomas: DFID does not make use of recruitment, search and selection agencies when recruiting staff to the home civil service.

In accordance with The Civil Service Commissioners code, external appointments are made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

Our job advertisements are placed in the national press or specialised magazines in addition to appearing on DFID's own website www.dfid.gov.uk. Since 2003, all of our vacancies have also been placed on the civil service recruitment Gateway website www.careers.civil-service.gov.uk

Sex Tourism

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken by his Department to work with developing countries to tackle sex tourism, with particular reference to that involving children. [68174]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) is working with Governments of developing countries to reduce poverty. Poverty can make poor people vulnerable to exploitation in local and international sex tourism. DFID has committed approximately £12 million to support countries' efforts to combat trafficking of poor women and children, many of whom are trafficked for work in the sex industry.

DFID's commitments include support through the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour to help eliminate labour exploitation of women and children in the Greater Mekong basin in South East Asia. This six year programme began in 2003 and works with the Governments of Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam and the province of Yunnan in China to combat trafficking of women and children. DFID is also supporting a Save the Children Fund programme, which works with communities and is specially designed to complement the ILO's interventions on trafficking at national level.

Sexual Violence

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken by his Department *(a)* to reduce the incidence of sexual violence in Democratic Republic of the Congo and *(b)* to improve the status of women in society. [68230]

Hilary Benn: We are concerned about the continuing reports of wide-scale sexual violence in the DRC, primarily against women, though also against significant numbers of children and men too. Rape seems to have become a weapon of war among armed groups. The prevailing culture of impunity, which creates the conditions for ongoing human rights violations, persists in the great lakes region.

The UK is working with the international community at different levels to deal with causes and symptoms of this, and has raised the issue with the Congolese authorities at all levels on many occasions, reminding them of the need to protect the rights of all vulnerable groups and for judicial action to be taken to bring the perpetrators of such abuses to justice. Specifically, as a member of the International Committee to Support the Transition (CIAT), the UK has joined the international community in highlighting abuses perpetrated by the Congolese army against the civilian population.

To end the cycle of human rights violations in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), there needs to be an end to conflict in the country and the whole great lakes region. Conflict reduction is a major focus of the UK's engagement in DRC, and at a local level in the East we support NGOs who are promoting dialogue and peace building work between communities previously in conflict, with a total commitment of £3.3 million.

In addition, all the projects within this peace building programme try to tackle many of the underlying causes of sexual violence and to enhance women's status in society by working with women's organisations. One example of this type of work is International Alert's support for the South Kivu Women's Forum, which brings together women's organisations from community groups to women politicians to work for women's empowerment and peace.

Other areas of our work aim to address other aspects of women's empowerment. For example we are providing support of £800,000 to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to ensure women's full participation in the electoral process, both as candidates and voters.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken by his Department to provide *(a)* psychological counselling for rape victims, *(b)* education for communities to reduce the stigma associated with rape, *(c)* medical treatment for victims including repair of fistula, *(d)* support for women made pregnant as a result of rape and *(e)* other support for victims of sexual violence in Democratic Republic of the Congo. [68231]

Hilary Benn: The high incidence of sexual violence in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is of great concern to the Government, particularly as recent evidence that suggest that levels are increasing. Providing support to the victims of such violence is a key part of humanitarian work in the DRC and DFID is a major donor to humanitarian programmes in the country, through the DRC Humanitarian Action Plan.

The Action Plan identifies 'protection' as a key sector for support, which includes ensuring that special measures are implemented to protect women and girls

from violence in emergency situations and providing adequate assistance for survivors of gender-based violence.

Many of the individual humanitarian projects that we fund include providing support, especially medical assistance to victims of sexual violence, particularly in Eastern DRC. We are providing £440,000 to the Norwegian non-governmental organisation (NGO,) Christian Relief Network to set up and run a hospital wing in South Kivu treating women suffering from fistula—which is one of the most serious and devastating consequences of sexual violence. Their programme includes some of psychological support for patients as well as medical treatment. We are also supporting the International Committee of the Red Cross, who have recently launched a gender-based violence pilot programme in the East.

We have recently agreed to the addition of medical and psychosocial support for victims of sexual violence to an existing humanitarian health programme implemented by the health NGO, Merlin.

Sierra Leone

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the percentage of the population of Sierra Leone which *(a)* lives below the poverty line and *(b)* lives on (i) $1 and (ii) $2 a day. [68150]

Hilary Benn: The Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey of 2003-04 (the latest available figures) found that:

70 per cent. of the population lived below the national poverty line (Leones 2,111 a day, which is the equivalent of $0.90 a day);

Approximately 70 per cent. of the population therefore lives on less than a dollar a day, and this figure is cited by the UN in 2005;

Approximately 75 per cent. of Sierra Leoneans live on less than two dollars a day according to data cited by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in 2006.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department has taken to help Sierra Leone develop policies to enable its Government to generate income from *(a)* diamonds and *(b)* fishing. [68152]

Hilary Benn: DFID is supporting the objectives set out in the Government of Sierra Leone's Core Mineral Policy. It has two main aims: to maximise the economic and social benefits of the diamond sector to both the Government and the people of Sierra Leone; and to ensure that the benefits accrued from the sector are divided more equitably among those involved. I refer the hon. Member for Cotswold to the answer I previously gave on 7 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1395-6.

DFID is committed to ensuring that the Government of Sierra Leone maximise the revenues it can accrue from its mineral resources, including the diamond sector. As part of this commitment, DFID is recruiting a Director General (DG) for the Ministry of Mineral Resources (MMR), whose principle task will be to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Ministry. The DG's responsibilities will include overseeing a work plan that the MMR will develop in close consultation with the Office of the President. The DG will also liaise closely with other ministries, such as the National Revenue Authority and the Ministry of Finance to ensure that the policies developed maximise the revenue potential available to the Government from its extractive sector.

DFID officials are currently assessing options for providing support to fisheries policy development and more effective fisheries management by the Sierra Leone Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources. The European Commission (EC) is currently supporting a fisheries stock assessment in Sierra Leone and DFID's assistance would aim to build on this. At the same time, the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has shown an interest in engaging with Sierra Leone on issues relating to illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing. Our combined objective is to ensure the wealth of this highly prized fishery accrues to Sierra Leone for use by Sierra Leoneans. It is commonly recognised that currently Sierra Leone and neighbouring countries Liberia and Guinea, are together losing $140 million in fish that is stolen by illegal foreign fleets operating beyond the reach of national policing. A recent DFID assessment mission noted that this would have important benefits for the many small-scale fishers and processors and help them access new markets for their produce.

The mission was undertaken as part of the development of a new Joint EC/DFID Country Strategy Paper for Sierra Leone, which will be published in the autumn.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of the population of Sierra Leone has access to *(a)* free education and basic healthcare and *(b)* fresh water; and what steps he is taking to increase the percentage in each case. [68153]

Hilary Benn: There is currently no accurate or reliable data on the percentage of the population that have access to free education and basic health care services. The Ministry of Health estimates for 2005, indicate that approximately 60 per cent. of the population has access to health services of some kind. I refer the hon. Member to the information on 'gross school enrolment rates' in my answer of 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1941W.

On the percentage of the population who have access to safe water, estimates from the Sierra Leone National Energy and Water Policy Planning Unit vary from 21 per cent. to 46 per cent. (Updated water data from a household survey will be available soon and DFID is supporting ActionAid to undertake a water user survey in the Freetown area.)

At the end of the conflict in 2002, DFID agreed a country assistance programme with the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) which focused on promoting peace and security, and good governance. This, with poverty reduction budget support, has formed the core of DFID support to date. As part of the development a new Joint Country Strategy, DFID, the GoSL and the European Commission (EC) are reviewing existing country programmes. This will include an assessment

of needs in the education, health and water sectors. A draft of the Joint Country Strategy will be available for wider consultation in July.

In the meantime, DFID is funding a number of separate initiatives across all three sectors. These include:

providing support to implement a Malaria Outreach programme;

undertaking preparatory work with the National Energy and Water Policy Planning Unit to support the National Water and Sanitation Policy. DFID is also financing a programme aimed at improving the effectiveness of state-owned enterprises, including in the water sector;

through DFID contributions to the EU Water Facility a number of NGO programmes for rural water supply and sanitation are underway in Sierra Leone—with a total value of some €5.4 million.

White Papers

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many White Papers were published by his Department in 2005; and if he will make a statement. [68247]

Hilary Benn: No White Papers within the Commands Paper series were published by DFID in 2005.

TRANSPORT

Aircraft (Air Supply)

John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Civil Aviation Authority has started an investigation into the chronic neurotoxic effects of exposure to pyrolised engine oils via inhalation from aircraft engines into the cabin air supply on various types of aircraft; and if he will make a statement. [67802]

Derek Twigg: We have commissioned for the independent Committee on Toxicity (COT) to conduct a comprehensive evidence review of any health risks in cabin air and the CAA are contributing to this process. The formal COT meeting will be held in public later this year.

Cabotage Directive

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the impact of the EU Directive relating to cabotage on the UK haulage industry. [69528]

Dr. Ladyman: Based on figures published by Eurostat, it is estimated that, in 2004, cabotage operations by foreign hauliers accounted for about 1.2 per cent. of all road haulage operations in the UK (the cabotage penetration rate for the EU as a whole was also about 1.2 per cent.)

We are working with industry, through the Haulage Industry Task Group, to gather further evidence on the range of challenges facing the haulage industry, including competition from overseas, but also a number of other important issues.

Corporate Hospitality

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on how many occasions he has accepted corporate hospitality in the last 12 months. [67529]

Derek Twigg: Paragraph 5.28 of the Ministerial Code sets out the rules on the registration of hospitality.

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list *(a)* the websites operated by his Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65200]

Derek Twigg: The following websites are operated by the Department for Transport and its Agencies:

www.dft.gov.uk
www.cfit.gov.uk
www.cyclesense.net
www.cyclesmart.org
www.databases.dft.gov.uk/schools
www.databases.dft.gov.uk/primary
www.databases.dft.gov.uk/secondary
www.databases.dft.gov.uk/roadsafety
www.dft-eb-calculator.co.uk
www.dptac.gov.uk
www.drugdrive.com
www.hedgehogs.gov.uk
www.highwaycode.gov.uk
www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk
www.thinkseatbelts.com
www.transportdirect.gov.uk
www.transportdirect.info
www.utmc.gov.uk
www.webtag.org.uk

DfT Agency websites:

www.mcga.gov.uk
www.highways.gov.uk
www.ha-research.gov.uk
www.trafficmap.co.uk
www.dvlaregistrations.co.uk
www.dvla.gov.uk
www.dvlaonline.gov.uk
www.vehiclelicence.gov.uk
www.dsa.gov.uk
www.passplus.org.uk
www.arrivealive.info
www.ask-what-if.com
www.theory-tests.co.uk
www.vcacarfueldata.org.uk
www.vca.gov.uk
www.vosa.gov.uk

We published 187 new documents on the Department's main website (www.dft.gov.uk) in March 2006.

All major activity will be published in both forms and promoted to stakeholders and the press for wider dissemination. In contrast, some publications, particularly those aimed at niche/specialist audiences, may be published in electronic format only.

It is the Department's policy to make documents available in paper and alternative formats on request. The DfT website also complies with Web Accessibility Initiative (WIA) AA accessibility standards.

Disabled Access

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department is taking to enforce the disability equality duty on train operating companies. [64483]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport is currently assessing its policies and functions, including those of the Rail Group, in preparation for producing its own Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan which will be published later this year.

We have already achieved a great deal to ensure that our railways are more accessible to disabled people, for example:

All new rail vehicles must be accessible to disabled people, including wheelchair users. Over 4,400 accessible vehicles have already entered service.

All TOCs, and Network Rail, are now required to publish a Disabled People's Protection Policy which describes how they will provide a service to disabled passengers and make information about the accessible features of each of the stations they operate publicly available.

As service providers, TOCs are obliged to remove any barriers that make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to access their services. This duty applies to infrastructure including stations and services such as booking facilities.

In addition, we have launched our "Railways for All" Strategy which sets out how we will improve the accessibility of rail travel in Great Britain. The strategy is complemented by a £370 million Access for All fund to target improvements to the accessibility of stations through to 2015.

Powers in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 will also have an effect in this area. In particular, they will give disabled people a "right of access" to transport vehicles?including rail vehicles, enable the setting of an "end date", of no later than 1 January 2020, by which time all rail vehicles will become regulated, enable accessibility regulations to be applied to older rail vehicles when they are refurbished and other measures such as the introduction of compliance certification. These provisions will be in place by the end of this year.

GNER (Leeds/London)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with GNER concerning its plans to increase the number of Leeds to London trains; and if he will make a statement. [68672]

Derek Twigg: Network Rail has been required by the Office of Rail Regulation to undertake further timetabling work to establish how many additional GNER Leeds to London trains can be accommodated in addition to the extra Grand Central and Hull Trains services for which ORR recently granted access rights. The impact on GNER's timetable plans will be assessed when the result of Network Rail's work becomes available.

Humber Sea Terminals

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the Harbour Revision Order for Humber Sea Terminals (Phase 3) to be signed; and if he will make a statement. [67882]

Derek Twigg: I expect a decision on the order to be made within the next six weeks.

London Underground

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make representations to Transport for London to ensure that *(a)* underground stations are not closed and *(b)* services are not subject to significant restrictions unless planned work is carried out; and if he will make a statement. [68601]

Derek Twigg: The closure of stations and suspension of services for maintenance works is an operational matter for London Underground, which transferred from central Government to Transport for London and the Mayor of London on 15 July 2003.

MOT Computer System

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what provisions he has made to compensate garage owners for technical difficulties with the new MOT computer system. [69551]

Dr. Ladyman: There are two back-up provisions available to all garages in the MOT scheme designed to enable continuity of service to motorists in the event of technical difficulties to the MOT computer system. In addition to these, all of the 18,300 garages currently in the MOT scheme have been contacted and advised to write to the MOT service management team if they believe they have suffered financial loss as a result of disruptions to the MOT service. Each claim will be considered on its respective merits.

Night Flight Restrictions

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he plans to announce a decision in relation to the Night Flights Restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted Consultation; and if he will make a statement. [68108]

Gillian Merron *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* We have been considering the responses to the consultation on night flying restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports and will announce our final conclusions by the end of the month. However, in order to remove uncertainty on an element which has given rise to concerns, we announced yesterday that we have decided not to increase night-time movement limits at Heathrow during the period 2006 to 2012.

Railways

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had since the

beginning of 2005 with *(a)* directors and *(b)* employees of Network Rail to discuss extra rail capacity for open access operators; and if he will make a statement. [67271]

Derek Twigg: The Secretary of State meets regularly with senior directors of Network Rail to discuss a range of issues, including improving the capacity of parts of the network for all train operators, both franchised and open access.

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Office of the Rail Regulator, *(b)* potential bidders, *(c)* Network Rail and *(d)* Passenger Focus about the network capacity and financial implications of an open access operator operating on the route as part of the franchise specification process for the (i) South West, (ii) East Midlands, (iii) West Midlands and (iv) Cross Country franchise areas. [67272]

Derek Twigg: The Department has regular discussions with the ORR, Network Rail and Passenger Focus on issues relating to franchise specifications, and a briefing session for potential franchise bidders was held in April 2006.

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the rail franchise contracts that have been awarded in the last two years; and what the *(a)* premium or subsidy payable and *(b)* length of the contract is in each case. [67268]

Derek Twigg: The franchises awarded, their contract lengths, and details of their subsidy or premium are as follows:

Franchise	*Started*	*Term (years)*	*Subsidy or premium*
One	April 2004	10	£0.5 billion premium
ScotRail	October 2004	10	£1.9 billion subsidy
Northern Rail	December 2004	8.75	£2.434 billion subsidy
ICEC	April 2005	10	£1.36 billion premium
Integrated Kent	April 2006	8	£585 million subsidy
Greater Western	April 2006	10	£1.131 billion premium
Thameslink/GN	April 2006	9	£808 million premium

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the award of franchises on the East Coast rail line. [68049]

Derek Twigg: The following franchises have part of their operation on the East Coast Main Line: Virgin Cross Country, Northern Trains, Trans Pennine Express, First Capital Connect, ScotRail, Central Trains and GNER. Periodically these franchises will fall due for renewal. Replacement franchises will be awarded in accordance with DfTs guidance which is published on the Department's website.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what information a bidder is required to give about its services for disabled people within the tender evaluation process for rail franchising; and what weight is given to that information in awarding the franchise. [68469]

Derek Twigg: The evaluation of each bid incorporates assessing the evidence provided of how the franchisee intends to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) in delivering station and train services including provision of assistance to and consultation with impaired passengers, provision of tickets and training of staff.

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to ensure that Ivybridge has a rail service and timetable that is viable for *(a)* commuters and *(b)* students. [67608]

Derek Twigg: Under present plans Ivybridge will have five trains in each direction each weekday with effect from December 2006, at times to meet the needs of the majority of users. We are considering whether there are options for providing additional services.

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to be able to announce how much will be available from the savings made by the reduction in the Sunderland-Newcastle rail service to help fund improvements to Sunderland railway stations. [67811]

Derek Twigg: Discussions between the Department for Transport and Nexus, the Tyne and Wear PTE, who are sponsoring proposed improvements to Sunderland railway station, are continuing. An announcement will be made in due course.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much *(a)* GNER trains, *(b)* Virgin trains, *(c)* Northern trains and *(d)* First trains have been fined for late running of trains in each year since the introduction of the fines. [67188]

Derek Twigg: The penalties for poor performance paid by franchised train operators, together with bonuses paid where performance has been better than each company's benchmark, are itemised in the following table.

Incentive net regime payments by financial year

£000

Train operator	*1997-98*	*1998-99*	*1999-2000*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Anglia Railways	303	302	288	(221)	(329)	(3,160)	—	—
Cardiff Railways	298	(1,423)	(59)	(73)	217	—	—	—
Central Trains	1,675	(1,651)	(384)	(8,804)	(9,633)	(10,910)	(6,838)	(11,348)
Chiltern Railways	(117)	(276)	(115)	(467)	(484)	(846)	(397)	(189)
Connex South Central/ South Central	764	1,118	(1,020)	(9,248)	(5,978)	(6,342)	(12,828)	(12,118)
Connex South Eastern	(974)	(1,629)	(2,040)	(11,229)	(5,746)	(6,897)	(2,895)	—
South Eastern Trains	—	—	—	—	—	—	(2,998)	(2,501)
Cross Country	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gatwick Express	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Great Eastern Railway	(122)	541	325	(7,744)	(5,579)	(1,525)	—	—
Great Northern Eastern Railway	—	—	—	—	—	—	(2,902)	(2,447)
Great Western	—	(2,452)	(2,175)	(1,978)	(5,408)	(2,610)	(2,020)	(1,058)

Incentive net regime payments by financial year

£000

Train operator	*1997-98*	*1998-99*	*1999-2000*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Island Line	(24)	(14)	(20)	(41)	(9)	(12)	(17)	(25)
LTS Rail (later c2c Rail)	1,391	747	34	(477)	(2,540)	(430)	371	1,844
Merseyrail Electrics	178	(114)	(346)	(796)	(641)	276	—	—
Midland Mainline	—	—	(18)	(15)	87	—	—	—
North Western Trains	2,078	238	1,982	(2,256)	(3,455)	(2,536)	(1,448)	(540)
Regional Railways North East/Northern Spirit	1,331	1,761	625	(8,337)	(7,611)	(3,729)	(1,111)	(741)
Northern	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Scotrail	6,986	6,280	5,402	(5,284)	(9,999)	(8,654)	(2,820)	(2,268)
First Scotrail	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	(178)
Silverlink	844	(199)	(254)	(2,879)	(2,854)	(447)	(90)	294
South West Trains	(1,281)	(3,933)	(3,657)	(10,648)	(12,776)	(11,471)	(10,186)	6,726
Thames Trains/First Great Western Link	(572)	(2,224)	(2,046)	(4,291)	(4,069)	(4,173)	(3,990)	(4,700)
Thameslink	(49)	(270)	(668)	(4,337)	(3,325)	(2,904)	(2,844)	(6,473)
TransPennine Express	—	—	—	—	—	—	(50)	(2,817)
Wales and West	664	(378)	1,776	(4,497)	(1,577)	—	—	—
West Anglia Great Northern	(346)	(452)	(849)	(8,833)	(8,359)	(6,380)	(2,782)	(1,767)
West Coast Trains	—	—	(67)	(15)	(12)	(88)	(476)	(80)
Wales and Borders Trains/Arriva Trains Wales	—	—	—	—	(1,329)	(2,425)	1,286	179
Wessex Trains	—	—	—	—	(1,115)	(3,354)	(2,094)	(1,398)
Total	13,027	(4,028)	(3,286)	(92,470)	(92,524)	(78,617)	(57,029)	(41,605)

Notes:
1. Figures obtained from published financial reports.
2. Brackets indicate receipt from the Operator.
3. Roundings can result in the total not being the same as previous published total.
4. Wales and West Railway and Cardiff Railway were superseded by Wales and Borders Trains and Wessex Trains on 14 October 2001.
5. 2004-05 represents the period 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005, with the exception of Arriva Trains Northern, which is from 1 April 2004 to 11 December 2004; First North Western, which is from 1 April 2004 to 11 December 2004; Northern, which is from 12 December 2004 to 31 March 2005; Scotrail, which is from 1 April 2004 to 16 October 2004; and First Scotrail, 17 October 2004 to 31 March 2005.
6. 2003-04 represents the period 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004, with the exception of Arriva Trains Wales, which is from 8 December 2003 to 31 March 2004; South Eastern Trains, which is from 9 November 2003 to 31 March 2004; TransPennine Express, which is from 2 February 2004 to 31 March 2004.
7. Merseyrail no longer franchised from July 2003.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when HM Railway Inspectorate last visited Llansamlet railway station; and what conclusions were drawn from the visit. [60818]

Derek Twigg: The Health and Safety Executive's HM Railway Inspectorate (HMRI) last visited Llansamlet station on 27 January 2006. HMRI inspected work being undertaken by a Network Rail contractor, to upgrade railway signalling and telecommunication infrastructure near the station. HMRI concluded that no action needed to be taken.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps are being taken at Llansamlet railway station *(a)* to improve passenger security, *(b)* to reduce vandalism, *(c)* to improve passenger facilities, *(d)* to provide on station ticketing machines and *(e)* to provide CCTV as part of the Arriva Trains Wales franchise. [60826]

Derek Twigg: There are no current plans by Arriva Trains Wales (ATW) for improvements to passenger facilities and security at Llansamlet railway station. ATW do have a regular programme of station patrols and graffiti removal.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to incorporate the Westcountry coast line between Exeter and Plymouth in the Trans European Network. [68330]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The line between Exeter and Plymouth is already defined as part of the Trans European Railway Network.

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the electrification of the Wrexham to Bidston railway line. [68890]

Derek Twigg: The Borderlands Rail Study assessed electrification of all or parts of the Wrexham to Bidston line and integrating it with the Merseyrail Electrics network. It also considered the case for extensions to the existing diesel operation and new stations at Beechwood, Woodchurch and Deeside Park. Merseytravel, together with neighbouring authorities and the North Wales local authority consortium Taith, are considering the results of the study.

Subject to all available funding sources and discussions with interested parties, Merseytravel will consider whether a scheme is suitable to promote for major scheme funding as part of the second local transport plan for Merseyside covering the period 2006-11. The specification and funding of the Arriva Trains Wales service between Wrexham and Bidston is a matter for the Welsh Assembly Government.

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the maximum speed regularly attained by *(a)* passenger and *(b)* freight trains is on the North Wales coast line between Chester and Holyhead. [69430]

Derek Twigg: The maximum line speed for passenger train services along the North Wales Mainline is 90mph and for freight trains it is set at 60mph.

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* incidents of objects thrown at or dropped on moving railway vehicles, *(b)* derailments, *(c)* incidents of livestock wandering

onto the track, *(d)* collisions between moving railway vehicles and *(e)* suicides were recorded on the North Wales coast line between Chester and Holyhead in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [69431]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport does not hold this information. This is an operational matter for Network Rail and I have asked them to reply directly to my hon. Member.

Sea Defences

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been allocated to maintain the sea defences along the stretch of railway track at Dawlish in each of the next three years; and how much was spent in each of the last three years. [69129]

Derek Twigg: This is an operational matter for Network Rail. I have asked Network Rail to reply directly to the hon. Member.

Ship-to-ship Oil Transfers

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the plans to regulate ship to ship oil transfer are on schedule; and if he will make a statement. [68945]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to my answer to the hon. Member for Edinburgh, North and Leith (Mark Lazarowicz) of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1118-19W. My officials are still working towards the deadline outlined therein, ie to consult in the summer with a view to secondary legislation which will regulate ship-to-ship transfers within the limits of the UK's territorial sea coming into force later in the year.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the economic effects of ship to ship oil transfer on *(a)* HM Treasury, *(b)* ports authorities and *(c)* surrounding local communities. [69203]

Dr. Ladyman: In accordance with the Cabinet Office guidance, the Department will prepare a regulatory impact assessment, which will address economic factors, to accompany the secondary legislation which will regulate ship-to-ship transfers within the limits of the UK's territorial sea.

Taxi Access (Disabled People)

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the Government will publish taxi access regulations under Part 5 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. [68470]

Derek Twigg: We do not yet have a timetable for introduction of taxi accessibility regulations but the current situation is that local licensing authorities remain free to introduce their own accessibility policies and many have done so already. We are currently developing a technical specification to set the design parameters for accessible taxis. To assist this process, the Department held a seminar in June 2005 for stakeholders from industry, organisations representing disabled people and licensing authorities to discuss the complex issues around taxi accessibility. The views expressed at the seminar will be used to shape a consultation package.

Transport Regulations

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the operation of *(a)* Regulation 16, *(b)* Regulation 18 and *(c)* Schedule 3 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986; and what recent representations he has received about the operation of these Regulations. [69635]

Dr. Ladyman: The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 as amended, including Regulations 16, 18 and Schedule 3, are operating as normal and I have received no representations about their operation. I occasionally get enquiries or suggestions for amendments to the Regulations. Each request is considered on its merits and may result in changes to the Regulations. The most recent amendments to the specific Regulations mentioned were made in 2001 and came into force on 1 May 2002.

It has been suggested that consolidation of the Regulations would be useful. The Department has sympathy with this view but does not see such a consolidation as a high priority at present.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the operation of the Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations 1989; and what recent representations he has received about the operation of this Act. [69636]

Dr. Ladyman: The Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations 1989, as amended, are operating as normal and I have received no representations about their operation. I occasionally get suggestions or enquiries about amendments or additions to the Regulations. Recent enquiries have included requests for the Regulations to include special retro-reflective markings for the emergency services' vehicles, to permit red lights to be used by emergency and recovery vehicles and to require the fitment of retro-reflective tape to trucks. Each request is considered on its merits and this may result in changes to the Regulations; the latest amendments were made last year.

The Department is at present planning further amendments to the Regulations. These would permit the distinctive retro-reflective liveries on vehicles used by the emergency services, such as the blue and yellow block pattern used by the police, which are not allowed under the existing Regulations. This change would remove the need for the individual temporary exemptions that are currently issued to each service.

SCOTLAND

Joint Ministerial Committee

7. **Mr. Lancaster:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when the Joint Ministerial Committee last met. [67713]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Joint Ministerial Committee is the policy responsibility of the

Department for Constitutional Affairs. The last plenary meeting of the JMC was in October 2002.

Manufacturing

8. **Jim Sheridan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what assessment he has made of the future of Scotland's manufacturing industry. [67714]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Prospects for the future of the Scottish manufacturing sector are now very positive with a number of reports of growth in output, demand and employment in the first quarter of this year.

Energy

9. **Anne Moffat:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what steps he is taking to ensure that the energy review takes account of the views of the energy industry and energy consumers in Scotland. [67716]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: A wide range of Scottish interests have contributed to the consultation process in connection with the Energy Review. My hon. Friend, the Energy Minister, and his review team are in regular contact with the devolved Administrations.

12. **John Thurso**: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with Ministers in the Department for Trade and Industry on the commercial development of tidal energy in the Pentland Firth; and if he will make a statement. [67719]

David Cairns: Scotland Office Ministers and officials have discussions with their counterparts in the Department of Trade and Industry on a wide range of energy-related topics.

Government support development of tidal and other marine energy technologies by assistance for the European Marine Energy Centre in Orkney and through the £50 million Marine Renewables Development Fund.

Personal Debt

10. **John Barrett:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on levels of personal debt in Scotland. [67717]

David Cairns: Personal debt data is collected on a UK basis by the Bank of England. The UK Government, in partnership with the Scottish Executive, is however committed to addressing problems that may arise from over-indebtedness, particularly for vulnerable groups.

Barnett Formula

11. **David Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what representations he has received on the socio-economic effects of the Barnett formula in Scotland. [67718]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I have received no representations on the socio-economic effects of the Barnett formula. The Government are content with current arrangements and have no plans to replace or to review the Barnett formula, which has delivered fair, stable and transparent settlements for Scotland under successive administrations for almost 30 years.

Voting Rights

13. **Mark Pritchard**: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the voting rights of hon. Members representing Scottish seats on issues which do not affect Scotland. [67720]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Wellingborough (Mr. Bone) during Scottish oral questions on 28 February 2006.

TV Licences

14. **Mr. Weir**: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what recent discussions he has had with the BBC and Cabinet colleagues on television licences in Scotland. [67721]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I intend to have regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues on a range of issues affecting Scotland. TV licensing is a matter for the BBC.

Loan Sharks

Mark Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on the work of the loan sharks pilot scheme in Scotland. [67715]

David Cairns: My right hon. Friend and I have regular discussions with Ministerial colleagues in the Department of Trade and Industry. I recently met the manager of the Scottish Illegal Money Lending Unit, based in Glasgow, to discuss this groundbreaking initiative that tackles the problem of illegal loan sharks.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Sexual Offences (Anonymity)

22. **Ben Chapman**: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the Home Department on anonymity during court proceedings for those accused of sexual offences. [68822]

Ms Harman: I have had many discussions with Home Office Ministers about sexual offences since I became Solicitor General in 2001 and since 2005 in my role as Minister of State in the Department for Constitutional Affairs. There are no plans to change the rules to provide anonymity for those accused of sexual offences.

Compulsory Voting

23. **Ann McKechin**: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether her Department has considered recent studies on the merits of compulsory voting; and if she will make a statement. [68823]

Bridget Prentice: The Government have noted with interest the findings of the report just published by the Institute for Public Policy Research on this subject, and will wish to give them careful consideration.

Electoral Fraud

24. **Mr. Gordon Prentice**: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent estimate she has made of the incidence of electoral fraud. [68824]

Bridget Prentice: Although instances of fraud often get prominent coverage in the media, it should be put in context, as actual proven cases are few and far between. That is not to say we are complacent, as the legislative and other action we have taken in recent years demonstrates.

Court Houses (Private Finance Initiative)

25. **Bob Russell**: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many court houses have been built by means of a private finance initiative in the last five years. [68825]

Ms Harman: There have been 15 courthouses built under the private finance initiative in the last five years.

Court Modernisation (East Anglia)

26. **Mr. Bellingham**: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when she next expects to meet representatives of the lay magistracy to discuss the modernisation of courts in East Anglia. [68826]

Ms Harman: I have no current plans to meet representatives of the local magistracy in East Anglia to discuss the modernisation of courts in East Anglia. I am of course ready to do so if that would prove useful.

Asylum Seekers (Local Franchises)

27. **Jim Cousins:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what criteria the Legal Services Commission will use to award local franchises for services to asylum seekers. [68827]

Vera Baird: The Commission may award a contract where a supplier has obtained its Specialist Quality Mark, has an accredited supervisor and intends to provide legal services in an area of unmet need. Next year the Commission may introduce a contract performance requirement for 40 per cent. success rate at appeal.

Electoral Turnout

28. **Julie Morgan:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps his Department is taking to increase voter turn-out. [68828]

Bridget Prentice: The Government have embarked on a number of initiatives to promote participation in democracy. It is the role of The Electoral Commission to promote participation in elections and we fully support them in this work.

Human Rights Act

29. **Mr. Dismore:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what guidance his Department has issued on the applicability of the Human Rights Act 1998 to residential homes for the elderly in the context of private providers of public functions. [68829]

Bridget Prentice: As recommended by the Joint Committee on Human Rights, the Government issued guidance last year to local authorities on the use of contractual conditions to ensure that services delivered on behalf of the local authority are provided in a way that takes account of the Human Rights Act 1998.

NGOs (Financial Initiatives)

Mr. Love: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what initiatives his Department and its non-departmental bodies support to promote *(a)* financial education, *(b)* financial advice, *(c)* financial inclusion and *(d)* financial capability; which organisations are involved in delivering each initiative; and how much funding is provided for each by (i) his Department and its non-departmental public bodies, (ii) other Government Departments, (iii) the private sector and (iv) the voluntary sector. [66579]

Bridget Prentice: The Legal Services Commission (an NDPB of the Department for Constitutional Affairs) is working with the Department of Trade and Industry and Department for Work and Pensions as part of a national agenda to tackle rising levels of debt. The Commission is currently piloting a number of innovative new advice services to help people facing financial exclusion, following a £6 million grant from the Treasury's Financial Inclusion Fund.

During 2004-05 the Legal Services Commission spent approximately £17.5 million on specialist debt advice through its contracts with both solicitors and not for profit agencies.

The Public Guardianship Office is an Agency of the Department for Constitutional Affairs responsible for ensuring the financial well-being of people who lack the capacity to manage their own financial affairs. It does this by supporting the Court of Protection (CoP) in the appointment of Receivers, and through the registration of Enduring Powers of Attorney (EPA). The PGO also undertake checks to establish that appointed Receivers are carrying out their duties in an appropriate manner.

Exceptionally, when no suitable relative or friend wishes to act as a Receiver, the PGO try to find someone else to take on this role, or as a last resort, the Chief Executive of the PGO may be appointed.

In carry out its role the PGO provides practical guidance for people appointed by the CoP to make financial decisions for people who lack mental capacity to do so themselves. The PGO also undertakes awareness initiatives to inform the public on how to make provision in the event that someone may lose their mental capability—due to dementia, illness or accident—and may no longer be able to make their own decisions.

The PGO currently recovers 82 per cent. of its full costs from fees, which results in approximately a net cost to DCA of £5 million of which £1 million is in respect to fee remission. This work is not an 'initiative' as such, as it is part of the core work of the Agency.

Recruitment

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on recruitment, search and selection agencies in each of the last five years. [68347]

Bridget Prentice: The answer is as follows:

Recruitment below the senior civil service

My Department does not hold this information centrally and it is, therefore, not possible to collate this without incurring disproportionate costs. For DCA recruitment below the SCS we do not routinely use search or selection agencies. All recruitment is managed in house in accordance with the civil service commissioners code.

Senior civil service recruitment

No central information is held about the costs of campaigns as individual business areas pay their own recruitment costs. However, during the last five years we ran 24 campaigns to recruit 39 Senior Civil Servants. The average cost for each of these campaigns would be approximately £40,000, which includes the advertising and assessment centre costs.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Portcullis House

34. **Norman Baker:** To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what plans the Commission has to review the use of voice messages in the lifts in Portcullis House. [68811]

Nick Harvey: There is currently a programme to ensure that all lifts on the parliamentary estate comply with disability best practice. The voice messages in the lifts in Portcullis House are being reviewed as part of this programme. Messages will cover the opening and closing of the doors, the direction of travel and the floor at which a lift stops.

House Expenditure

35. **Mr. Andrew Turner:** To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what the procedures are for approving expenditure by the House of between £100,000 and £1 million; and if he will make a statement. [68812]

Nick Harvey: Approval procedures and financial delegations to officials are set out in the House of Commons Resource Framework, a copy of which has been placed in the Library. Significant investment decisions?over £500,000 on works and £150,000 on non-works?require a full business case and formal approval by the Clerk of the House. Decisions on overall funding and on major individual expenditure proposals are overseen by the Commission, advised as appropriate by the Finance and Services Committee.

Recycling

36. **Mr. Hollobone:** To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what steps the Commission has taken to increase the recycling of office waste on the House estate. [68813]

Nick Harvey: Since the beginning of the year recycling of glass, cans and plastic bottles is being introduced on a trial basis in Portcullis House (Atrium and photocopier rooms), outside the Terrace Cafeteria and in 7 Millbank. These trials will highlight any issues and allow them to be addressed before the scheme is rolled out, first into outbuildings and then into the Palace.

All small offices should now have two waste bins; one for general waste and another for paper only. Larger offices and open-plan offices have general waste bins and a large cardboard bin for paper only. General waste and paper is collected separately, with the general waste sent for incineration and the paper sent for recycling.

In addition, a new waste management contract is currently being let. The specification of this contract sets targets for continuous improvement in recycling throughout the life of the contract.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Back-Bench Debates

33. **Sir Nicholas Winterton:** To ask the Leader of the House if he will bring forward proposals to allocate parliamentary time on the floor of the House for debates on motions to be chosen by Back-Bench hon. Members. [68810]

Mr. Straw: There are no current plans to do this but the Procedure Committee is looking at the handling of Early Day Motions at the moment and I will of course consider their report with interest.

Parliamentary Questions

37. **Ben Chapman:** To ask the Leader of the House what recent discussions he has had with ministerial colleagues regarding tabling of parliamentary questions during recesses. [68814]

Mr. Straw: I remain open to representations on this issue.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

English Teaching

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of posts for teaching English in secondary schools are *(a)* vacant and *(b)* held by someone without a first degree in English. [67439]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* Provisional information on teacher vacancies in secondary schools by subject for January 2006 was published in table 6 of the School Workforce in England Statistical First Release, on 27 April 2006. This publication is available on the department's website at the following URL: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000653/index.shtml

This shows that the provisional vacancy rate for English in January 2006 was 0.8 per cent. down from 0.9 per cent. in 2005. The overall secondary classroom vacancy rate in secondary schools was 0.7 per cent. in January 2006.

Information on the number of teachers teaching English in secondary schools by post A level qualification was last collected in November 2002. This was published in Statistics of Education, School Workforce in England Volume, 2005 edition, on *26 January 2006. Tables D8 and D9 refer.* This publication is available on the department's website at the following URL: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DBA/OL/v000633/index.shtml

This showed that an estimated 73 per cent. of secondary teachers teaching English held a degree-level [1] qualification in the subject. However, they delivered an estimated 83 per cent. of the curriculum time.

Copies of these publications have been placed in the House of Common's Library.

[1] Degree level qualification includes degree, B.Ed and PGCE.

Examination Results

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* GCSE, *(b)* A-level and *(c)* key stage results were for the 100 (i) primary and (ii) secondary schools with the *(A)* highest and *(B)* lowest percentage of children receiving free school meals in each of the last three years. [66090]

Jim Knight: The information requested has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Extended School Provision

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding is available for extended school provision for children in *(a)* Tameside metropolitan borough and *(b)* Stockport metropolitan borough. [67889]

Beverley Hughes: Over 2003 to 2008 we are making available £840 million nationally to support the development of extended services accessed in or through schools. £110 million of this was allocated in 2005-06. Tameside local authority received £500,135, and Stockport local authority received £539,129.

Of the £680 million to be allocated across 2006 to 2008, £250 million will go direct to schools through the School Standards Grant. The formula for announcing each school's allocation for 2006-07 was announced on 7 December. The remaining £430 million will be distributed to local authorities through the Standards Fund and the General Sure Start Grant. Of this, Tameside local authority will receive £821,066 in 2006-07 and £1,006,162 in 2007-08. In the same period, Stockport local authority will receive funding of £908,857 in 2006-07 and £1,056,525 in 2007-08. Funding will be released to schools in accordance with each local authority's strategy for extended services.

Foreign Languages

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many unfilled vacancies there are for teachers of modern foreign languages in secondary schools. [67438]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* Provisional January 2006 figures released in Statistical First Release 18/2006 show that there were 40 language vacancies in local authority maintained secondary schools in England. This equates to a vacancy rate of 0.3 per cent., down from 0.5 per cent. in 2005. The overall provisional January 2006 vacancy rate for secondary schools (all subjects) is 0.7 per cent. compared to 0.9 per cent. in January 2005.

This publication is available on the Department's website at the following URL:
http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000653/index.shtml

GCSEs

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of children educated at home achieved five GCSEs graded at A* to C by the age of 16 in each of the last five years. [67406]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* The Department is unable to distinguish the GCSE results of children educated at home.

Head Teachers

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools did not have a permanent head teacher in the course of each of the past 10 years; [66034]

(2) how many temporary head teachers have been in post in each of the past 10 years. [66038]

Jim Knight: Information is not collected on the number of schools that were without a permanent head at any time during a year.

Some information on full time temporary filled head teacher posts is available from the annual survey of teachers in service and teacher vacancies held in January each year. This only covers posts that were temporarily filled on the date of the survey.

Table 9 of Statistical First Release 18/2006 provides a snapshot of temporarily filled head teacher posts as at January for each year available. This publication is available on the department's website at the following URL: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000653/index.shtml

A copy has been placed in the House of Common's Library.

Healthy School Status

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of schools in each local authority have achieved healthy school status. [67415]

Jim Knight: The information requested is contained in the following table:

Local authority	Schools achieving health school status[1] (percentage)
East Midlands	
Nottinghamshire	47.2
Derbyshire	59.4
Northamptonshire	39.2
City of Nottingham	38.9
Lincolnshire	31.2
Leicester City	34.8
Rutland	81.0
City of Derby	90.6
Leicestershire	42.7
East of England	
Norfolk	21.4
Hertfordshire	33.0
Luton	38.3
Thurrock	43.5
Suffolk	14.2
Cambridgeshire	39.9
Essex	47.6
Bedfordshire	23.2
City of Peterborough	66.7
Southend-on-Sea	43.9
London	
Barnet	61.4
Richmond-upon-Thames	66.0
Barking and Dagenham	21.7
Harrow	41.7
Corporation of London	50.0
Redbridge	35.5
Haringey	50.6
Lewisham	32.6
Kensington and Chelsea	32.4
Merton	43.6
Ealing	38.0
Islington	11.3
Enfield	57.0
Newham	31.2
Hounslow	63.9
Bromley	37.9
Brent	27.8
Westminster	22.8
Croydon	12.6
Wandsworth	48.8
Kingston-upon-Thames	52.8
Hammersmith and Fulham	61.1
Waltham Forest	39.1
Camden	26.2
Hillingdon	61.1
Southwark	28.2
Tower Hamlets	21.2
Havering	47.7
Lambeth	25.6
Sutton	37.1
Greenwich	56.3
Bexley	38.8
Hackney	14.9
North East	
North Tyneside	84.5
Durham	75.8
Darlington	64.1
Stockton on Tees	28.0
South Tyneside	58.1
Redcar and Cleveland	32.3
Sunderland	46.2
Hartlepool	57.5
Gateshead	93.8
Middlesbrough	53.1
Newcastle upon Tyne	80.2
Northumberland	57.5

Local authority	Schools achieving health school status[1] (percentage)
North West	
Liverpool	92.6
Blackpool	34.9
Knowsley	51.3
Salford	50.9
Blackburn with Darwen	45.0
Stockport	96.8
Oldham	23.9
Cheshire	50.3
Halton	82.9
Rochdale	58.2
Warrington	44.8
Bury	44.6
Sefton	67.2
Lancashire	44.2
Wigan	75.9
Cumbria	46.3
Manchester	35.2
Wirral	55.4
St. Helens	74.0
Trafford	41.4
Bolton	39.7
Tameside	43.1
South East	
Buckinghamshire	25.4
Slough	86.0
The Medway Towns	56.4
Oxfordshire	28.8
Wokingham	55.1
West Berkshire	39.8
Brighton and Hove	60.8
Milton Keynes	14.0
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	51.8
East Sussex	55.4
Isle of Wight	76.4
Bracknell Forest	84.4
Southampton	39.8
Surrey	23.5
Portsmouth	51.4
West Sussex	56.2
Hampshire	51.9
Kent	26.0
Reading	61.3
South West	
Bath and North East Somerset	70.4
Somerset	53.0
Wiltshire	36.0
South Gloucester	60.3
Bournemouth	75.0
Dorset	45.7
Poole	80.0
Cornwall	51.7
Devon	24.7
Gloucestershire	64.0
City of Bristol	41.6
North Somerset	53.1
Torbay	86.7
Swindon	78.6
City of Plymouth	57.4
West Midlands	
Solihull	56.5
Walsall	40.4
Worcestershire	30.5
Shropshire	26.9
Wolverhampton	32.2
Staffordshire	45.7
Birmingham	81.6
Stoke-on-Trent	57.0

Local authority	Schools achieving health school status[1] (percentage)
Herefordshire	17.3
Coventry	32.5
Warwickshire	32.1
Sandwell	51.6
Dudley	69.2
Telford and Wrekin	32.6
Yorkshire and Humberside	
Kirklees	43.6
North East Lincolnshire	47.4
Sheffield	35.1
Calderdale	68.3
East Riding of Yorkshire	53.1
Bradford	39.7
Leeds	50.4
North Lincolnshire	70.6
Wakefield	37.9
City of York	21.9
Barnsley	62.0
North Yorkshire	34.4
Doncaster	52.3
Kingston upon Hull	72.0
Rotherham	93.5
England	45.8

[1] Criteria for achieving healthy school status was modified in September 2005

Information Sharing

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what estimate he has made of the proportion of the UK population aged 15 years and under that will be registered on the Information Sharing Index; [67115]

(2) at what age children will be *(a)* added to and *(b)* removed from the Information Sharing Index; [67025]

(3) for what period data on children will be held on the Information Sharing Index; [67026]

(4) at what age children will be registered on the Child Population Register; [67039]

(5) what the earliest date is on which the Child Population Register could be established; [67044]

(6) what recent discussions his Department has had with the Home Office on *(a)* information sharing, *(b)* technology sharing and *(c)* information transfer between current and future databases operated by the Departments; [67045]

(7) who will be responsible for providing data to the Child Population Register; [67047]

(8) whether registration on the Child Population Register will be compulsory; [67048]

(9) at what age individuals' data will be removed from the Child Population Register; [67049]

(10) what estimate he has made of the likely change in the *(a)* set-up cost and *(b)* annual running costs of the Information Sharing Index to upgrade it to a Child Population Register; [67050]

(11) what funds his Department has spent to date in connection with the Child Population Register, broken down by main budget heading; [67051]

(12) what estimate he has made of the proportion of the population aged 15 years and under that will be included on the Child Population Register. [67052]

Beverley Hughes: In relation to questions 67115, 67025 and 67026, the Information Sharing Index will contain records of all children in England. Current estimates from the Government Actuary's Department, giving 2006 projections based on 2003 figures, indicate that there are approximately 9.5 million children in England aged 15 and under, and approximately 11.5 million children in the UK aged 15 and under. We estimate therefore that the England index will contain records of approximately 82 per cent. of children aged 15 and under in the UK. Decisions on whether to establish an index in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are for the devolved Administrations.

An index record will be created for each child at birth and maintained until the child's 18th birthday. To help ensure that the transition from youth to adult services is managed smoothly, it may also be desirable to make provision to retain information on the index on an individual basis for young adults with multiple needs, (for example care leavers and young people with disabilities), beyond their 18th birthday, with their consent.

In line with the Data Protection Act, information will be retained on the index for as long as it is accurate and relevant, for example, practitioner contact details will be available for the period they are involved with the child and for a year beyond the end of that involvement. This will enable contact to be made with those practitioners currently and most recently involved with a child.

In relation to questions 67039, 67044, 67046, 67047, 67048, 67050, 67051 and 67052, the objectives of the index remain as agreed by Parliament when the Children Act 2004 was passed. These are to support the duties on local authorities and other partners to co-operate to promote the well-being of children and to safeguard and improve their welfare. There is, therefore, no provision for a Child Population Register in the funding we have made available for the index.

We have accepted the recommendation in the final report of the Citizen Information Project that we should consider the scope for a Child Population Register. That consideration will be informed by an assessment of whether there are sufficient additional efficiency and effectiveness benefits. No decision has been taken to establish such a register. A Child Population Register would have wider objectives than the index and would therefore require new primary legislation. A clear case would have to be made for it.

My Department has not undertaken scoping or design work in relation to a Child Population Register. There are therefore no proposals for the ages at which children might be registered and their details removed, when a register might be established, who would be responsible for providing data, whether registration would be compulsory or voluntary, or what proportion of the population aged 15 and under would be included. My Department has so far spent and allocated no funds in relation to a register.

In relation to question 67045, officials from my Department and the Home Office are in regular contact on a range of information sharing issues with the aim of improving efficiency and the effectiveness of public services. These include:

the cross-Government guidance for practitioners in children's services on information sharing in respect of children and young people, published on 6 April 2006;

securing cross-Government agreement to the way forward for implementing the Information Sharing Index on the basis of the objectives set out in the Children Act 2004, and confirming that there are no operational dependencies between plans for the index and for the National Identity Register;

how ID cards and the National Identity Register might be used to support business processes and improve customer services in the education and skills sector;

the establishment of the new vetting and barring scheme for people working with children and vulnerable adults which is set out in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Bill currently before Parliament;

how customer service in the student loans system could be improved through confirming the identity of students directly with the Identity and Passport Service; and

how projects in each Department are addressing the common technical challenges of large data systems, with a view to sharing learning.

Pupil Exclusion

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much each local education authority spent on *(a)* excluded pupils and (b) pupils in (i) pupil referral units, (ii) behaviour support implementation programmes, (iii) inclusion, administration, assessment and co-ordination programmes, (iv) behaviour support plans and (v) other programmes intended to avoid exclusion of pupils in the last period for which figures are available. [67214]

Jim Knight: The DfES does not hold the information requested, as details of expenditure on behaviour-specific measures are not collected centrally. However, the following table details planned spend for each local authority in 2005/06 on: excluded pupils; pupil referral units; behaviour support services; behaviour support plans; support for inclusion; and, SEN administration and assessment. The data are taken from Section 52 budget collections.

The Education (Budget Statements) (England) Regulations 2005. Budgeted net expenditure by local authorities during 2005-06. Cash terms figures as reported by local authorities as at 27 April 2006.

LEA number	*Local authority name*	*2.4.3 Excluded pupils*[1]	*1.3.1 Pupil referral units*[1]	*1.3.2 Behaviour support services*[1]
	England	12,776,710	227,793,614	84,908,393
201	City of London	4,300	0	0
202	Camden	120,000	1,236,817	501,227
203	Greenwich	69,570	2,409,750	1,310,970
204	Hackney	27,518	1,976,119	142,125
205	Hammersmith and Fulham	19,287	1,594,894	36,287
206	Islington	0	2,043,509	81,618
207	Kensington and Chelsea	100,241	1,325,912	110,527
208	Lambeth	0	2,019,284	128,995
209	Lewisham	42,086	2,709,378	348,859
210	Southwark	27,000	2,110,030	1,638,600
211	Tower Hamlets	31,894	2,166,079	219,459
212	Wandsworth	113,362	1,304,865	25,567
213	Westminster	44,900	436,300	0
301	Barking and Dagenham	58,870	880,966	350,400
302	Barnet	0	1,017,638	0
303	Bexley	11,000	1,502,000	364,000
304	Brent	256,000	1,292,000	63,000
305	Bromley	49,156	828,755	286,945
306	Croydon	121,182	3,944,040	0
307	Ealing	165,400	2,369,400	689,100
308	Enfield	87,689	1,084,750	473,598
309	Haringey	27,078	2,172,666	995,754
310	Harrow	10,288	694,643	131,234
311	Havering	30,893	915,180	513,490
312	Hillingdon	42,030	73,323	195,071
313	Hounslow	75,036	1,048,935	288,424
314	Kingston-upon-Thames	59,690	386,765	144,666
315	Merton	26,188	864,057	114,137
316	Newham	0	3,248,868	466,116
317	Redbridge	60,665	780,080	283,435
318	Richmond-upon-Thames	53,300	664,300	146,800
319	Sutton	19,614	768,034	399,458
320	Waltham Forest	183,367	678,533	520,424
330	Birmingham	256,560	5,995,720	690,633
331	Coventry	61,322	818,752	292,127
332	Dudley	235,546	2,258,734	148,478
333	Sandwell	0	2,621,200	431,800
334	Solihull	53,024	741,428	0
335	Walsall	0	925,015	797,709
336	Wolverhampton	80,700	2,820,200	1,379,700
340	Knowsley	5,889	1,572,474	409,943
341	Liverpool	704,179	1,557,993	843,691

The Education (Budget Statements) (England) Regulations 2005. Budgeted net expenditure by local authorities during 2005-06. Cash terms figures as reported by local authorities as at 27 April 2006.

LEA number	Local authority name	2.4.3 Excluded pupils[1]	1.3.1 Pupil referral units[1]	1.3.2 Behaviour support services[1]
342	St. Helens	45,198	1,365,927	49,094
343	Sefton	3,670	527,990	887,420
344	Wirral	10,200	917,300	21,700
350	Bolton	53,763	1,429,171	689,500
351	Bury	0	1,693,100	75,300
352	Manchester	594,090	952,795	2,472,167
353	Oldham	11,631	938,581	1,239,990
354	Rochdale	29,748	1,667,836	298,981
355	Salford	89,032	2,242,012	144,578
356	Stockport	54,803	2,180,329	750,456
357	Tameside	0	1,039,150	287,780
358	Trafford	0	432,164	264,097
359	Wigan	142,738	770,306	378,801
370	Barnsley	55,000	1,327,470	434,790
371	Doncaster	107,970	2,645,840	1,414,440
372	Rotherham	32,008	1,297,515	1,466,365
373	Sheffield	10,226	2,373,669	688,569
380	Bradford	83,708	2,380,356	558,514
381	Calderdale	9,256	0	490,531
382	Kirklees	58,200	1,482,000	462,500
383	Leeds	93,560	4,129,050	965,950
384	Wakefield	0	634,381	870,973
390	Gateshead	117,820	752,106	440,876
391	Newcastle upon Tyne	81,670	1,067,264	614,000
392	North Tyneside	56,174	990,122	201,122
393	South Tyneside	0	738,734	0
394	Sunderland	171,296	1,134,469	349,555
420	Isles of Scilly	1,500	0	5,508
800	Bath and NE Somerset	42,123	0	31,643
801	City of Bristol	81,939	2,034,901	569,001
802	North Somerset	8,080	1,286,205	100,200
803	South Gloucestershire	81,000	1,303,000	419,000
805	Hartlepool	52,299	827,027	313,931
806	Middlesbrough	23,881	2,316,725	332,938
807	Redcar and Cleveland	77,359	493,666	285,900
808	Stockton-on-Tees	31,717	1,198,292	407,252
810	City of Kingston-upon-Hull	39,652	2,081,488	43,982
811	East Riding of Yorkshire	80,794	533,500	540,848
812	North East Lincolnshire	0	1,033,134	44,291
813	North Lincolnshire	20,614	1,119,133	167,063
815	North Yorkshire	208,658	705,699	0
816	York	101,876	605,404	395,375
820	Bedfordshire	154,237	1,129,267	148,305
821	Luton	188,115	1,020,709	207,553
825	Buckinghamshire	0	1,908,183	296,628
826	Milton Keynes	79,630	747,648	1,122,608
830	Derbyshire	196,296	2,025,609	3,717,365
831	Derby	942	2,535,538	230,616
835	Dorset	7,300	2,455,499	354,254
836	Poole	17,667	415,365	21,886
837	Bournemouth	45,750	663,096	220,820
840	Durham	137,478	668,909	844,941
841	Darlington	9,748	418,761	290,380
845	East Sussex	16,586	7,254	154,930
846	Brighton and Hove	2,940	100,000	30,570
850	Hampshire	535,000	4,492,000	1,369,000
851	Portsmouth	57,780	1,358,749	416,197
852	Southampton	132,100	1,569,500	986,800
855	Leicestershire	186,640	1,601,630	803,088
856	Leicester City	125,800	2,438,800	161,800
857	Rutland	4,892	0	0
860	Staffordshire	204,310	2,241,470	1,274,750
861	Stoke	25,000	1,093,383	207,710
865	Wiltshire	10,568	2,428,851	725,877
866	Swindon	0	385,805	896,567
867	Bracknell Forest	121,251	571,717	232,776
868	Windsor and Maidenhead	0	522,366	297,416
869	West Berkshire	18,019	914,267	294,323
870	Reading	78,490	1,176,427	362,838
871	Slough	72,691	665,093	149,970
872	Wokingham	40,401	610,840	207,994

The Education (Budget Statements) (England) Regulations 2005. Budgeted net expenditure by local authorities during 2005-06. Cash terms figures as reported by local authorities as at 27 April 2006.

LEA number	Local authority name	2.4.3 Excluded pupils[1]	1.3.1 Pupil referral units[1]	1.3.2 Behaviour support services[1]
873	Cambridgeshire	36,484	2,133,683	2,303,625
874	City of Peterborough	5,605	1,352,063	49,402
875	Cheshire	3,112	163,207	1,150,909
876	Halton	186,565	654,850	17,590
877	Warrington	11,057	315,295	274,555
878	Devon	26,000	1,597,000	399,000
879	City of Plymouth	35,534	985,071	61,236
880	Torbay	28,616	736,274	175,071
881	Essex	37,980	2,625,434	2,323,695
882	Southend	33,116	489,104	271,553
883	Thurrock	56,644	1,472,893	0
884	Herefordshire	29,888	722,228	107,325
885	Worcestershire	236,354	2,752,589	553,070
886	Kent	184,403	3,818,047	3,282,252
887	Medway	54,401	1,658,268	1,023,769
888	Lancashire	369,680	10,759,755	4,515,923
889	Blackburn and Darwen	145,139	1,750,261	356,215
890	Blackpool	40,210	1,589,941	367,068
891	Nottinghamshire	162,434	2,875,604	1,569,374
892	City of Nottingham	473,690	776,030	1,309,557
893	Shropshire	72,670	547,681	40,790
894	Telford and Wrekin	29,121	993,882	201,293
908	Cornwall	0	2,851,674	604,132
909	Cumbria	332,471	1,948,159	464,797
916	Gloucestershire	0	730,566	1,213,393
919	Hertfordshire	308,517	2,101,213	1,660,100
921	Isle of Wight	49,175	420,546	213,595
925	Lincolnshire	193,411	2,893,505	270,332
926	Norfolk	99,630	2,860,360	1,510,253
928	Northamptonshire	0	2,678,960	226,920
929	Northumberland	90,880	259,180	506,030
931	Oxfordshire	160,488	1,434,695	444,730
933	Somerset	186,814	1,383,842	967,608
935	Suffolk	104,262	4,323,335	1,470,951
936	Surrey	226,805	4,267,356	1,815,720
937	Warwickshire	0	3,405,919	9,554
938	West Sussex	237,846	1,230,129	1,017,698

LEA number	Local authority name	2.4.4 Behaviour support plans[1]	1.2.5 Support for inclusion[1]	2.2.2 SEN administration assessment and coordination[1]
	England	5,034,984	47,841,841	67,546,224
201	City of London	4,300	0	9,700
202	Camden	0	240,204	686,663
203	Greenwich	10,080	0	721,939
204	Hackney	61,739	97,484	39,140
205	Hammersmith and Fulham	0	202,901	345,438
206	Islington	8,169	122,940	215,065
207	Kensington and Chelsea	0	224,714	0
208	Lambeth	0	314,922	250,395
209	Lewisham	0	339,202	0
210	Southwark	67,680	304,960	1,127,009
211	Tower Hamlets	14,418	205,395	416,818
212	Wandsworth	5,394	213,265	602,734
213	Westminster	0	0	872,700
301	Barking and Dagenham	0	245,200	43,350
302	Barnet	0	500,350	1,000,838
303	Bexley	92,000	9,000	450,000
304	Brent	116,000	74,000	790,000
305	Bromley	3,500	94,311	656,628
306	Croydon	25,544	0	177,024
307	Ealing	51,900	0	576,900
308	Enfield	12,603	437,786	654,808
309	Haringey	164,909	53,821	497,053
310	Harrow	0	263,760	0
311	Havering	6,240	98,220	348,170
312	Hillingdon	0	0	478,575
313	Hounslow	80,934	56,129	527,122

LEA number	Local authority name	2.4.4 Behaviour support plans[4]	1.2.5 Support for inclusion[3]	2.2.2 SEN administration assessment and coordination[4]
314	Kingston-upon-Thames	41,883	17,583	129,253
315	Merton	28,182	438,690	370,482
316	Newham	0	155,460	808,559
317	Redbridge	79,645	74,479	518,515
318	Richmond-upon-Thames	27,100	30,600	290,800
319	Sutton	12,189	20,000	557,044
320	Waltham Forest	0	31,507	0
330	Birmingham	0	1,117,334	1,416,193
331	Coventry	40,420	143,463	574,989
332	Dudley	3,050	93,864	457,712
333	Sandwell	0	0	56,700
334	Solihull	0	37,420	177,678
335	Walsall	18,418	0	423,121
336	Wolverhampton	69,000	33,500	314,600
340	Knowsley	0	1,791,601	202,193
341	Liverpool	73,129	93,530	70,000
342	St. Helens	0	0	354,078
343	Sefton	251,200	33,950	70,000
344	Wirral	4,000	175,000	356,700
350	Bolton	10,687	290,598	245,135
351	Bury	0	390,548	37,900
352	Manchester	0	1,575,502	0
353	Oldham	0	385,489	386,460
354	Rochdale	20,357	57,960	308,139
355	Salford	5,127	40,258	317,596
356	Stockport	16,717	664,217	339,082
357	Tameside	30,000	500,000	335,090
358	Trafford	0	0	189,356
359	Wigan	138,213	0	781,538
370	Barnsley	0	909,500	309,250
371	Doncaster	0	76,690	444,990
372	Rotherham	3,168	369,743	49,621
373	Sheffield	1,211	1,764,564	425,188
380	Bradford	30,542	56,560	650,000
381	Calderdale	2,892	0	0
382	Kirklees	0	27,800	0
383	Leeds	201,650	389,150	265,570
384	Wakefield	0	399,074	206,220
390	Gateshead	103,216	69,697	70,538
391	Newcastle upon Tyne	45,200	0	73,440
392	North Tyneside	0	121,798	248,269
393	South Tyneside	0	535,234	380,265
394	Sunderland	0	375,915	260,773
420	Isles of Scilly	0	0	24,017
800	Bath and NE Somerset	10,457	238,920	419,073
801	City of Bristol	122,088	576,238	486,582
802	North Somerset	27,140	469,355	261,670
803	South Gloucestershire	5,000	313,000	490,000
805	Hartlepool	2,975	120,429	66,019
806	Middlesbrough	8,721	24,422	298,134
807	Redcar and Cleveland	145,776	137,350	57,608
808	Stockton-on-Tees	0	64,773	269,257
810	City of Kingston-upon-Hull	0	35,466	0
811	East Riding of Yorkshire	0	0	191,980
812	North East Lincolnshire	33,324	0	181,044
813	North Lincolnshire	10,271	216,467	82,918
815	North Yorkshire	283,805	377,445	556,652
816	York	170,836	89,577	53,585
820	Bedfordshire	0	264,352	790,169
821	Luton	20,877	223,386	210,970
825	Buckinghamshire	0	254,508	1,289,787
826	Milton Keynes	13,505	248,397	582,800
830	Derbyshire	202,056	0	1,225,841
831	Derby	0	56,772	307,286
835	Dorset	11,300	22,800	634,600
836	Poole	9,600	18,801	190,954
837	Bournemouth	22,172	166,599	238,913
840	Durham	6,556	287,502	755,299
841	Darlington	17,783	30,130	165,387
845	East Sussex	0	1,075,262	1,069,094
846	Brighton and Hove	30,570	21,900	256,090
850	Hampshire	174,000	31,000	1,815,000
851	Portsmouth	0	32,715	253,303

LEA number	Local authority name	2.4.4 Behaviour support plans[4]	1.2.5 Support for inclusion[5]	2.2.2 SEN administration assessment and coordination[6]
852	Southampton	0	321,101	89,000
855	Leicestershire	116,846	0	592,496
856	Leicester City	15,000	720,157	578,900
857	Rutland	0	25,828	17,513
860	Staffordshire	36,220	473,280	2,493,860
861	Stoke	0	979,201	230,000
865	Wiltshire	5,004	17,999	776,191
866	Swindon	0	63,776	237,114
867	Bracknell Forest	4,290	10,180	174,729
868	Windsor and Maidenhead	3,760	68,998	237,650
869	West Berkshire	34,394	25,020	89,358
870	Reading	81,869	776,225	202,556
871	Slough	249,968	134,503	40,850
872	Wokingham	28,782	0	249,621
873	Cambridgeshire	33,564	541,993	748,211
874	City of Peterborough	160,899	153,973	79,958
875	Cheshire	0	289,941	1,422,690
876	Halton	0	147,760	165,790
877	Warrington	27,728	34,530	345,302
878	Devon	0	1,032,000	747,000
879	City of Plymouth	17,405	262,037	229,132
880	Torbay	9,804	96,938	187,160
881	Essex	0	440,563	0
882	Southend	19,870	225,191	259,010
883	Thurrock	61,467	0	240,639
884	Herefordshire	16,719	84,579	403,146
885	Worcestershire	2,000	330,568	683,188
886	Kent	0	5,356,452	1,847,436
887	Medway	10,600	117,900	471,814
888	Lancashire	0	361,700	0
889	Blackburn and Darwen	0	45,871	227,805
890	Blackpool	33,990	418,399	260,353
891	Nottinghamshire	17,320	63,447	579,957
892	City of Nottingham	76,205	245,754	59,335
893	Shropshire	0	60,793	168,341
894	Telford and Wrekin	20,800	266,923	243,123
908	Cornwall	109,903	440,000	899,725
909	Cumbria	36,099	335,125	949,205
916	Gloucestershire	0	4,062,588	426,084
919	Hertfordshire	63,994	523,167	2,400,938
921	Isle of Wight	45,206	57,375	56,222
925	Lincolnshire	25,859	1,414,222	1,075,972
926	Norfolk	67,657	110,537	1,059,855
928	Northamptonshire	0	87,100	836,450
929	Northumberland	5,050	0	367,000
931	Oxfordshire	98,259	1,081,136	1,599,823
933	Somerset	10,000	416,567	1,498,028
935	Suffolk	0	138,770	482,176
936	Surrey	110,167	294,062	1,642,770
937	Warwickshire	0	32,504	717,610
938	West Sussex	66,868	1,870,700	0

[1] Excluded pupils includes any planned expenditure in relation to the exclusion of pupils from schools of pupil referral units, excluding the making of any provision of education to such pupils, but including advice to the parents of an excluded pupil. Expenditure on PRUs should be recorded at 1.3.1 pupil referral units.

[2] Pupil Referral Units includes any planned expenditure on the provision of education at Pupil referral units as defined in section 19 of the 1996 Act. Also includes any school standards grant income and expenditure in relation to PRUs.

[3] Behaviour support services includes any planned expenditure on the cost of providing or purchasing specialist behaviour support services, both advisory and teaching.

[4] Behaviour support plans includes any planned expenditure on the costs of preparing and reviewing behaviour support plans under section 527A of the 1996 Act. Expenditure on behaviour support services should be recorded above at 1.3.2.

[5] Support for inclusion includes any planned expenditure on: the collaboration between mainstream and special schools and primary and secondary schools to enable children with special educational needs to take part in mainstream activities; the integration of children from specialist to mainstream settings and the provision of discrete services or projects to promote such integration.

[6] SEN administration, assessment and co-ordination includes any planned expenditure on the identification and assessment of children with SEN and the making, maintaining and reviewing of statements under sections 321 to 331 of the 1996 Act. Also includes the cost of strategic management and planning of services to support the inclusion and attainment of children and young people with SEN, preparing relevant strategic plans and SEN administration, planning and co-ordination.

Source:

The data are drawn from local authorities' 2005-06 Section 52 Budget Statements (Table 1) submitted to the Department for Education and Skills.

RU Thinking About It?

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much his Department has given to the RU Thinking About It? website in each month since its inception; and if he will make a statement. [66864]

Beverley Hughes: The Department's expenditure on the RU Thinking website since taking over responsibility for it from the Department of Health is as follows:

Financial year	*Expenditure (£)*
2004/05	52,394
2005/06	92,726

These figures break down to average monthly costs of £4,366 and £7,727 respectively and include reporting, hosting and maintenance, design and development and the creation/addition of new articles and features. Figures are exclusive of VAT.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions he has had with the organisers of the RU Thinking About It? website about *(a)* the type of material and *(b)* the accuracy of the information contained on the website; if she will request that the abortion section be amended to read that doctors can only offer an abortion if the criteria in the Abortion Act 1967 (as amended) are complied with; and if she will make a statement. [66865]

Beverley Hughes: The information is as follows.

(a) As Minister for Children and Young People, I have discussed the approach and role of the website within the campaign strategy. However, it is the role of departmental officials to liaise with the website providers over the detail of the content, which I would expect to be consistent with the key messages of the campaign.

The RU Thinking website provides information to support the key messages of the national campaign to reduce teenage pregnancy: encouraging young people to resist peer pressure and delay early sex; raising awareness of risks of unprotected sex; and highlighting the importance of seeking early advice, The breadth of information on the site reflects the full range of issues on which young people contact the service.

(b) I am confident that the governance of the site adheres to high standards on clinical and legal accuracy and that it is endorsed by officials from both the Department of Health and DfES. All medical information is checked for accuracy with sexual health professionals.

The website makes clear that an abortion can only be performed with the agreement of two doctors. We believe that it is more appropriate to explain the further eligibility criteria for an abortion under the Abortion Act 1967 (as amended), in the medical consultation.

School Finance

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of the overall budget for schools was spent on *(a)* departmental administration and contractors and consultants and *(b)* local authority administration in each year since 1997. [68082]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* The Department does not collect the information in the way it has been requested at *(a)*. However, the following table gives a breakdown of the available data for *(b)* local authority administration. Similar data are not available before 1999-2000.

	[1]Central administration (£)	*[2]Total education spending (£)*	*Percentage*
1999-2000	382,997,357	22,112,093,232	1.7
2000-01	368,846,719	23,713,133,097	1.6
2001-02	388,643,297	26,087,492,215	1.5
2002-03	555,581,472	27,565,869,821	2.0
2003-04	513,310,247	31,457,564,859	1.6
2004-05[3]	560,717,875	33,294,983,910	1.7

[1] Net current expenditure on central administration covers the overall management of a local authority's responsibility in relation to education. Central administration figures are drawn from local authorities' Section 52 Outturn Statement s and include expenditure on insurance and joint use arrangements. Central Administration expenditure is shown as a percentage of total education spending.

[2] 1999-2000 saw a change in data source when the data collection moved from the RO1 form collected by the ODPM to the Section 52 form from the DfES, directly comparable figures are not available from this source. The closest comparison available would give percentages of 3.2 per cent. for both 1997-98 and 1998-99. 2002-03 saw a further break in the time series following the introduction of Consistent Financial Reporting (CFR) and the associated restructuring of the Outturn tables. The change in sources is shown by the blank row. Up to 2001-02 figures were taken from the net current expenditure before recharges row, management and support statutory / regulatory duties column. For 2002-03 onwards the net current expenditure column for the central administration line has been provided.

[3] Since 2003 the Schools Budget has been separate from the LEA Budget.

Note:

Cash terms figures as reported by local authorities as at 28 April 2006.

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the education budget for schools was in each year since 1997. [68083]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* The available information is contained within the following table. Similar data are not available before 1999-2000.

		£ *of which:*
	Budgeted education revenue expenditure	*Total school budget*
1999-2000	20,898,167,000	n/a
2000-01	22,847,836,000	n/a
2001-02	25,225,703,000	n/a
2002-03	26,791,292,000	n/a
2003-04	29,685,101,000	26,375,484,000
2004-05	31,782,676,000	28,378,783,000
2005-06	34,181,710,000	30,656,061,000

n/a = not available

Notes:

1. Total schools budget and budgeted education revenue expenditure is drawn from local authorities Section 52 Budget Statements submitted to DfES. This is calculated as the gross elements of any grant lines plus the net elements of the remainder of the budget.
2. Budget education revenue was split to show local authority and schools' budget separately from 2003-04 onwards.
3. Cash figures are rounded to the nearest £1,000. As reported by local authorities as at 2 May 2006.

School Sports Partnerships

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he expects all schools to be part of a school sports partnership; what progress has been made towards this target; and if he will make a statement. [67416]

Jim Knight: All maintained schools will be within a school sport partnership from this September (2006). There are currently 411 school sport partnerships encompassing 80 per cent. of maintained schools in England.

Sure Start

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new Sure Start centres his Department plans to open by the end of 2008. [69351]

Beverley Hughes: The Government have set a target of 2,500 Sure Start children's centres being open by March 2008 and 3,500 centres by 2010.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the budget for Sure Start will be in 2008-09, expressed in terms of funds *(a)* per Sure Start centre and *(b)* per head of anticipated child users. [69352]

Beverley Hughes: Funding for Sure Start for the period 2008-09 to 2010-11 will be subject to the outcome of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). Details of the budget allocated to Sure Start for 2008-09 will not be available until the CSR has been completed.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many under-fives entitled to free nursery places on the Sure Start scheme are on waiting lists in Tamworth constituency; [68349]

(2) how many available places there are in Sure Start schemes in Tamworth constituency. [68350]

Beverley Hughes: Information on the availability of places and the number of children on waiting lists for Sure Start services are not collected centrally.

However, Sure Start Tamworth has the potential to deliver a range of integrated services to 448 children under four and their families.

Sure Start Tamworth is set to become a children's centre during phase 2 of the children's centre programme (2006 to 2008) bringing Sure Start services to children under five and their families in the area. Staffordshire local authority is in the process of finalising proposals for the future development of children's centres.

Teachers

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary (i) head teacher and (ii) deputy head teacher posts in England had been vacant for more than three months in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [67403]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* Information is not collected in the form requested.

Provisional information on teacher vacancies and temporarily filled head teacher posts for January 2006 was published in tables 4, 5 and 9 of the School Workforce in England Statistical First Release 18/2006, on 27 April 2006. The SFR provides a snapshot of vacancies and temporarily filled posts as at January and is available on the department's website at the following URL:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000653/index.shtml

A copy has been placed in the House of Common's Library.

Truancy

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the truancy levels were in schools in *(a)* Carlisle constituency, *(b)* Cumbria and *(c)* England in each year since 1996. [65752]

Jim Knight: The Department does not hold data on the levels of truancy. However, the figures for the percentage of half days missed due to unauthorised absence (of which truancy forms a part) in maintained mainstream schools can be found in the following tables:

Percentage of half days missed in maintained primary schools due to unauthorised absence

	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Carlisle	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.3
Cumbria	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.20	0.21	0.17	0.16
England	0.50	0.49	0.47	0.49	0.45	0.43	0.41	0.43

Percentage of half days missed in maintained secondary schools due to unauthorised absence

	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Carlisle	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.4	1.5	1.8	1.9
Cumbria	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.75	0.82	0.94	0.97
England	1.40	1.07	1.04	1.07	1.09	1.07	1.13	1.23

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total cost of truancy programmes has been since 1997; and what assessment has been made of the effectiveness of each programme. [68605]

Jim Knight: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 6 March 2006, *Official report*, column 1235W to the hon. Member for South-West Hertfordshire (Mr. Gauke).

As a result of our investment and reforms, school absence has fallen for four consecutive years and is now at a record low, with 10,000 fewer pupils absent from school every day compared to last year and 60,000 fewer than in 1996/97. Overall absence in 193 secondary schools, targeted with extra Government support because of their high levels of absence, reduced in 2004/05 by 6.45 per cent. compared to 1.98 per cent. in other schools.

We plan to publish a report on the effectiveness of electronic registration systems in secondary schools at the end of May.

Trust Schools

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether he plans *(a)* to establish a separate team and *(b)* to employ consultants to promote trust schools. [64683]

Jim Knight: There is a dedicated unit in the Department, comprising existing DfES staff, looking at the overall implementation of the trusts schools policy. We employ a consultancy firm to build and develop relationships between the Department and business across a range of education projects including trust schools. Once appointed the schools commissioner will undertake a wider matching role in relation to trust schools.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what specific powers will trust schools have in determining and shaping their own curriculum. [67196]

Jim Knight: Trust schools will be required to deliver the National Curriculum in exactly the same way as other maintained schools in England.

The national curriculum sets out what must be taught, not how it is to be taught. Within this statutory framework, trust schools—like other maintained schools—will have considerable freedom to develop and shape a curriculum that responds to the personal learning needs of their children and to introduce new approaches to teaching and learning.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Problem Gamblers (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of the number of problem gamblers in Tamworth constituency. [68354]

Mr. Caborn: The current estimate is that 0.6 per cent. of the adult population of Great Britain are problem gamblers. This figure is drawn from the most recent authoritative research: Kerry Sproston, Bob Erens and Jim Orford (2000) "Gambling Behaviour in Britain: Results from the British Gambling Prevalence Study" (National Centre for Social Research, June 2000). This research was conducted using a sample of addresses selected at random. It is not possible therefore to give figures by constituency.

Sport England North West

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what role Ministers had in *(a)* devising and *(b)* approving the scheme for Sport England North West to distribute lottery funds to firms and organisations to enable them to encourage their employees to be healthier. [68533]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* Ministers had no role in devising or approving the Sport England North West "£1 million Challenge" workplace health initiative. Sport England is a lottery distributor independent from government.

Ministers do, however, have a role in setting broad policy priorities through policy directions. Sport England's lottery policy directions, coupled with their strategic objectives, provide a focus on increasing participation in sport and physical activity.

References to my having been "fully involved in that [decision]" (*Sunday Telegraph* 23 April) inaccurately inferred a role in devising or approving initiatives rather than the role I do have in setting the broad policy priorities.

Decisions on regional lottery investment are taken by the Regional Sports Boards, according to identified regional priorities.

The investments through the workplace health initiative form part of a targeted pilot programme in the North West to encourage employers to put more emphasis on sport and physical activity.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what involvement *(a)* the Minister for Sport and *(b)* other Ministers in her Department have had with Sport England North West's pilot project to distribute funds to improve the fitness of employees. [68792]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The North West Sports Board has been proactive in trying to engage with the private sector in support of our drive to increase participation in sport. The North West Sports Board organised "private sector forums" to discuss sport and physical activity in the workplace with employers and the private sector. In order to attract some of the regions' major business leaders to the forums, I was invited to help host two of these events.

The aim of the first meeting on 6 September was to address:

what would encourage the private sector to invest in sport;

the benefits to industry of a fit and healthy workforce.

There was no discussion on specific programmes or initiatives, but over the following eight months, in the light of this debate, the North West Regional Sports Board devised and developed the workplace health initiative, which was launched in May 2005.

I attended a further meeting of this forum on 14 November 2005 where Sport England updated the guests present on the progress that had been made in this area. Ministers had no role in devising or approving the Sport England North West "£1 million Challenge" workplace health initiative.

Decisions on regional lottery investment are taken by the Regional Sports Boards, according to identified regional priorities.

CABINET OFFICE

Guide to Legislative Procedure

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (1) whether he plans to issue an updated version of the Guide to Legislative Procedure; when it was last updated; whom he consulted prior to publication; and if he will make a statement; [67163]

(2) what assistance *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Legislative Programme Committee gives to departmental Bill teams; and if he will make a statement. [67165]

Hilary Armstrong: The "Guide to Legislative Procedures" is available on the Cabinet Office website and is intended to provide departmental officials with detailed guidance on all aspects of a Bill's preparation and parliamentary passage. A revised version was published by the Legislative Programme Committee Secretariat in the Cabinet Office in October 2004 following consultation with key official stakeholders within Government and parliamentary officials. Small and urgent updates are made from time to time, and another comprehensive revision is planned over the summer recess in time to publish before the beginning of the next session.

The Legislative Programme Secretariat, along with Parliamentary Counsel, works closely with the National School of Government in running a programme of seminars for Bill teams which cover the legislative process from policy formulation to Royal Assent.

Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill

John Bercow: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what representations he has received on the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill. [68220]

Hilary Armstrong: As at Thursday 4 May, since the introduction of the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill to Parliament on Wednesday 11 January, over 325 representations have been received from the private and public sectors as well as from individuals.

Recruitment

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on recruitment, search and selection agencies in each of the last five years. [68348]

Hilary Armstrong: The information requested is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

DEFENCE

Civilian Guard Force

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of the civilian guard force have suffered gunshot injuries in *(a)* Northern Ireland, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* England and Wales and *(d)* while serving overseas in the last 12 months. [67688]

Mr. Des Browne: The term ' civilian guard force' has been taken to include both the Ministry of Defence police, who are authorised to be armed, and the MOD's 'in house' guard services. The MOD's guard services in Germany and in Northern Ireland are authorised to be armed, but in England, Scotland and Wales Ministry of Defence guard service personnel are unarmed.

In the last 12 months one member of the Northern Ireland guard service was involved in a fatal shooting incident. In the same period in England and Wales one member of the Ministry of Defence police sustained a minor gunshot injury during firearms training. There have been no such incidents in Scotland or overseas.

Iran (Military Operations)

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his assessment is of the advances in military technology claimed by Iran during recent military operations in the straits of Hormuz; and if he will make a statement. [69164]

Mr. Des Browne *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* We continuously assess developments in military technology, including in relation to Iran, in order to draw any lessons that may be relevant to the capability and tactics of our own forces.

Iraq

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent assessment he has made of the level of infiltration by militias into the Iraqi security forces in Multi-National Division South East. [65443]

Mr. Des Browne: I refer the hon. Member to the answer my right hon. Friend the Member for Airdrie and Shotts (John Reid) gave on 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 672-73W to the hon. Member for North Devon (Nick Harvey).

Trident

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department has spent on the development and production of the Mark 98 Mod 7 Fire Control System for Trident; when the system is due to enter service; what the reason is for the upgrade; and if he will make a statement. [66678]

Mr. Des Browne: To date, the Ministry of Defence has spent £28.4 million on the acquisition of the Mk 98 Mod 7 Fire Control Subsystem update programme. The system is due to enter service in 2010. The Mk 98 Mod 7 programme is being undertaken to avoid equipment obsolescence.

WALES

Dentistry

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales pursuant to the oral answer from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, of 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 957, on NHS dentistry, if he will clarify the sums spent on NHS dentistry in Wales in 2005-06 and 2006-07. [69484]

Nick Ainger: Pursuant to my oral answer on 3 May 2006, the net spend on NHS dentistry in Wales was £81 million in 2004-05 and an estimated £88.2 million for 2005-06. An additional £30 million is being invested in NHS dentistry in 2006-07, bringing the total forecast spend to £118.5 million.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Ascension Island

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer to question 63679, on Ascension Island, what the focus of discussions was on each of the seven meetings on issues related to Ascension Island to which reference was made. [66873]

Mr. Hoon *[pursuant to the reply, 20 April 2006, Official Report, c. 778W]:* The meetings with the hon. Member's constituent and Richard James International were to hear representations from those concerned about UK policy on Ascension Island.

The remaining meetings considered a variety of issues relating to the administration of the Island. The timing reflected the fact of a routine (leave) visit to the UK by the Administrator. Similarly, the Director of Finance paid a call on the Department during a leave visit to the UK.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much has been spent by the UK Government on infrastructure and services on Ascension Island in each year since 1997. [66960]

Mr. Hoon: The Government do not contribute directly to infrastructure and services on Ascension Island.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office programme funds have, however, contributed to a number of projects on the Island encompassing environmental issues (with the Department for International Development), economic diversification and prospects to enhance good government including law and order, as follows:

	£
1997-98	25,300
1998-99	9,200
1999-2000	57,410
2000-01	196,356
2001-02	887,520
2002-03	115,000
2003-04	231,390
2004-05	334,840
2005-06	161,696

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the standard amount of time is that people who have ended their work contract with one of the main users on Ascension Island are given to leave the island. [66961]

Mr. Hoon: The Workmen's Protection (Ascension) Ordinance, Regulations Section 12, Paragraph 3, requires employers to repatriate any worker and their dependants within 30 days of the expiry of their contract of service.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how and where vacancies with the main users on Ascension Island are advertised; and whether *(a)* (i) current and (i) previous Ascension Island residents and *(b)* other groups are particularly encouraged to apply. [66962]

Mr. Hoon: We understand that vacancies are advertised as widely as possible, depending on the type and status of the job. Ascension and St. Helenian newspapers, Falkland Island newspapers, local notice boards on all three islands, UK press, Ascension Island Government website, employment agencies and UK job centres may be used.

Posts are equally open to everyone, including people currently working and living on Ascension, and people who have previously worked and lived there.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 14 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2047W, on Ascension Island, what plans she has for further expenditure on researching animal, plant and geological features on Ascension Island. [67085]

Mr. Hoon: The Overseas Territories Environment Programme, which is a joint Department for International Development/Foreign and Commonwealth Office fund, has this financial year (2006-07) approved £49,910 for the continuation of the Ascension Environment Information Operations Utility, a project which began last year, and £29,500 for a new project to improve access to Green Mountain National Park.

Burma

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will take steps to place the situation in Burma on the agenda of the UN Security Council; and what assistance the UK Government offer to pro-democracy groups in Burma. [68643]

Mr. McCartney *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* We fully support any action in the UN, including in the UN Security Council (UNSC), which would help to promote reform and positive change in Burma. Members of the UNSC last discussed the situation in Burma during informal consultations on 16 December. At present there is no consensus within the UNSC, including among the permanent members, to add Burma to the Council's formal agenda. We remain in regular contact with permanent members of the UNSC on this issue.

UK assistance in Burma includes programmes aimed at building the capacity of civil society groups and individuals who are working to build a democratic society.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* EU foreign nationals and *(b)* non-EU foreign nationals have been employed in her Department in each of the last five years; what vetting procedures are in place for each category of staff; and whether these include liaison with foreign law enforcement agencies. [68023]

Margaret Beckett: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) is a British nationals-only employer. However, some foreign nationals are employed in a small number of service provision roles, in line with the requirements laid down in the Aliens Restriction (Amendment) Act 1919 on the employment of aliens. The figures on those employed are:

Financial year	*EU foreign nationals*	*Non-EU nationals*
2001-02	16	8
2002-03	16	8
2003-04	16	8
2004-05	16	8
2006 (to date)	16	7

The vetting procedures in place for all category of staff employed in the FCO are in line with the policy laid down in the Cabinet Office Manual of Protective Security. The FCO recruit individuals to work in jobs which generally require those individuals to be cleared to security check or developed vetting level. However, in some cases we recruit contracted workers to work at a lower level where counter terrorist check clearance is more appropriate. Where necessary, this will include a check of time spent overseas. The FCO has its own vetting section.

EU Finance

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the reason is for the difference between the figures for the European Union's budget for administration costs over the next financial framework in the publication of the United Kingdom presidency proposal on 14 December and the publication of the UK's final proposals on 19 December. [66157]

Mr. Hoon: A number of changes, including the change to the budget for administration costs, were necessary to the UK presidency proposal of 14 December in order to generate political consensus for an agreement on the 2007 Financial Perspective at the European Council on 15 December.

Export Licensing

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 24 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 860W, on arms exports, on how many occasions since 1997 the Government have received information from *(a)* their overseas posts and *(b)* a non-governmental organisation that British defence exports have been diverted that has led to the Government revoking an export licence from a UK defence manufacturer; and if she will make a statement. [68263]

Dr. Howells *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* Due to the way data are recorded it is not possible to establish whether information leading to revocations originated from overseas posts, or non-governmental organisations.

Reasons for refusals and revocations are listed in each Annual Report for Strategic Exports. A copy of each of the annual reports has been placed in the Library of the House. As all export licence applications are judged rigorously against the Consolidated EU and National Export Licensing Criteria with an assessment made against the risk of diversion by all four Government Departments (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Department of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Defence, Department for International Development) involved in the export licensing process, there are few revocations.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 24 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 860W, on arms exports, with what frequency reviews of risk assessments specific to an export licence are carried out by the UK Government after an export licence is granted to a UK defence manufacturer; how many staff are engaged in carrying out such reviews with regard to *(a)* Israel and *(b)* Saudi Arabia; and if she will make a statement. [68264]

Dr. Howells *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* All export licences are assessed on a case by case basis against the consolidated EU and National Export Licensing Criteria. The risk assessment takes place at the time of application and is carried out by dedicated export licensing teams in all four Departments (Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), Department of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Defence, Department for International Development) involved in the export licensing process. Each team is staffed appropriately for existing workloads, but levels may change.

In addition to the process of assessing licences against the criteria and prevailing circumstances, the FCO will review extant licences for all destinations when subsequent reporting from post, media, non-governmental organisations or other sources gives rise to human rights or diversion concerns.

Honours (Non-UK Citizens)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will list the individuals who are not UK citizens who in the period 1 January 2004 to 30 April 2005 were awarded honours; and what *(a)* the date of announcement, *(b)* the honour and *(c)* the reason for the award was in each case. [68480]

Margaret Beckett *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* As the information requested is lengthy, I will arrange for the information to be placed in the Library of the House, and will send a copy directly to the hon. Member.

As honorary awards, ie to citizens of countries where HM the Queen is not Head of State, are not formally announced, the date of the Queen's formal approval of such awards has been given.

Indonesia

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations the UK Government have made to the Indonesian authorities about the situation of Christians in Indonesia. [69131]

Mr. McCartney: We regularly raise human rights issues with the Government of Indonesia, both bilaterally and through the EU. We have made clear our view that freedom of religion is an important component of the democratic life of the country.

Through the EU, we have made representations to the Indonesian Government concerning the death penalty handed down to three Christians convicted of masterminding violence in Central Sulawesi in 2000. On 14 November 2005, as EU presidency, we expressed to the Government of Indonesia the EU's regret at the decision to carry out the executions, and urged the Indonesian government not to do so and to consider the abolition of the death penalty altogether. The current EU presidency, Austria, followed this up with the Government of Indonesia in January in separate meetings with the Minister of Law and Human Rights and the Attorney-General, and in a note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The EU presidency raised this again during the EU-Indonesia Ministerial Troika meeting in Vienna on 27 March.

We understand that the Indonesian Supreme Court had recently re-opened the case and that there may be further police inquiries.

Iran

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of the possible effects of economic sanctions on Iran on the world economy, with particular reference to the price of oil. [67241]

Dr. Howells: The United Nations Security Council has not yet considered imposing sanctions against Iran, though this cannot be ruled out at some point if Iran continues not to take the steps regarding its nuclear programme that the International Atomic Energy Agency Board of Governors has deemed essential. The effects of any sanctions on the world economy would depend critically on the kinds of measures imposed; at this stage, speculation is premature.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 27 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 304W, on Iran, what assessment she has made of Iranian financial support to Hamas since the January 2006 Palestinian legislative elections; and if she will make a statement. [69305]

Dr. Howells: On 16 April, the Iranian Foreign Minister pledged that Iran would give $50 million to the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority (PA); he did not say when or how this would be delivered.

We remain deeply concerned by Iran's support for groups undermining peace in the Middle East and by President Ahmadinejad's calls for the destruction of the state of Israel. We believe it would not be in the interests of peace in the region, for the PA to depend on funding from Iran. The PA needs to engage with the whole international community to find a lasting solution to its funding needs on the basis of commitments to recognising the state of Israel, commitment to non-violence and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the roadmap.

Israel

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proportion of Israel's Security Fence is outside Israel's borders as they existed in 1967; and if she will make a statement. [67246]

Dr. Howells: In March 2005, the UN Office for Co-ordination for Humanitarian Affairs reported that 20 per cent. of the completed section of the barrier ran along the green line. The remainder of the barrier is routed on Occupied Territory.

We fully recognise Israel's right to self-defence. A barrier is a reasonable way to achieve this. But the barrier's route should be on or behind the green line and not on occupied territory. The territory beyond the green line which Israel occupied in June 1967 is occupied territory. We will continue to raise our concerns over the barrier with the Israeli Government at all levels.

Memoranda of Understanding (Deportees)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment the Government have made of comments by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights that the practice of seeking memoranda of understanding regarding the return of deportees to certain countries is fundamentally flawed in several ways. [68189]

Dr. Howells: We respect the views of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. However, individuals who are not British nationals, and who pose a threat to the national security of the United Kingdom, should not have the right to remain here indefinitely. The Government continue to believe that memoranda of understanding providing for the deportation with assurances of particular individuals enable us to safeguard the rights of individuals being returned in a manner consistent with, and in respect of our international human rights obligations.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions she has had with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights about the use of memoranda of understanding regarding the return of deportees to certain countries. [68190]

Dr. Howells: I met the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on 16 February 2006. We discussed, among other issues, the use of memoranda of understanding regarding the return of deportees to certain countries.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assurances the Government have received in relation to whether countries with which the UK has memoranda of understanding regarding the return of deportees are complying with both the spirit and the letter of the terms of the agreement. [68191]

Dr. Howells: The Government are confident that the countries concerned will abide by the spirit and letter of the memoranda of understanding (MOU) which they have signed. MOUs on deportation with assurances have so far been signed with Libya, Lebanon and Jordan. No deportations have yet been made under the terms of the MOUs. The deportations are subject to the courts.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken by the Government to monitor the treatment of people sent to countries with which the UK has a Memorandum of Understanding regarding the return of deportees. [68192]

Dr. Howells: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk (Mr. Moore) on 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1910-11W.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment the Government have made of the decision of the Council of Europe not to develop guidelines for the acceptable use of diplomatic assurances for extraditing people to countries where they might be at risk of torture; and what the implications are of that decision for the UK's use of Memoranda of Understanding. [68193]

Dr. Howells: We have noted the decision of the Council of Europe's Steering Committee on Human Rights not to draft a legal instrument on minimum standards for the use of diplomatic assurances in the context of expulsion procedures and, in the framework of the fight against terrorism, in cases where there is a risk of torture or inhuman or degrading punishment or treatment. The decision has no implications for the Government's policy on the use of Memoranda of Understanding for the purpose in question.

Middle East

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what mechanisms the EU is considering for the delivery of aid to health and education projects in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; and if he will make a statement. [68201]

Hilary Benn: I have been asked to reply.

Until the Hamas-led government complies with the conditions laid out by the Quartet on 30 January, direct aid to the Palestinian Cabinet and its Ministries will not be possible. The UK government, European Commission and other international partners are, therefore, looking at other ways to support the basic needs of the Palestinian people. A mechanism has not yet been agreed. However, neither the UK government nor the European Community will fund organisations where there is a risk of resources being diverted to terrorism.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) provides health, education and other basic services to Palestinian refugees. The UK and European Community provide substantial financial support to UNRWA's work, including £15 million from DFID in April this year.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what funds have been provided by the EU to build the institutional fabric of the Palestinian Authority in the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [68202]

Hilary Benn: I have been asked to reply.

Between 2000 and 2004, the European Community (EC) provided £450.3 million in overall assistance to Palestinian administrative areas. In 2004 and 2005 this included a total of £140 million in direct aid to the Palestinian Authority (PA), aimed at building the institutional capacity of the PA and increasing stability by assisting with budget shortfalls. This was in addition to the EC's contribution to humanitarian assistance, including support to Palestinian refugees through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

Until the new Palestinian government complies with the conditions set out by the Quartet on 30 January, direct aid to the Palestinian Cabinet and its Ministries will not be possible. Like the UK, the European Commission is looking at other ways to support the basic needs of the Palestinian people.

Nepal

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of human rights in Nepal. [68179]

Dr. Howells: Nepal has a deplorable human rights record. Both Maoists and security forces have carried out gross abuses, both against combatants and civilians. Our annual Human Rights Report (chapters 2 and 5) covers this in detail. The report can be found on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website at: http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1119526503628

The UK has regularly spoken out against such abuses and has taken a number of measures to reduce them, including providing human rights training, bomb disposal equipment and funding for the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights in Kathmandu.

Since the beginning of the year we have been deeply troubled by the escalation of violent Maoist attacks, which have resulted in large numbers of deaths and injuries among the Royal Nepalese Army, the police and civilians. We have also been gravely concerned by human rights abuses carried out by the security forces and by the Government's infringements of civil liberties and democratic freedoms.

With our EU partners we condemned all such abuses in a statement on 27 January 2006. In that statement we strongly condemned the escalation of Maoist violence and the Government's use of force to suppress the Nepalese people's fundamental rights. We also underlined the obligation of all parties to fully respect international humanitarian law.

In response to the nationwide demonstrations in April, I issued a public statement condemning the excessive violence that the Nepalese people have suffered. The full text of the statement is available on the FCO website: http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029391629&a=KArticle&aid=1144253679044%20&year=2006&month=2006-04-01&date=2006-04-21 The EU also issued a statement calling on all concerned to exercise restraint and resolve the problems by restoring democracy and by initiating a dialogue for peace. The statement can be found on the EU website at: http://www.eu2006.at/en/News/CFSP_Statements/April/2504Nepal.html For this reason we are greatly encouraged by the King's restoration of Parliament. This is a tribute to the Nepalese people's desire for democracy and peace. We hope that all those concerned will now work together to restore peace, democracy and human rights in Nepal and we will continue to assist them in their efforts.

Nuclear Weapons Convention

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of the feasibility of a further nuclear weapons convention; and if she will make a statement. [68514]

Dr. Howells: The Government consider the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to be the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the framework for nuclear disarmament. The UK has an excellent record in implementing its disarmament obligations under Article VI of the NPT and, in this regard, continues to press for multilateral negotiations towards mutual, balanced and verifiable reductions in nuclear weapons. The Government do not support any new process, including a Nuclear Weapons Convention, which could risk cutting across the existing NPT regime.

Palestinian Authority

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions she has had with her Quartet counterparts regarding Russia's decision to fund the new Palestinian Authority; and if she will make a statement. [69177]

Dr. Howells: We value Russia as a member of the Quartet (EU, US, UN and Russia). Russia has made clear its support for the Quartet's three principles of commitment to non-violence, recognition of Israel and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the roadmap. We are aware that Russia has pledged US$10 million to the Palestinian Authority (PA). Funding to the PA is one of a range of issues that we discuss with our Quartet partners. We discussed funding issues at an informal meeting of international donors on 27 April in London, which all the Quartet members attended.

Peru

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the Government of Peru about *(a)* the re-emergence of the Shining Path guerrilla group and *(b)* their links to the drug trade. [68171]

Mr. Hoon: Through our embassy in Lima and contact with visiting Peruvian officials in London, the UK has regular discussions with the Peruvian authorities about terrorism and drugs, including the alleged links between remnants of the Shining Path guerrilla group and the illegal drugs trade.

RAF Wideawake

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much the US Administration has paid for the use of RAF Wideawake in each year since 1997. [66959]

Mr. Hoon: Wideawake Airfield, constructed by the US government in 1942, forms part of the US Long Range Proving Ground Base sites on Ascension Island. Under the terms of the Bahamas Agreement, the US government uses these sites on Ascension Island free from rent and charges.

Rendition

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 88W, on rendition, whether the derivation of the legal requirement for permission to fly through UK territory and airspace, including overseas territories, is affected by the purpose of the flight to which the request for permission relates. [68685]

Dr. Howells: The legal requirement for a state to seek permission to render detainees via UK territory of airspace, including overseas territories, applies regardless of any other purpose of the flight to which the request for permission relates.

Son Jong Nam

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will meet representatives of Christian Solidarity Worldwide to discuss the case of Mr. Son Jong Nam, sentenced to death in North Korea. [68644]

Mr. McCartney *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* My officials have raised Son Jong Nam's case with the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea authorities. Due to diary commitments, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary is unable to meet representatives of Christian Solidarity Worldwide, but my hon. Friend the former Minister of State for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs (Ian Pearson) met the President of its Board of Trustees to discuss the issue.

Turkey

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when her Department last lodged an official complaint about human rights abuses in Turkey; and if she will make a statement. [66645]

Mr. Hoon: The Government closely monitor the human rights situation in Turkey and raise concerns as appropriate with the Turkish Government. Our ambassador in Ankara raised concerns about freedom of religion, the south-east and freedom of expression with senior Turkish Ministers and politicians on 13 April. Our ambassador also raised freedom of expression, especially Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code, in an EU Heads of Mission meeting with the Turkish Foreign Minister on 19 April.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the treatment of detainees held following recent protests in south-eastern Turkey; and if she will make a statement; [66943]

(2) if she will draw the attention of the Turkish Government to the European Union's Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict in relation to the Turkish Government's response to the peaceful demonstrations in south-eastern Turkey in recent weeks; and if she will make a statement; [66945]

(3) if she will make representations to the Government of Turkey on methods used to deal with recent peaceful demonstrations in south-eastern Turkey. [66946]

Mr. Hoon: According to official, media and non-governmental organisation reports, the recent demonstrations in south east Turkey were not peaceful in nature. The Government condemns the violence and subsequent terrorist attacks in Istanbul. Our ambassador in Ankara has raised this issue with the Turkish Foreign Minister, but Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers have not discussed these recent events with the Turkish Government. We have not raised the EU's Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict and have no plans to do so at present.

We will continue to monitor developments and will raise specific allegations of human rights abuse, including any related to the methods used and treatment of detainees, as appropriate.

Turkmenistan

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions she has had with her EU counterparts about *(a)* human rights in, *(b)* trade with and *(c)* gas reserves in Turkmenistan. [68188]

Mr. Hoon: As with all of the countries of Central Asia, we continue to have a close dialogue with our EU partners on Turkmenistan. In November 2005, together with our EU partners, we supported a resolution on Turkmenistan in the UN's Third Committee. This resolution comprehensively covered the points of progress and of continuing concern and encouraged the Government of Turkmenistan to ensure full respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The next EU-Turkmenistan Joint Committee Meeting, including an Ad-Hoc Meeting on human rights, is due to take place on 1 June 2006. Prior to this, we will be consulting closely with our EU colleagues on the issues to be covered. These will inevitably include human rights issues and questions relating to trade and economic co-operation.

Earlier this year Jan Kubis, the EU Special Representative for Central Asia, visited Turkmenistan and met President Niyazov with whom he was able to discuss the full range of EU-Turkmen issues including energy and human rights. After this visit, on 8 March 2006, my right hon. Friend the then Minister for Europe (Mr. Alexander) had a discussion with Kubis about Central Asia, including Turkmenistan. I am hoping to meet Kubis later this month.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Attracta Harron

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on how many occasions between September 2003 and 11 December 2003 the person subsequently convicted of the murder of Attracta Harron received a home visit without advance notice from those responsible for ascertaining his whereabouts. [66113]

Mr. Hanson: The Probation Board for Northern Ireland has been requested to prepare a pre-sentence report on Trevor Hamilton who was convicted of the murder of Attracta Harron.

The Probation Board for Northern Ireland is unable to comment on the details of the case or its handling until sentence has been imposed, to avoid any risk of prejudicing the matter. I will write to the hon. Gentleman once sentence has been passed.

Cancer

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children received cancer treatment in Northern Ireland in *(a)* 1999, *(b)* 2001, *(c)* 2003 and *(d)* 2005, broken down by (i) council district and (ii) age group. [69377]

Paul Goggins: The number of children who received cancer treatment in Northern Ireland is not available, however the number of children admitted[1] to hospitals in Northern Ireland with a primary or secondary diagnosis of cancer related illnesses is available by local district council and age groups and is shown in the following tables. The full 2005 calendar year's information is currently unavailable therefore 2004 information has been provided.

[1] The figures presented are for the number of individual children admitted (discharges and deaths are used as an approximation for admissions) to hospitals in Northern Ireland. It should be noted that if a child is admitted to more than one hospital in any year or over a number of years he/she will be counted more than once in the tables.

(i) Local district council

Local government district 1992 name	Calendar year (a) 1999	(b) 2001	(c) 2003	(d) 2004
Antrim	6	6	5	5
Ards	13	6	9	7
Armagh	6	7	5	8
Ballymena	11	6	5	8
Ballymoney	6	<5	<5	<5
Banbridge	6	6	5	10
Belfast	30	27	24	34
Carrickfergus	5	7	6	8
Castlereagh	12	13	13	12
Coleraine	5	<5	7	<5
Cookstown	5	8	7	9
Craigavon	8	12	11	15
Derry	29	20	29	20
Down	8	6	<5	<5
Dungannon	7	7	6	13
Fermanagh	10	<5	9	5
Larne	<5	<5	<5	0
Limavady	7	<5	7	9
Lisburn	<5	14	11	10
Magherafelt	<5	<5	<5	7
Moyle	<5	<5	<5	<5
Newry and Mourne	9	14	13	19
Newtownabbey	11	8	<5	<5
North Down	8	5	10	11
Omagh	11	<5	6	8
Strabane	<5	6	9	<5
LGD unknown	0	<5	<5	0
Northern Ireland total	228	208	216	238

Note:
Please note that cell sizes that have a value of less than 5 have been masked in order to help protect confidentiality.
Source:
Hospital Inpatient System.

(ii) Age groups

Age groups	Calendar year (a) 1999	(b) 2001	(c) 2003	(d) 2004
0 to 5	79	70	84	91
6 to 10	71	56	61	66
11 to 16	78	82	71	81
Northern Ireland total	228	208	216	238

Source:
Hospital Inpatient System.

Corporate Hospitality

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on how many occasions *(a)* he and *(b)* the other Ministers in his Department have accepted corporate hospitality in the last 12 months. [67515]

Mr. Hain: In the course of their duties, Ministers attend functions and events some of which are hosted or sponsored by companies. Such details are not recorded separately from other diary records. All hospitality received is in accordance with the Ministerial Code.

Dental Services

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will collect and collate statistics on *(a)* the incidence of childhood dental caries, *(b)* childhood and adult obesity and *(c)* the number of child care places in Northern Ireland at (i) ward and (ii) sub-ward level. [67933]

Paul Goggins: The capture of information at small area level such as ward or below, is usually dependent on the existence of an administrative system containing individual records with a reliable geographical identifier attached such as postcode. Even in the event that such systems are maintained by Boards or Trusts, there can be issues around data quality and personal disclosure, that mitigate against the central collation and publication of data for small areas. Alternative data collection methods such as sample surveys can yield useful information at Northern Ireland or Health and Social Services Board level. However, cost constraints usually prevent achieving a 4 representative sample which would be large enough to provide reliable results at sub-Board level. For these reasons, the routine central collection and collation of the requested data items at ward or sub-ward level is not being considered.

DXA Scanning Machines

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many DXA scanning machines are available in Northern Ireland. [69188]

Paul Goggins: There are six DXA scanning machines available in HPSS Trusts in Northern Ireland.

Eating Disorders

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 476W, on eating disorders, how many people in Northern Ireland were estimated to be suffering from *(a)* anorexia nervosa and *(b)* bulimia nervosa in each of the last five years. [69241]

Paul Goggins: Pursuant to PQ answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 476W, the figures quoted were estimates of the prevalence of these two conditions. Relatively little epidemiological data is available with respect to eating disorder incidence or prevalence in Northern Ireland. However, it is unlikely that local epidemiology differs markedly from indicative levels and trends reported within the UK in general. The figures quoted are calculated on the estimated national prevalence applied to Northern Ireland's population.

It is difficult to assess the true scale of the prevalence of eating disorders. Most patients are treated as psychiatric outpatients and outpatients' diagnosis is not routinely recorded for statistical purposes.

Education Minister

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many days the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State with responsibility for the Department of Education has spent in Northern Ireland to date in 2006. [67201]

Mr. Hain: I advise the hon. Member that the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State with responsibility for the Department of Education has spent a total of 37 days in Northern Ireland to date in 2006. In addition to those 37 days the Minister also performs duties as Education Minister at the NIO in Millbank as well as in Parliament.

Fair Employment

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he plans to implement the

findings of the Exception of Teachers from the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 report published by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in December 2004. [68114]

Maria Eagle: The Department of Education is currently considering the Equality Commission's investigation findings and recommendations in the context of the wider change programme in the education sector.

General Practitioners

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average number of patients registered per general practitioner in Northern Ireland was in *(a)* 1995 and *(b)* 2005. [68425]

Paul Goggins: The information is as follows: *(a)* The Central Services Agency only holds computerised archived data on registrations with a general practitioner from 2001; reliable data for 1995 are therefore not available. However, we can provide the data for 2001 for comparison.

As at May 2001	*Number*
Total number of patients registered with a general practitioner[1]	1,768,473
Total number of general practitioners[2]	1,050
Average number of patients per general practitioner	1,684

Source:
[1] Central Health Index, Central Services Agency
[2] Medlist Database, Central Services Agency

(b) The information requested for 2005 is provided in the following table. However it is important to note that from the introduction of the new General Medical Services contract in April 2004, patients have been registered with a general practice and not with the general practitioner.

As at April 2005	*Number*
Total number of patients registered with a general practice[1]	1,794,104
Total number of general practitioners[2]	1,086
Average number of patients per general practitioner	1,652

Source:
[1] National Health Applications and Infrastructure Services System, Central Services Agency
[2] Medlist Database, Central Services Agency

Herceptin

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients with early stage breast cancer in Northern Ireland are receiving Herceptin on the NHS. [69184]

Paul Goggins: My hon. Friend, the Member for St. Helen's, South (Mr. Woodward) in his role as Minister with responsibility for Health Social Services and Public Safety, announced in November 2005, that the cancer drug Herceptin may be made available to women with early stage breast cancer where this is clinically appropriate.

I have been advised that approximately 53 women in Northern Ireland are receiving Herceptin for the treatment of early stage breast cancer.

Housing Council

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost was to the public purse of the Northern Ireland Housing Council in each of the last three years. [69465]

Mr. Hanson: The information is as follows:

Financial year	*Amount (£)*
2003-04	62,806
2004-05	54,977
2005-06	45,735

Medical Services (Complaints)

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many complaints have been received by each health trust in Northern Ireland in relation to *(a)* mental health-related and *(b)* general medical-related services in each of the last five years. [68447]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is as follows.

(a) Complaints received in relation to mental health-related services

	2000-01	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Newry and Mourne	7	4	3	8	5
N and W Belfast	3	7	5	5	5
Homefirst	14	21	37	31	45
Belfast City Hospital	5	7	4	6	8
Down Lisburn	24	31	27	25	21
Royal Group	0	0	0	0	0
Causeway	6	9	11	33	50
Craigavon Area Group	0	0	0	0	0
Armagh and Dungannon	16	13	22	8	8
S and E Belfast	30	20	41	56	30
Ulster Comm and Hosp	22	9	10	28	16
Altnagelvin Hospitals	0	0	0	0	0
Foyle	6	5	13	8	10
Sperrin Lakeland	0	2	12	6	4
Mater	10	18	12	7	14
Greenpark	0	0	0	0	0
Craigavon and Banbridge	11	11	12	11	16
United Hospitals	0	0	0	0	0
NI Ambulance Service	0	0	0	0	0
Total	160	157	209	232	232

(b) Complaints received in relation to general medical-related services

	2000-01	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Newry and Mourne	111	154	109	133	145
N and W Belfast	153	123	145	105	138
Homefirst	74	127	148	255	282
Belfast City Hospital	191	156	106	189	145
Down Lisburn	279	243	262	257	278
Royal Group	590	657	490	415	623
Causeway	299	411	495	422	406
Craigavon Area Group	210	225	193	168	220
Armagh and Dungannon	87	73	63	69	61
S and E Belfast	220	185	229	228	222
Ulster Comm and Hosp	493	391	350	354	278
Altnagelvin Hospitals	173	234	200	229	213
Foyle	48	65	42	70	61
Sperrin Lakeland	83	80	84	48	60
Mater	103	101	124	85	84

(b) Complaints received in relation to general medical-related services

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Greenpark	281	188	132	144	203
Craigavon and Banbridge	86	95	70	79	112
United Hospitals	243	191	262	275	310
NI Ambulance Service	148	168	157	181	144
Total	3,876	3,867	3,661	3,706	3,985

Ministerial Visits

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many visits were made by each Minister in his Department in each of the last three years to each *(a)* constituency and *(b)* council area. [67514]

Mr. Hain: Due to ministerial changes and redistribution of portfolios during the period requested the information sought by the hon. Member can be provided only at a disproportionate cost. I can however give the hon. Member the details he seeks for the present ministerial team since they took office and this is provided in the following tables:

Constituency visits—9 May 2005 to 2 May 2006

Constituency	David Hanson	Shaun Woodward	Angela Smith	Lord Rooker
North Down	3	2	1	0
Lagan Valley	6	3	1	0
Upper Bann	2	2	1	2
East Londonderry	4	2	8	1
Strangford	5	1	0	4
South Antrim	3	0	8	1
Belfast North	16	4	6	1
Belfast East	10	5	3	0
Belfast South	18	11	13	6
Belfast West	1	2	2	3
East Antrim	1	0	4	1
Foyle	3	1	10	3
North Antrim	2	0	4	3
South Down	1	0	1	2
Newry and Armagh	3	0	4	0
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	1	0	3	5
West Tyrone	1	0	5	2
Mid Ulster	1	0	1	0

Council area visits—9 May to 2 May 2006

Council areas	David Hanson	Shaun Woodward	Angela Smith	Lord Rooker
Moyle	0	0	1	1
Ballymoney	0	0	1	0
Ballymena	1	0	2	2
Lame	0	0	3	0
Carrickfergus	1	0	1	0
Newtownabbey	0	1	4	1
Belfast	42	18	34	10
Castlereagh	5	4	1	2
North Down	3	2	1	0
Ards	3	0	0	3
Down	1	0	1	2
Lisburn	6	3	7	0
Antrim	4	0	1	1
Coleraine	3	1	3	1
Magherafelt	0	0	1	0
Cookstown	0	0	0	0
Craigavon	1	2	1	2
Banbridge	1	0	0	0
Limavady	1	1	7	0
Derry	3	1	11	3
Strabane	1	0	4	0
Omagh	0	0	1	2
Dungannon	1	0	2	1
Fermanagh	1	0	1	4
Armagh	1	0	5	0
Newry and Mourne	2	0	1	0

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list his visits to Northern Ireland together with the purpose and duration of each such visit since 1 January. [67597]

Mr. Hain: I refer the hon. Member to the following list of visits:

Date of arrival	Date of departure
9 January 2006	10 January 2006
16 January 2006	17 January 2006
30 January 2006	31 January 2006
5 February 2006	7 February 2006
9 February 2006	10 February 2006
17 February 2006	21 February 2006
24 February 2006	26 February 2006
26 February 2006	28 February 2006
5 March 2006	7 March 2006
8 March 2006	8 March 2006
20 March 2006	21 March 2006
27 March 2006	29 March 2006
30 March 2006	31 March 2006
3 April 2006	4 April 2006
6 April 2006	6 April 2006
20 April 2006	20 April 2006
24 April 2006	25 April 2006
28 April 2006	1 May 2006

Note:
Reason for visits—Northern Ireland business

Ministerial Working Hours

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what average number of hours per week each Minister in his Department spent working in each of the Departments for which they are responsible in the last 12 months. [67513]

Mr. Hain: The information requested is not held centrally and can be obtained only at disproportionate costs.

MRI Scanners

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many MRI scanners are operating in NHS hospitals in Northern Ireland; where they are located; and what their average monthly usage was in each of the last 12 months. [68556]

Paul Goggins: There are nine MRI scanners in Health and Personal Social Services hospitals. Details of the hospitals in which they are located and their average monthly usage, as provided by the Health and Social Services Trusts, are given in the following table.

Hospital	Number of MRI scanners	Average number of hours per month scanner is in use
Altnagelvin Hospital	1	183
Antrim Hospital	1	170
Belfast City Hospital	1	106
Belfast City Hospital Cancer Centre	1	[1]81
Craigavon Hospital	1	160
Musgrave Park Hospital	2	532
Royal Victoria Hospital	1	264
Ulster Hospital	1	121

[1] New cancer centre operational from April 2006. Belvoir Park Hospital MRI scanner was in use for an average of 85 hours per month prior to closure.

Nuisance Hedges

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the proposal for legislation to tackle nuisance hedges was first raised with his Department by an hon. Member; and if he will make a statement on progress made since that time. [68554]

Maria Eagle: Following suspension of the Northern Ireland Executive, the proposal for legislation to tackle nuisance high hedges was first raised with the Department of the Environment by the hon. Member for North Down in January 2004.

The Department subsequently completed a public consultation in October 2005 to assess the scale of the high hedge problem and has recently published a summary of the responses to that consultation on the Planning Service website. The Department accepts, on the basis of that consultation, that legislation is necessary but this cannot be brought forward due to a number of pressures on the legislative programme. It is now unlikely that consultation on the draft legislation will take place prior to the end of 2007.

Nursing

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the number of nurses in the Province who have left the NHS in each of the last 10 years; and what assessment he has made of the reasons why nurses in the Province leave the NHS before the age of retirement. [49322]

Paul Goggins: The number of qualified nurses[1] leaving the HPSS in the last 10 years is provided in the following table:

1 April to 31 March	*Headcount*	*Whole-time equivalent*
1996-97	1,104	925.37
1997-98	1,297	1,090.22
1998-99	1,120	906.73
1999-2000	725	609.63
2000-01	955	814.01
2001-02	896	741.84
2002-03	739	625.42
2003-04	913	765.48
2004-05	893	756.22
2005-06	890	758.54

Information on the actual reasons for leaving is not collected. However, in addition to retirees, leavers may include staff taking a career break, those transferring to the independent/private sector or to the NHS in England, Scotland or Wales, and those leaving for other reasons such as family commitments.

[1] Qualified nurses include midwives and health visitors.

On-the-runs

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will ensure that any future proposals which deal with the issue of 'on-the-runs' will be subjected to equality impact assessments. [66395]

Mr. Hain: Any future proposals to deal with on-the-runs would be subjected to the procedures contained in the Northern Ireland Office's Equality Scheme. The scheme requires that all policies should be subjected to an equality screening exercise; and that, if the screening demonstrates that there might be an adverse impact or that the impact is unknown, the Department should then to proceed to consider whether a full equality impact assessment is necessary.

Route Development Fund

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was spent from the Route Development Fund on flights into and out of Northern Ireland in 2005. [69469]

Maria Eagle: Total funding for the nine routes supported by the Air Route Development Fund during the 2005-06 financial year was £1,458,634.

School Funding

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average funding per child was in each *(a)* grammar school and *(b)* other secondary school in Northern Ireland in each of the past 10 years. [67817]

Maria Eagle: Detailed information at individual school level for Education and Library Board schools is available from the published Outturn Statements for 1999-2000 to 2003-04 which are available in the House of Commons Libraries. Similar outturn information on voluntary grammar and grant-maintained integrated schools is not available as this is prepared by individual schools.

The following tables show per pupil funding, by sector, for grammar and other post-primary schools, between 1995-96 and 2004-05 (the last year for which this information is readily available). Figures are based on information provided by each of the Education and Library Boards for their controlled grammar and other non-grammar schools, and by the relevant branches within my Department for voluntary grammar and grant-maintained integrated schools. Figures include both delegated and centre recurrent funding, but exclude special schools, capital funds and other costs such as milk and meals and transport, which are not allocated at individual school level.

Grammar schools[1]

	Funding[2] *(£)*	*Full-time equivalent pupils*[2]	*Average per pupil*
1995-96	143,693,606	60,749	2,365
1996-97	149,523,462	61,436	2,434
1997-98	154,528,688	62,392	2,477
1998-99	161,368,273	62,602	2,578
1999-2000	170,893,174	62,847	2,719
2000-01	183,865,573	62,956	2,921
2001-02	201,553,192	62,966	3,201
2002-03	208,006,222	63,076	3,298
2003-04	223,467,549	63,385	3,526
2004-05	231,509,292	63,643	3,638

[1] All controlled and voluntary grammar schools
[2] Includes some funding/pupils in preparatory departments

All other post-primary schools

	Funding (£)	*Full-time equivalent pupils*	*Average per pupil*
1995-96	232,383,540	90,150	2,578
1996-97	246,685,733	91,056	2,709
1997-98	250,207,239	91,306	2,740

All other post-primary schools

	Funding (£)	Full-time equivalent pupils	Average per pupil
1998-99	257,052,959	91,837	2,799
1999-2000	277,132,434	92,331	3,002
2000-01	307,702,284	92,950	3,310
2001-02	327,281,993	93,185	3,512
2002-03	338,548,377	92,603	3,656
2003-04	360,179,522	92,839	3,880
2004-05	364,958,184	91,778	3,977

Sure Start

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of children are on Sure Start schemes in each *(a)* ward, *(b)* county and *(c)* constituency in Northern Ireland. [68035]

Paul Goggins: There are currently 25 Sure Start projects in Northern Ireland offering just over 24,000 children in the 0-4 age range access to health care and family support services.

Table 1 shows the percentage of children on Sure Start schemes at Ward level. There are a total of 582 wards in Northern Ireland and Sure Start projects cover 107 wards.

Table 1

Ward	Percentage of children that are on Sure Start schemes
Ardglass	44.81
Ardoyne	0.87
Armoy	100.00
Audley's Acre	66.90
Augher	94.12
Ballee	35.59
Ballinamallard	95.65
Ballybay	65.70
Ballybot	56.52
Ballycolman	75.68
Ballykeel	78.92
Ballymacarrett	52.05
Ballymote	47.26
Ballynafeigh	46.59
Ballyoran	69.75
Ballysaggart	39.61
Ballysally	49.50
Ballysillan	21.25
Ballywalter	89.95
Blackstaff	65.66
Bonamargy and Rathlin	77.78
Botanic	54.62
Bushmills	100.00
Camlough	18.27
Camowen	77.56
Cam Hill	61.11
Castlecaulfield	36.97
Castleview	21.85
Cathedral	35.45
Churchlands	37.64
Cliftonville	1.28
Clogher	71.79
Clonard	42.59
Collin Glen	13.98
Coole	54.97
Coolessan	62.50
Corcrain	52.31
Creggan	17.51
Crevagh	80.30
Cross Glebe	45.37
Crossmaglen	23.31
Crumlin	20.53
Culmore	29.26
Daisy Hill	28.06
Dalriada	37.82
Drumalane	40.21
Drumragh	77.70
Dunanney	100.00
Duncairn	17.95
Dungiven	62.86
Dunseverick	65.96
East	75.88
Falls	34.94
Feeny	62.66
Fivemiletown	88.19
Glack	62.40
Glencairn	30.83
Glentaisie	76.71
Gortalowry	37.45
Harryville	90.48
Highfield	22.94
Irvinestown	95.92
Island	71.43
Kesh Ederney and Lack	95.80
Killough	29.50
Killyclogher	77.64
Killymeal	49.59
Killymoon	27.71
Kilwee	37.96
Kinbane	43.40
Kircubbin	97.92
Legoniel	1.51
Lisanelly	77.74
Lisnarrick	95.51
Moat	25.83
Moss-side and Moyarget	41.82
Moygashel	44.53
Mullaghmore	41.22
New Lodge	18.23
Newtownhamilton	21.35
North	75.63
Oldtown	62.35
Poleglass	24.16
Portaferry	83.56
Portavogie	83.56
Quoile	56.21
Shaftesbury	46.26
Shankill	29.89
Shantallow East	61.47
Shantallow West	61.26
Sion Mills	75.60
South	75.82
Springtown	80.08
St Mary's	50.65
St Patrick's	29.89
Strangford	74.80
The Highlands	62.26
The Mount	78.84
Trillick	95.65
Twinbrook	36.76
Upper Glenshane	62.72
Upper Malone	23.38
Valley	41.29
Water Works	23.67
West	75.65
Whitehouse	100.00
Woodstock	59.38
Woodvale	27.37

Table 2 shows the percentage of children on Sure Start Schemes at County level. There are a total of 6 Counties in Northern Ireland.

Table 2

County	*Percentage of children that are on Sure Start schemes*
Antrim	34.38
Armagh	61.64
Down	47.98
Fermanagh	95.73
Londonderry	55.79
Tyrone	65.84

Table 3 shows the percentage of children on Sure Start Schemes at constituency level. There are a total of 18 constituencies in Northern Ireland. Lagan Valley, North Down and South Antrim recorded nil.

Table 3

Constituency	*Percentage of children are on Sure Start schemes*
Antrim Coast and Glens	55.71
Belfast East	65.37
Belfast North	21.29
Belfast South	48.62
Belfast West	28.26
East Deny	54.67
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	73.68
Foyle County	56.40
Mid Ulster	41.91
Newry and Armagh	28.05
North Antrim	59.19
South Down	44.23
Strangford	88.37
Upper Bann	61.64
West Tyrone	76.49

HOME DEPARTMENT

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reason section 61 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 has not yet been brought into force. [68803]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Before implementing this provision we need to consider the implications for the sentencing framework under the Criminal Justice Act 2003 and the development of improved offender management. A Young Adult Offenders project is looking at the specific needs of this age group, including standards for the management of offenders in custody and the community. This will include consultation with the main interest groups. The project is due to report to Ministers in the autumn, following which a decision will be taken on the best way forward.

Criminal Records Bureau

Natascha Engel: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what procedures are in place to remove people wrongfully included on the Criminal Records Bureau database. [68449]

Joan Ryan: The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) operates a central database in order to record transactions during the process of disclosure. This database does not hold details of police convictions or other intelligence, although the CRB does have access to the Police National Computer (PNC) for the purposes of processing disclosure applications.

The CRB has a procedure whereby individuals may contest or "dispute" information held by the police or other data sources in certain circumstances, but the CRB does not have the authority to amend or remove conviction information; this is the responsibility of the police who are the data owners of such material. Where an individual indicates that conviction information has been wrongly or inaccurately portrayed on his or her disclosure, the CRB will contact the relevant force and ask them to review the accuracy or the relevance of such material and will communicate the force's decision to the applicant.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Criminal Records Bureau checks have been carried out since they were introduced. [69439]

Joan Ryan: The latest available figure shows that the Criminal Records Bureau has issued 8,990,597 Disclosures. This is broken down into 1,063,852 Standard Disclosures and 7,926,745 Enhanced Disclosures.

Death Penalty

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the operation of the Murder (Abolition of Death Penalty) Act 1965; and what recent representations he has received about the operation of this Act. [69638]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Murder (Abolition of Death Penalty) Act 1965 abolished capital punishment for those convicted of murder and introduced the mandatory life sentence instead. I have not received any representations recently about the operation of the Act.

DNA Database

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which *(a)* individuals and *(b)* bodies are authorised to access the National DNA Database. [68460]

Joan Ryan: Authorisation to access the National DNA Database (NDNAD) is given to 18 staff within the HO Custodian's group who have responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the NDNAD. In addition the Forensic Science Service Ltd have 15 staff in the NDNAD service delivery team and 16 staff in their information service division, supporting the systems and working on NDNAD development, who have authorisation to access the NDNAD.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many volunteers providing DNA elimination samples have consented to the addition of their DNA profile to the National DNA Database in each year since 1997; and what percentage of volunteers this represented in each year. [68461]

Mr. Sutcliffe: No volunteer samples were loaded before the financial year 2004-05. 12,095 samples were loaded in 2004-05, 3,953 in 2005-06, and 135 have been loaded since 1 April 2006. It is not possible to determine what percentage of volunteers this represents, as no central records are kept of volunteers who give samples which are not loaded to the National DNA Database.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in how many criminal cases familiar searching of the National DNA Database has been used in each year since 1997. [68462]

Mr. Sutcliffe: There were 73 familiar searches in 2004, 78 in 2005 and there have been 19 so far in 2006. There are no data on any familial searches before 2004.

DNA Sampling

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which organisations are approved to provide *(a)* DNA profiles and *(b)* crime scene samples. [68459]

Joan Ryan: The following organisations are approved to provide DNA profiles from individuals:

Forensic Science Service Ltd
LGC Limited
Orchid Cellmark
Tayside Police Forensic Science Laboratory
Forensic Science Northern Ireland

The following organisations are approved to provide DNA profiles from crime scene samples:

Forensic Science Service Ltd
LGC Limited
Orchid Cellmark
Tayside Police Forensic Science Laboratory
Strathclyde Police Forensic Science Laboratory
Lothian and Borders Police Forensic Science Laboratory

Forensic Integration Strategy

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what projects are being undertaken under the Forensic Integration Strategy; and if he will make a statement. [68458]

Joan Ryan: There are a number of projects currently being progressed under the auspices of the Forensic Integration Strategy:

National rollout of livescan?project to ensure all police forces are able to rapidly check fingerprints to establish identity in custody centres.

International data-sharing feasibility assessment?work to assess the feasibility of technical options to support international sharing of information, accounting for different national legislation and data protection.

ACPO DNA and fingerprint retention project?work to ensure that DNA and fingerprint records are appropriately retained following the implementation of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001.

ACPO forensic training strategy?to support development and implementation of ACPO's forensic training strategy.

Improvement of forensic mortuaries.

Introduction of national IT system for forensic pathologists?to ensure maintenance of common standards and provision of effective management information.

Development of forensic procurement framework?supporting ACPO to develop common statement of requirements and terms and conditions to support equality of opportunity in development of the forensic service market.

Harry Hammond

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 320W, on Mr. Harry Hammond, if he will posthumously strike Mr. Hammond's conviction from the public record. [68961]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Mr. Hammond was convicted by a court of law and only a court can quash that conviction. It is open to the relatives of Mr. Hammond to seek to bring a late appeal or to seek the assistance of the Criminal Cases Review Commission.

Identity Cards

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on his plans for the management of the identity card database. [68561]

Joan Ryan: Strategic functions, critical decision making and sensitive staff roles connected with the National Identity Register will remain under the direct control of the public sector under the auspices of the Identity and Passport Service. However, where appropriate, it is also planned that where the operations of the National Identity Scheme can be best delivered by the private sector, the Identity and Passport Service will seek to procure these services from the market. The Government have also confirmed that the facilities used for hosting the National Identity Register, as part of the country's Critical National Infrastructure, as well as those used for the personalisation of identity cards will be located in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has for remote reading of identity cards; and if he will make a statement. [68599]

Joan Ryan: It is currently intended that the identity card will be a valid travel document for travel within the European Union. In order to meet minimum international standards for travel documents set by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), the identity card must include a "proximity" or "contactless" chip. Such chips are being introduced into travel documents worldwide to improve their integrity and security, with four of the five largest passport issuing countries, the US, UK, Japan and Germany introducing this chip in passports this year.

The "proximity" or "contactless" chip is read by actively placing the chip on the reader (at a distance of 0 cm to 2 cm from the reader). The contents of the chip can only be 'unlocked' after special characters printed on the card/passport's Machine Readable Zone (MRZ) are scanned. An attempt to read the chip without using the information printed in the MRZ to 'unlock' it will yield no data which can be used to identify the individual. This is known as Basic Access Control protection, which is being implemented internationally in accordance with ICAO standards. It should be noted

that this technology differs from that used in RFID tags. While both use radio frequencies, they operate very differently from one another—an RFID tag is just an identity tag that provides information.

A proximity chip is more advanced—it has processing capability with different operating systems and different security settings. This is reflected in the fact that they are defined by two separate standards set by the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO).

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of people who will reapply for passports before their expiry date in advance of passports being issued in combination with identity cards; and whether he plans to recruit additional staff to process passport applications. [68600]

Joan Ryan: The Identity and Passport Service expects to receive 6.9 million applications in the 2006-07 financial year and has recruited sufficient staff for this. We do not anticipate that the number of people choosing to renew early in order to delay enrolment on the National Identity Register will be significant in the context of the overall number of applications. However, the IPS will continue to monitor trends in application numbers closely and will take action if necessary.

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 15 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 2128W, on the identity cards scheme, whether the total staff costs for the identity cards unit are included in the costs reported to Parliament. [68647]

Joan Ryan *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* Yes. The figure of £32.05 million provided in the answer of 15 February 2006 included total staff costs.

Immigration Detention (Children)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will ensure that children subject to immigration control have their needs represented by the Commissioners for Children and Young People in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. [66790]

Beverley Hughes: I have been asked to respond as I have ministerial responsibility for the Children's Commissioner for England.

The Children's Commissioner has the general function of promoting awareness of the views and interests of children in England on all matters, and on non-devolved matters in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This is a broad and strategic remit allowing him flexibility in the issues he wishes to consider.

As immigration control is a non-devolved matter the Children's Commissioner has the remit to promote awareness of the views and interests of children across the UK in respect of this matter.

The Children's Commissioner is independent of Government. The Secretary of State for Education and Skills does not have the power to direct the general work of the Children's Commissioner so would not be able to ensure the needs of children subject to immigration control are represented by the Commissioner. The Secretary of State can however, direct the Commissioner to hold an inquiry into a case where he considers that the case of an individual child raises issues of relevance to other children.

Informants

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the incidence of the illegal use of prison inmates as informants; what steps he is taking to reduce the incidence of the practice; and if he will make a statement. [69416]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Home Secretary is aware that the Office of Surveillance Commissioners' inspection team found evidence that some information gathering in prisons ought to have had covert human intelligence source authorisation. The Prison Service is committed to address this in their action plan drawn up in response to the inspection undertaken in 2005.

Kelly Hutchinson

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the death in custody of Kelly Hutchinson. [69204]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Kelly Hutchinson, a 22-year-old prisoner at HMPYOI New Hall, tragically died in the early hours of 1 May 2006, following an incident in which she was found hanging. Ms Hutchinson was the first woman prisoner to apparently take her own life since October 2005. Ms Hutchinson's death will be thoroughly investigated by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman, Stephen Shaw, who, since April 2004, has been investigating all deaths in custody. Her death will also the subject of a police investigation and a coroner's inquest before a jury. The Prison Service will be looking to act on any early lessons that can be learned from Ms Hutchinson's very sad death. My sympathies are with the family and friends of Ms Hutchinson at this time.

Prison Service (Covert Surveillance)

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times covert surveillance has been used in investigations involving staff within the Prison Service in each of the last three years. [69328]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I refer to the answer that was given to the hon. Member on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 335W.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether disciplinary proceedings were *(a)* instigated, *(b)* progressed and *(c)* successfully concluded against prison staff as a result of video evidence obtained by the prison service in a covert surveillance operation in the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [69329]

Mr. Sutcliffe: For operational reasons, it would be inappropriate to divulge details of the outcome of surveillance operations.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many covert surveillance operations were deployed within each regional area of the Prison Service in each of the last 12 months. [69330]

Mr. Sutcliffe: For reasons of operational security, I am unable to list the information in the manner asked. However, the numbers of prison surveillance operations remains low, not least because there continue to be other effective ways of either obtaining intelligence or stopping contraband from entering prison establishments.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what mechanisms exist to authorise the appropriate use of covert surveillance techniques in the Prison Service; and if he will make a statement. [69331]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Both public sector and contracted prisons have systems and audit trails to authorize staff to consider the use of covert investigative techniques. The policy, set out in function four of the National Security Framework, requires a local risk assessment to be undertaken to consider the necessity; proportionality; and potential for unintentional intrusion that may be caused by any covert operation, before it is submitted to the area manager for approval.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he last met the Surveillance Commissioner to discuss *(a)* the use of covert surveillance in the Prison Service and *(b)* the performance of the Prison Service in surveillance operations; and if he will publish the minutes of that meeting. [69418]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The former Home Secretary, Charles Clarke, met Sir Andrew Leggatt, the Chief Surveillance Commissioner, on 2 February 2006. The meeting covered a number of subjects including the performance of the Prison Service. In view of the sensitivities of the subjects under discussion, I am not proposing to release the minutes of the meeting.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he is taking to improve the use of covert surveillance in prisons; and if he will make a statement. [69419]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Prison Service is implementing an action plan that addresses issues raised in the Office of the Surveillance Commissioner's report following an inspection in 2005. I am satisfied that the Prison Service is on course to delivering the action plan and the associated improvements to the use of covert surveillance.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether covert surveillance techniques in the Prison Service include the authorised use of in-cell surveillance; and if he will make a statement. [69453]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Prison Service has powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 to use intrusive surveillance and ensure appropriate audit trails are in place for their use.

Prisons

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he has taken to improve levels of constructive activity and the availability of quality intervention programmes for 18 to 21-year-old prisoners. [65590]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government have invested considerable extra funds in improving rehabilitation regimes for all adults, including this age group, and we now spend £300 million a year on this in prisons alone. All establishments are required to provide constructive regimes which address offending behaviour, improve educational and work skills, and promote law abiding behaviour. To address the specific needs of this group, the National Offender Management Service has established a project to develop a strategy and standards for their management both in custody and the community. This is working with key interest groups who have experience of working successfully with this age group. It is due to report its findings to Ministers in the autumn.

Rathbone Charity

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the work of the Rathbone charity at *(a)* HM Young Offender Institution Feltham, *(b)* HM Young Offender Institution Huntercombe and *(c)* HM Young Offender Institution Warren Hill; what outcomes he expects the project to deliver; at what cost; and within what time scale. [69323]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Rathbone charity provides an employment, training and education service to young people to acquire the necessary skills for employment or further education courses upon release. Funding for the project is £300,000 from the Youth Justice Board for young people under 18, and £60,000 from the Learning and Skills Council, which can be used additionally to support young people aged 18 and over on transition. The initiative will run at Warren Hill young offender institution (YOI) between April and October 2006 and at Feltham and Huntercombe YOIs between May and November 2006.

Sex Offenders (Extradition)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many alleged sex offenders have been extradited from the US to the UK in each of the last five years. [69358]

Joan Ryan: The figures for the last five complete calendar years are as follows:

	Number of extraditions
2001	0
2002	1
2003	0
2004	2
2005	0

Stephen Ayre

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the conclusions of the probation service review into the case of Stephen Ayre will be made public. [68290]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Serious Further Offence (SFO) reviews are an internal process carried out by the probation service to quality assure its risk assessment, risk management and offender management procedures. The SFO review of the supervision of Stephen Ayre by West Yorkshire probation area is not yet fully complete, and as such, it would be inappropriate at present to discuss the conclusions of the review. The SFO review is likely to be complete at the end of May, and consideration will then be given to dissemination of the review's conclusions. I will therefore update the hon. Member further once the review has been fully completed.

Train Fare Evasion

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been *(a)* prosecuted and *(b)* convicted for evading a train fare in each of the last eight years. [61273]

Mr. Byrne: Data on the number of people prosecuted and convicted for evading a train fare are not held centrally on the Court Proceedings Database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform as prosecutions are brought privately by train operators.

Young Offenders Establishments

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made at each young offender establishment in the self-assessment against the code of practice outlined in Managing Children and Young People's Behaviour in the Secure Estate; and whether he plans to publish the results. [69322]

Mr. Sutcliffe: With one exception, all secure establishments that accommodate sentenced or remanded young people under the age of 18 have now completed a self-assessment of performance against the code of practice. The remaining establishment is expected to complete its self-assessment shortly. These self-assessments have been validated, either by the Youth Justice Board or by Prison Service operational support staff. Additionally, the Prison Service has audited its national policies and procedures against the code of practice. By the end of May, each establishment is expected to have completed an action plan to address any areas of non-compliance. Once the Youth Justice Board has had the opportunity to analyse all the information gathered from establishments, it will consider how the results can be made more widely available.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Fire and Rescue Services

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many staff members employed by each local authority fire and rescue service are members of the *(a)* Retained Firefighters Union and *(b)* Fire Officers Association; and what mechanism she uses to verify the number. [69170]

Angela E. Smith: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many consultants her Department has employed on fire services-related projects, and at what cost, in each of the last five years. [63953]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was formed in May 2002 and expenditure prior to this date is not readily available. For the period May 2002 to March 2006 the figures are detailed in the following table.

	Number of consultancies	*£ million*
2002-03	65	3.38
2003-04	78	5.29
2004-05	114	13.27
2005-06	80	15.35

Holiday Accommodation Tax

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what research her Department has undertaken into the effect of a hotel, tourist or bed tax. [66341]

Mr. Woolas: During the Balance of Funding Review, the Local Government Association provided two papers which considered the merits of a range of potential revenue sources, including a tourist tax.

The Office has not carried out or commissioned any research into the effect of a hotel, tourist or bed tax.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 9 May 2006

HEALTH

Abortions

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many terminations of pregnancies were performed on *(a)* 13 to 14 and *(b)* 15 to 16 year olds in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [69669]

Caroline Flint: The information (for England and Wales) is available on the Department's website at:

Data for 2002-04

www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Statistics/StatisticalWorkAreas/StatisticalPublicHealth/fs/en

Data for 2000-01

www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp%3Fvlnk%3D68%26Pos%3D2%26ColRank%3D2%26Rank%3D640

Data for 2005

Will be published in July 2006.

The Government's teenage pregnancy strategy aims to help young people delay early sex through its national media campaign and also improved sex and relationships education and support for parents in discussing relationship and sexual health issues with their children. However, it is very important that teenagers who are sexually active have access to contraception, including emergency contraception, and sexual health advice to minimise the risk of pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections.

Between 1998 (the baseline year for the strategy) and 2004 (the latest year for which data are available) the under-18 conception rate has fallen by 11.1 per cent. The under-16 conception rate has fallen by 15.2 per cent. over the same period. Both rates are now at their lowest levels since the mid-1980s.

Autism

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 254W, to the hon. Member for South Cambridgeshire (Mr. Lansley), on autism, what assessment the Government have made of the reasons for the trends in the incidence of autism; and what steps her Department is taking to expand the provision of care for autism sufferers. [68262]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In March 2001, the Department commissioned the Medical Research Council (MRC) to produce a report on the prevalence and incidence (epidemiology) and causes of autism. This was published in December 2001 and provides an authoritative overview of the current state of knowledge on the prevalence, incidence and causes of autism.

The report considers recent studies which suggest a prevalence of autism in young children of approximately 60 per 10,000 population and finds that much of the headline rise can be accounted for by changes in diagnostic practice and public awareness. It is available on the MRC website at www.mrc.ac.uk/pdf-autism-report.pdf.

It is for local commissioners to ensure their populations benefit from improvements to the provision of care for people with autistic spectrum disorders using the increasing resources this Government have made available.

Mr. Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures are being undertaken by her Department to increase awareness of autism among health professionals. [68913]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The detailed curricula for the education and training of doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals in treating and supporting those with autism is a matter for the relevant professional bodies.

The national directors for learning disability and mental health are commissioning a document to assist those working with people with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). This will clarify how existing policies apply to people with ASD and how these may best be delivered to this group.

Care Homes

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the merits of including a value for money assessment in the inspection reports of care homes for older people produced by the Commission for Social Care Inspection. [65303]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: No assessment has been made. The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), as the independent inspectorate for social care in England, is responsible for registering, inspecting and regulating all social care services, including care homes. CSCI works to maintain and improve the quality of care, to ensure the safety of service users and, if necessary, takes enforcement action to end bad practice.

CSCI inspects local authority social services and awards star ratings, based on how effectively councils are meeting the social care needs of their populations. These ratings will include an assessment of councils' commissioning arrangements. Councils are responsible for ensuring they achieve value for money in their purchasing of services from care homes and CSCI's functions encompass the economy and efficiency of councils' provision and their value for money.

The great majority—around 70 per cent.—of care homes are private businesses. Market forces, particularly with regard to local authority-funded care home placements, which account for around 67 per cent. of places, ensure there is price competition, particularly in view of the fact that there is currently considerable spare capacity, with approximately 9 per cent. vacancy levels in privately owned, for-profit care homes in 2005[1].

[1] "Care of Elderly People–UK Market Report 2005", Laing and Buisson.

Child Care

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nursery and creche places are provided for people working in her Department; what charges are made for the provision of such services; and what other facilities are provided for the children of employees of her Department. [67365]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department offers a package of childcare support for working parents. The package comprises of access to 60 playscheme places offered on site in London and Leeds during the school holidays. The places are very popular and have been in place for more than five years. The places are subsidised on a daily basis. Each place is charged at £18.00 per day. Parents contribute £8.00 per place and the Department meets the cost of the difference. In addition, we will soon be offering childcare vouchers as part of a salary sacrifice scheme. This will be available to all staff to take advantage of the tax benefits attached to salary sacrifice. We are currently tendering for a voucher provider and expect the contract to begin on 1 September 2006. The Department also shares nursery provision with the Department for Work and Pensions for providing 20 on-site nursery places for pre-school children based in Quarry House, Leeds. Finally, we offer three days per annum carers leave in addition to annual and special leave for parents with caring responsibilities. This is to enable staff to care for their children when their usual childcare provision has broken down or in order for them to make alternative caring arrangements.

Children's Health Services

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children aged between four and five received pre-school vision screening in the most recent period for which figures are available. [67649]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not held centrally.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many babies received hearing screening during the first month of their life during the most recent period for which figures are available. [67655]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information is not collected centrally. However, data is available from the director of the newborn hearing screening programme for the number of babies receiving hearing screening during the first three months of their life. Between 1 April 2005 and 31 March 2006, 479,886 babies received a hearing screening test.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the impact on service users of changes planned for *(a)* speech and language therapy, *(b)* paediatric physiotherapy and *(c)* paediatric occupational therapy by primary care trusts in Buckinghamshire. [67663]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: It is for primary care trusts (PCTs) in partnership with strategic health authorities, local authorities and other local stakeholders to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services. This process provides the means for addressing local needs within the health community including the provision of speech and language therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy.

Children's Hospices

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list children's hospices which are receiving grants from the Big Lottery Fund; when this funding will cease in each case; whether she plans to increase funding for children's hospices from central budgets when Lottery funding ceases; and if she will make a statement. [51931]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The table shows the list of children's hospices receiving grants from the Big Lottery Fund, and when the funding will cease in each case.

The provision of palliative care for children and young people with a life threatening or life limiting condition requires a wide range of services provided in a variety of settings—home, school, hospital or hospice to enable them to live as normal a life as possible. It is for local primary care trusts (PCTs), working with local authority partners and stakeholders, to decide how these services will be provided; we have published guidance to support PCTs in working with local authorities and other partners, including hospices, to commission high quality services.

The Government's White Paper "Our health, our care, our say" (copies are available in the Library) reaffirms our manifesto commitment to double funding for end of life care to enable more people to have a choice where to die. For children this includes palliative care, quite often a lifelong need, and not just end of life care. I will make an announcement about the manifesto commitment as soon as I can.

Children's hospices in receipt of lottery funding

New opportunities fund	
Acorns Children's Hospice Trust	November 2006
Butterwick Children's Hospice	March 2006
Chase Children's Hospice	August 2006
Children's Hospice South West	September 2006
Claire House	June 2006
Cope Childrens Trust	October 2006
Demelza House Children's Hospice	August 2006
Derian House	September 2006
Donna Louise Trust	May 2006
East Anglia's Childrens Hospices	June 2006
Haven House Foundation	June 2006
Helen House Children's Hospice	April 2006
Hope House Children's Hospice	July 2006
Little Haven	March 2006
Martin House	January 2007
Pasque Charity	March 2006
Richard House Children's Hospice	March 2007
Richard House Trust	July 2007
St. Andrew's Hospice Limited	April 2006
St. Barnabas Hospice Limited	July 2007

Children's hospices in receipt of lottery funding	
Wessex Children's Hospice Trust	January 2007
Zoe's Place Trust	November 2006
Community fund	
Donna Louise Trust	April 2006
Claire House Children's Hospice	Not yet drawn down

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the future funding of children's hospices. [58331]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 13 March 2006]:* The White Paper "Our health, our care, our say" reaffirms our commitment to double funding of end of life care to enable more people to have a choice about where to die. We will make further announcements on plans to implement this manifesto commitment as soon as possible.

Colonoscopy

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects the remaining four programme hubs in the bowel cancer screening programme to be decided by the NHS cancer screening programme teams; and *(a)* how and *(b)* where the public can make representations on the location and timing of future hubs. [68712]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Five programme hubs across England will invite men and women to participate in the screening programme, send out the faecal occult blood (FOB) testing kits, interpret kits and send results out. Ninety to 100 local screening centres will provide endoscopy services for the 2 per cent. of men and women who have a positive FOB test result.

As there are only five programme hubs to cover the whole of England, these are being commissioned centrally by national health service cancer screening programmes. The national cancer screening team is currently assessing where the other programme hubs will be located and announcements will be made as soon as possible.

Strategic health authorities (SHAs) were asked to bid last August for their local endoscopy units to become local screening centres as part of the first wave of the programme in 2006-07. Similar exercises will take place for the second wave in 2007-08 and the third wave in 2008-09. It is up to SHAs to decide where local screening centres should be located for the benefit of their own populations.

We intend that all five programme hubs will be established, and around 14 local screening centres will be operating (out of a total of 90 to 100 for full national coverage) by March 2007.

Dentistry

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists signed the dental contract "in dispute". [65530]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of dentists who signed the new contract in dispute is not available centrally. Provisional management estimates indicate that 2,884 contracts were signed in dispute. A contract may be for either a practice or an individual dentist.

Primary care trusts are working with dentists to resolve as many disputes as possible locally.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidelines on recall interval between dental examinations; and if she will make a statement. [65961]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In 2002, the Department asked the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE), as the independent organisation responsible for providing health guidance, to produce a guideline relating to recall intervals between dental examinations. The Department regards NICE's recommendations as constituting the best available independent clinical advice on how dentists should agree with each patient the recall intervals that are appropriate to the needs of individual patients. Under the new contracts for general dental services and personal dental services, dentists are required to provide services in accordance with guidance issued by NICE, including guidance on recall intervals.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in the *(a)* Tameside and Glossop and *(b)* Stockport Primary Care Trust have signed the new NHS dental contract; and what percentage this represents of (i) all dentists and (ii) those dentists providing NHS treatments under the old arrangements in each PCT area. [67887]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not available in the format requested.

Information on the number of dentists who have signed the new contract and the number who have not signed is not available centrally. We do however have some provisional information that covers contracts. A contract may well be for more than one dentist so cannot be broken down further to individual dentist level.

Provisional management estimates in Tameside and Glossop Primary Care Trust (PCT)

	Number	*Approximate UDA[1] value*	*Percentage of UDA[1]s*
Contracts signed	39	416,673	—
Contracts rejected	5	10,845	2.5

Provisional management estimates in Stockport PCT

	Number	Approximate UDA[1] value	Percentage of UDA's
Contracts signed	55	541,000	—
Contracts rejected	7	29,000	5.1

[1] Approximate Units of Dental Activity value

Notes:
The information provided is not validated as it represents a snapshot of the position in early April 2006.
A contract may be for either a practice or an individual dentist.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were registered for NHS dentistry in Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust in each year since 1997. [68735]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The number of patients registered with a national health service dentist in Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust as at 31 December in each specified year is shown in the table.

With effect from September 1996, the registration period for adults was reduced from two years to 15 months from the date of the patient's last attendance at the dentist. Registration periods for children were also standardised at 15 months. This produced a gradual reduction in the number of patients registered with dentists between January and September 1998 as those adult patients who were originally registered on a 24-month basis and did not return to the dentist were no longer counted.

General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS)

	Registered patients
1997	173,009
1998	155,221
1999	157,106
2000	160,389
2001	161,980
2002	158,667
2003	151,480
2004	151,423
2005	144,555

Notes:
1. PDS schemes have varying registration periods. To ensure comparability with corresponding GDS data, PDS registrations for established PDS practices are estimated using proxy registrations, namely the number of patients seen by PDS practices in the past 15 months.
2. Data for 2003 and earlier do not include those PDS schemes that do not have any registrations, for example dental access centres, and is therefore not directly comparable with 2004 and 2005 data.
3. The registration figures for 1997 are not comparable with subsequent years due to the change in the registration period to 15 months. Previously the period for adults was 24 months whilst children's registrations expired at the end of the following calendar year. The introduction of PDS in October 1998 and subsequent growth has also affected the figures.
4. The areas have been defined using practice postcodes within the PCT, not the patient's home address.
5. Prison contracts have not been included in this analysis.

Sources:
The Information Centre for health and social care
Business Services Authority

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists doing NHS work have signed the new NHS dental contract in dispute in each primary care trust in England; and if she will make a statement. [69605]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of dentists who have signed the new contract and the number who have signed in dispute is not available centrally.

We do however have some provisional information that covers contracts. A contract may well be for more than one dentist so cannot be broken down further to individual dentist level. The number of contracts which have been signed in dispute in each primary care trust (PCT) has been placed in the library.

PCTs are working with dentists to resolve as many disputes as possible locally.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for *Health on* what basis the number of people registered with a dentist will be recorded following changes to the system for such registration. [62676]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Under the new arrangements, the NHS Business Services Authority will monitor the numbers of patients who receive care or treatment from national health service primary care dentists on one or more occasions within a given period of time, as has previously been the system for most personal dental services pilots. We are reviewing what time period should be used as the main basis for this monitoring.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of eligible dentists in the area covered by the Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth Primary Care Trust had accepted the NHS dental contract as at 31 March; how many eligible dentists had declined to accept the new NHS dental contract as at that date; and how many eligible dentists had not responded either way. [68373]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of dentists or dental practices who have signed the new contract and the number who have not signed is not available centrally. However, provisional information is available that covers contracts.

A contract may be for more than one dentist so cannot be broken down further to individual dentist level.

Provisional management estimates in Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth Primary Care Trust (PCT)

	Number	Approximate UDA[1] value	Percentage of UDA's
Contracts signed	62	253,250	—
Contracts still in discussion	0	0	—
Contracts rejected	12	6,078	2.3

[1] Approximate Units of Dental Activity value.

Notes:
The information provided is not validated as it represents a snapshot of the position in early April 2006.

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists were practising within the Bexley Primary Care Trust area in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2001 and *(c)* 2005. [68418]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

General dental services (CDS) and personal dental services (PDS): Number of national health service dentists in Bexley Primary Care Trust (PCT) as at 31 December in the specified years

	Number
1997	88
2001	90
2005	99

Notes:
1. Data include all notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS, received by the NHS Business Services Authority, up to 23 March 2006. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period, for example data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS.
2. Dentists consist of principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts have been excluded from the data.
3. The postcode of the dental practice was used to allocate dentists to specific geographic areas. PCT areas have been defined using the Office for National Statistics all fields postcode directory.
4. A dentist with a GDS or PDS contract may provide as little or as much NHS treatment as he or she chooses or has agreed with the PCT. Information concerning the amount of time dedicated to NHS work by individual dentists is not centrally available.
5. Data on dentists who work only in private practice are not held centrally.
Sources:
NHS Business Services Authority
The Information Centre for health and social care

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of *(a)* adults and *(b)* children are registered with an NHS dentist in each primary care trust in Devon; how many were registered in each category in 1997; and what proportion of dentists have signed the NHS contract in each health trust area in Devon. [68544]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The tables give the estimated percentage of adults and children registered with a national health service dentist in Devon in the years 1997 and 2005. There is no information currently available on the number of dentists who have signed the new NHS contract in Devon. However, information on provisional management estimates is provided for a number of contracts signed in the Devon area.

Table 1: General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS): Number of adults and children registered with an NHS dentist in Devon primary care trusts (PCTs) as at 31 December 1997 and the estimated percentage of the total estimated population in England

	1997		1997 Estimate percentage of patients registered	
	Adult	Child	Adult	Child
PCTs in England	259,054	98,742	53	69
East Devon	44,563	13,710	[1]—	[1]—
Mid Devon	28,781	12,501	[1]—	[1]—
North Devon	52,581	23,153	[1]—	[1]—
South Hams and West Devon	35,418	16,513	[1]—	[1]—
Teignbridge	40,232	13,840	[1]—	[1]—
Torbay	57,479	19,025	[1]—	[1]—

Table 2: GDS and PDS: Number of adults and children registered with an NHS dentist in Devon PCTs as at 31 December 2005 and the estimated percentage of the total estimated population in England and Devon PCTs in 2005

	2005		2005 Estimate percentage of patients registered	
	Adult	Child	Adult	Child
PCTs in England	17,705,593	7,040,445	46	60
East Devon	40,577	12,768	42	54
Mid Devon	39,837	15,165	54	70
North Devon	62,459	24,412	53	73
South Hams and West Devon	18,594	13,292	21	54
Teignbridge	27,665	10,851	33	46
Torbay	42,929	15,994	41	57

[1] Not applicable. Population estimates are not available at PCT level prior to 2001.
Notes:
1. Official 2005 population data is not yet available. 2005 data has therefore been estimated using Office for National Statistics 2004 mid-year population estimates based on the 2001 census as these are the latest available.
2. PDS schemes have varying registration periods. To ensure comparability with corresponding GDS data, PDS registrations for established PDS practices are estimated using "proxy registrations", namely the number of patients seen by PDS practices in the past 15 months.
3. Note that the data on registration numbers for December 1997 is calculated on a different basis from subsequent years. The registration period for both adults and children in GDS was 15 months from 1 September 1996 (registrations expire 15 months after the end of the month of registration). Previously the registration period for adults was an exact 24 months while children's registrations expired at the end of the next calendar year. Therefore, data on the 15 month registration period is available from January 1998 for children and September 1998 for adults. The introduction of PDS in October 1998 and subsequent growth has also affected the figures, changes in the registration period from two years to 15 months impacted on the number of patients registered after December 1997.
4. The postcode of the dental practice was used to allocate patient registrations to specific geographic areas (not the patient's home address).
5. Registration rates (i.e. the percentage of the population registered with a dentist) have been estimated by including registrations in the area of the dentist, that is according to the postcode of the dental surgery and not the patient's address. So the registration rates for some areas may be affected by some patients receiving dental treatment in a different area from the one in which they live. This can lead to figures being unusually high, even over 100 per cent. for child registrations, while other areas may have estimated rates which are lower than the actual (but unknown) proportion of residents who are registered with a dentist in or outside their own area.
6. Figures have been provided by the Information Centre for health and social care. The data source is the Business Services Authority and the figures are based on the numbers of patients registered with dentists with open General Dental Service (GDS) or Personal Dental Service (PDS) contracts as at 31 December in each specified year. Prison contracts have not been included in this analysis.
Source:
The Information Centre for health and social care and the NHS Business Services Authority

	Contracts signed		Contracts rejected		
PCTs	A: Number	B: Approximate UDA value	E: Number	F: Approximate UDA value	Percentage UDAs
Torbay	21	195,500	4	2,810	1.4
North Devon	25	264,300	5	18,500	6.5
East Devon	21	158,883	4	2,528	1.6
Teignbridge PCT	28	164,172	1	12	0.0
Mid Devon PCT	13	160,731	3	3,607	2.2
South Hams and West Devon	22	95,000	5	3,500	3.6

Note:
A contract may be for either a practice or an individual dentist.
The information provided is not validated.
It represents a snapshot of the position in early April.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists were practising within Horsham and Chactonbury Primary Care Trust area in each year for which records are available. [68134]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Numbers of national health services dentists at local geographic areas are not readily available prior to 1997. However, the number of NHS dentists as at 31 December 1997 to 2005 is shown in the table.

General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS): Number of NHS dentists in Horsham and Chactonbury Primary Care Trust (PCT) as at 31 December each year

	Number
1997	55
1998	55
1999	60
2000	64
2001	71
2002	74
2003	73
2004	74
2005	71

Notes:
1. Data include all notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS, received by the NHS Business Services Authority, up to 23 March 2006. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period, for example, data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS.
2. Dentists consist of principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts have been excluded from the data.
3. The postcode of the dental practice was used to allocate dentists to specific geographic areas. PCT areas have been defined using the Office for National Statistics all fields postcode directory.
4. A dentist with a GDS or PDS contract may provide as little or as much NHS treatment as he or she chooses or has agreed with the PCT. Information concerning the amount of time dedicated to NHS work by individual dentists is not centrally available.
5. Data on dentists who work only in private practice are not held centrally.
Sources:
NHS Business Services Authority
The Information Centre for health and social care

Enzyme Replacement Therapy

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the funding of enzyme replacement therapies for lysosomal storage diseases will continue under the national specialist commissioning advisory group arrangements after 31 March 2007. [69572]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: It has not yet been decided whether the funding of enzyme replacement therapies for lysosomal storage disorders will continue under the national specialist commissioning advisory group after 31 March 2007.

Fruit/Vegetable Consumption

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average fruit and vegetable consumption per person was in the UK in each year since 1997, broken down by household income. [59398]

Caroline Flint: The health survey for England (HSE) undertaken by the Department collects data on fruit and vegetable consumption. Data is available for 2003 for adults and 2001 for children. This is shown in tables one and two. The highest consumption was found in women from the higher income groups eating 4.4 portions per day compared to the recommended portions of five portions.

The Food Standards Agency's consumer attitude survey indicates that there has been a steady increase in awareness of the 5 a day message from 43 per cent. to 67 per cent. in 2005. Those claiming to have eaten at least five portions of fruit and vegetables the previous day had risen from 26 per cent. in 2000 to 30 per cent. in 2006.

Fruit and vegetable consumption for adults and children, broken down by household income for 2001 and 2003, is shown in tables one and two.

In 1997 to 2000, consumption of fruit and vegetables based on household purchases is available from the national food survey and after 2001, from the expenditure and food survey. Quantities purchased for 2001-02 to 2003-04 broken down by income quintile are shown in table three. Quantities for 1997 to 2000 broken down by income bands are shown in table four.

These tables show that, overall, households have not seen a huge change in the purchasing of fruit and vegetables. However, we have seen a significant increase in purchases from those in the lowest income quintiles. This group has purchased 33 per cent. more fruit and vegetables per week in 2004-05 compared to 2001-02.

Table 1: Mean fruit and vegetable consumption[1] portions per day by adults[2] (age standardised) by equivalised household income quintile and gender, England 2003

Percentages

	Equivalised annual household income quintile				
	Highest	Second	Third	Fourth	Lowest
Men	3.6	3.4	3.1	3.0	2.6
Women	4.4	3.8	3.5	3.2	2.8
Bases (weighted)					
Men	1,390	1,419	1,280	973	1,036
Women	1,172	1,365	1,424	1,134	1,285

[1] Consumption is calculated in 80-gram portions. [2] Adults aged 16 and over.
Source:
HSE 2003, Department of Health

Table 2: Mean fruit and vegetable consumption[1] portions per day by children[2], by equivalised household income quintile and gender, England 2001-02

Percentages

	Equivalised annual household income quintile				
	Highest	Second	Third	Fourth	Lowest
Males	3.0	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.3
Females	3.2	2.7	2.6	2.3	2.5
Bases (weighted)					
Males	550	715	853	812	798
Females	570	684	822	758	852

[1] Consumption is calculated in 80-gram portions. [2] Children aged 5 to 15.
Source:
HSE 2002, Department of Health

Table 3: Quantities of fruit and vegetables, excluding potatoes, purchased, grams per person per week[1]: United Kingdom

Average gross weekly household income (UK)	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Quintile 5 (highest income)	2,947	2,496	2,473	2,512
Quintile 4	2,492	2,325	2,143	2,129
Quintile 3	2,220	2,121	2,204	2,197
Quintile 2	2,058	2,273	2,377	2,248
Quintile 1 (lowest income)	1,667	2,217	2,049	2,210
UK average across all households	2,248	2,307	2,269	2,274

[1] Each household member over the age of seven kept a diary.
Source:
Expenditure and food survey, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Office for National Statistics

Table 4: Quantities of fruit and vegetables (excluding potatoes) purchased, grams per person per week[1]: Great Britain

By gross weekly income of head of household[2]	1997	1998	1999	2000
A	2,618	2,819	2,732	2,604
B	2,157	2,196	2,170	2,214
C	1,964	1,925	1,851	1,922
D (lowest income)	1,798	1,647	1,840	1,775
E1 (highest income)	3,036	3,198	3,072	3,245
E2 (lowest income)	1,881	1,863	1,827	2,133

Table 4: Quantities of fruit and vegetables (excluding potatoes) purchased, grams per person per week[1]: Great Britain

By gross weekly income of head of household[2]	1997	1998	1999	2000
OAP households	2,489	2,389	2,275	2,491
All GB households	2,188	2,181	2,158	2,197

[1] One diary for the entire household completed by person who does most of the food shopping.
[2] A, B and C are households with one or more earners; In 2000 A: £725 and over, B: £375 and under £725, C: £180 and under £375, E1 and E2 are households without an earner; In 2000 E1: £180 and over, E2: under £180.
Source:
National food survey, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Mental Health

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many care homes registered as catering for the needs of *(a)* people aged over 65 with mental illness and *(b)* people aged between 18 and 65 with mental illness there were in each of the last six years; [64766]

(2) what estimate she has made of the number of people aged 65 years and over who suffered from a sensory impairment in each of the last six years, broken down by sense; [64768]

(3) how many *(a)* care homes were registered for sensory impairment for elderly people and *(b)* places were available in such care homes in each of the last six years, broken down by local authority. [64769]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Table 1 shows the number of residential and nursing care homes for people aged 18 and over with mental health problems in England at 31 March for the years 2000 and 2001.

Table 1: Number of residential and nursing care homes for people with mental health problems, England 2000 and 2001

	Residential[1]		Nursing[2]	Total
At 31 March:	Aged 18-64	Aged 65 and over	All	All
2001	1,890	940	1,050	3,870
2000	1,940	930	1,070	3,950

[2] Nursing home figures are for all ages. Separate data for 18 to 64 and 65 and over are not available.
Note:
Information for 1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003 is not available.
Sources:
Forms RA(A)[1] and RH(N)A[2], Department of Health.

I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that the number of care homes catering for the needs of people aged over 65 and people aged between 18 and 65 with mental illness between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2006 were as shown in table 2.

Table 2: Total number of care homes registered for people with mental illness

	Aged over 65	Aged 18 to 65	Total
1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003	1,777	2,742	4,519
1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004	1,907	2,523	4,430
1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005	1,780	2,302	4,082
1 April 2005 to 23 March 2006	1,752	2,255	4,077

Information on the number of people aged 65 and over who are suffering from sensory impairment is not available centrally.

Table 3 shows the number of adults aged 65 and over who are registered as blind, partially blind, deaf or hard of hearing in England. Registration of blindness or deafness is voluntary. Therefore, the number of people registered does not include all people with a sensory impairment.

Table 3: Number of adults aged 65 and over who are registered as having a sensory impairment in England, as at 31 March 2000 to 2004

Registered as:	2000	2001	2003	2004
Blind	124,100	n/a	121,100	n/a
Partially sighted	118,900	n/a	122,200	n/a
Deaf	n/a	19,000	n/a	21,700
Hard of hearing	n/a	116,100	n/a	126,100

n/a = Not available.

Notes:
1. The information on both the blind and deaf registers is collected every three years.
2. Data is rounded.

I understand from CSCI that the number of care homes registered for sensory impairment and the number of places available in these homes, broken down by local authority, between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2006 is shown in table 4.

Table 4: Care homes registered for sensory impairment and available places, 2003 to 2006, England

	1 April to 31 March					
	2003-04		2004-05		2005-06	
Local authority	Care homes	Places	Care homes	Places	Care homes	Places
Bath and North East Somerset	1	22	1	22	1	22
Birmingham	2	98	2	98	2	98
Bradford	1	35	1	35	1	35
Brent	1	21	1	21	1	21
Brighton and Hove	1	44	1	44	1	44
Cambridgeshire	1	38	1	38	0	0
Cornwall	1	5	1	5	2	33
Coventry	1	13	1	13	1	13
Cumbria	1	38	1	38	1	38
Devon	3	78	4	106	4	106
Durham	1	40	1	40	1	40
Essex	2	60	2	60	2	60
Gateshead	17	559	18	592	18	578
Gloucestershire	2	56	2	56	2	56
Hampshire	4	160	4	160	4	160
Hertfordshire	2	58	2	58	2	58
Kingston upon Hull	1	21	1	21	1	21
Leeds	1	6	2	11	2	11
Leicester	19	605	19	605	20	622
Leicestershire	23	884	23	884	23	884
Manchester	2	45	1	32	1	32
North Yorkshire	—	—	1	39	1	39
Oldham	16	476	17	496	17	496
Oxfordshire	1	103	1	103	1	103
Peterborough	2	11	2	11	2	11
Plymouth	2	67	3	88	3	88
Salford	1	59	1	59	1	59
Sheffield	1	30	1	30	1	30
Somerset	1	40	1	40	1	40
South Tyneside	5	196	7	305	7	305
Southend on Sea	1	25	1	25	1	25
Stockport	1	44	1	44	1	44
Suffolk	1	16	1	16	1	16
Sunderland	15	597	15	597	14	553
Surrey	43	1,597	44	1,635	45	1,738
Swindon	1	5	1	5	1	5
Tameside	12	415	12	415	12	415
Wandsworth	1	6	1	6	1	6
Worcestershire	1	16	1	16	2	28
Total	105	3,703	200	6,869	202	6,933

Notes:
1. Local authorities not listed do not have care homes registered for sensory impairment.
2. Information on homes registered for sensory impairment prior to 2003 and the establishment of CSCI is not available.

Midwives

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many vacant midwife posts there are in *(a)* the North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire Strategic Health Authority area and *(b)* the East Hull and West Hull Primary Care Trust area; and what plans her Department has to recruit more midwives into the NHS in North and East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire. [65437]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is shown in the table. Individual national health service organisations are responsible for the recruitment of midwives. I am advised that Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust is able to deploy staff flexibly to cover vacancies, and is planning to recruit to five of the vacant posts. North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire Strategic Health Authority is continuing to commission training programmes for registered midwives at the Universities of Hull and York in order to maintain future supply.

Health and Social Care Information Centre Vacancies Survey March 2005: NHS three month qualified midwifery vacancies in North East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire Strategic Health Authority area by organisation—Three month vacancy rates, numbers and staff in post

Midwives

		March 2005		*September 2004 Staff in post*	
		Three month vacancy rate (%)	*Three month vacancy number*	*Full-time equivalent*	*Headcount*
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire Strategic Health Authority area total	Q11	4.9	21	558	709
Craven Harrogate and Rural District PCT	5KJ	0	0	0	0
East Yorkshire PCT	5E3	0	0	0	0
Eastern Hull PCT	5E5	0	0	0	0
Hambleton and Richmondshire PCT	5KH	0	0	0	0
Harrogate Health Care NHS Trust	RCD	0	0	47	59
Hull and East Riding Community Health NHS Trust	RV9	0	0	0	0
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	RWA	10.2	21	183	236
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire SHA	Q11	0	0	0	0
North East Lincolnshire PCT	5AN	0	0	0	0
North Lincolnshire PCT	5EF	0	0	0	0
Scarborough and North East Yorkshire Health Care NHS Trust	RCC	0	0	72	80
Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale PCT	5KK	*	0	1	1
Selby and York PCT	5E2	0	0	0	0
Tees East and North Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust	RV1	0	0	0	0
West Hull PCT	5E6	0	0	0	0
York Health Services NHS Trust	RCB	0	0	103	137
Yorkshire Wolds and Coast PCT	5E4	0	0	0	0

Three month vacancy notes:

1. Three month vacancy information is as at 31 March 2005.
2. Three month vacancies are vacancies which Trusts are actively trying to fill, which had lasted for three months or more (full time equivalents).
3. Three month Vacancy Rates are three month vacancies expressed as a percentage of three month vacancies plus staff in post.
4. Three month Vacancy Rates are calculated using staff in post from the Non-Medical Workforce Census September 2004.
5. Percentages are rounded to one decimal place.
6. * Figures where sum of staff in post (as at 30 September 2004) and vacancies (as at 31 March 2005) is less than 10. *Staff in post note:* Staff in post data is from the Non-Medical Workforce Census September 2004. *General notes:*

1. Vacancy and staff in post numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number.
2. Calculating the vacancy rates using the above data may not equal the actual vacancy rates.
3. Due to rounding, totals may not equal the sum of component parts.
4. The 2005 vacancy survey did not receive a valid return from the Lincolnshire and Goole Hospitals NHS Trust. Figures for this trust have been excluded from all applicable vacancy totals and calculations. Staff in post figures for this trust are included in the England, Yorkshire and the Humber GOR and North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire SHA totals so as to be consistent with other Health and Social Care Information Centre publications.

Sources:

The information centre for health and social care vacancies survey March 2005. The information centre for health and social care Non-Medical Workforce Census September 2004.

NHS Finance

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what additional funding has been provided to implement Agenda for Change in the Trent Strategic Health Authority in each financial year since 2004-05; and what such funding is planned for each year to 2008-09. [67849]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The funding for Agenda for Change is included in the unified primary care trust

(PCT) revenue allocations that cover the full range of services commissioned by PCTs. It is for PCTs to decide how their allocations can be used in the most effective way.

Opportunities for Volunteering Scheme

Dr. Whitehead: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what allocation of grants has been made from the opportunities for volunteering scheme in 2006-07. [68942]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department of Health has allocated £6.7 million to its opportunities for volunteering scheme for 2006-07. Funds will be distributed through grants to individual volunteering projects by the scheme's 16 voluntary sector national agents.

Osteoporosis

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many primary care trusts have an integrated falls and osteoporosis service. [69580]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not held centrally.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy to include chiropractors in the musculoskeletal services framework being developed by her Department; and if she will make a statement. [68440]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We have recently consulted with a wide range of stakeholders, including the General Chiropractic Council, on the framework. We will review and revise the framework in the light of the contributions received from all stakeholders before publication later this year.

Palliative Care

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much each primary care trust has allocated to palliative care for 2006-07. [67638]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not routinely collect the data requested. Primary care trusts are responsible within the national health service for commissioning and funding services for their resident population, including palliative care.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the process is for commissioning children's palliative care; and what plans she has for the reform of these arrangements. [36730]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: "National Standards, Local Action" published in July 2004 recommends that primary care trusts (PCTs) will need to take into account specialist services, which can only be commissioned effectively on a pan-PCT or broader basis. PCTs, with the support of strategic health authorities (SHAs), are expected to act collaboratively to secure these services and their improvement.

Last November, we published "Commissioning Children's and Young People's Palliative Care Services" which gives commissioners important advice about the key aspects of children's palliative care, both general and specialist, which will improve the quality of service provision and promote quality of care for children, young people and their families in a range of settings, for example palliative care at home, in hospital or in a hospice.

On 22 March a series of eight regional events were launched to bring PCT commissioners, hospital and community services and voluntary organisations to promote local networks to commission and deliver improved quality and choice in palliative care services for children and young people.

The Government's White Paper "Our health, our care, our say" (copies are available in the Library) reaffirms our manifesto commitment to double funding for end of life care to enable more people to have a choice about where to die. For children this includes palliative care, quite often a lifelong need and not just end of life care. The White Paper includes additional commitments on:

provision of emergency, home-based respite care;

expert carers programme;

carers helpline, where the hospice movement will play an important role; and

an audit of services by PCTs against the national service framework standard for disabled children and young people and those with complex health needs, agreeing funding, models of service and commissioning arrangements with SHAs.

Patient Transport Costs

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on private sector transportation of patients in the *(a)* Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust area and *(b)* Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority area in the last year for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [67480]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally by the Department. This information is collected individually by each national health services trust through their accounting procedures.

Photodynamic Therapy

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps she is taking *(a)* to raise awareness and *(b)* to promote the use of photodynamic therapy for skin cancer patients; [68771]

(2) what plans she has to ask the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to issue further guidance on the use of photodynamic therapy for skin cancer patients; [68772]

(3) what assessment she has made of *(a)* the relative costs and *(b)* the patient benefits of (i) photodynamic therapy treatment and (ii) other treatment options for skin cancer patients; [68773]

(4) what plans she has to commission research into the efficacy of photodynamic therapy for skin cancer patients. [68774]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 8 May 2006]*: It is the responsibility of clinicians to discuss with patients appropriate treatment options for their particular condition. However, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) was set up in 1999 to issue clinical guidance to support the national health service including: interventional procedure guidance to assess if a procedure is safe for routine use in the NHS; technology appraisals to assess if a treatment is clinically and cost effective; clinical guidelines to advise on the diagnosis and management of certain conditions; and cancer service guidance to advise on how services should be organised to ensure good outcomes for patients.

In February 2006, as part of its programme of work on interventional procedures, NICE issued guidance on the use of photodynamic therapy (PDT) in the treatment of non melanoma skin tumours. It noted that the procedure was generally safe and did not cause major problems although, in theory, it could start off cancerous changes in the skin. It recommended that when doctors use this procedure for people with basal cell carcinoma, Bowen's disease or actinic keratosis, they should be sure that the patient understands what is involved and consents to the treatment and that the results of the procedure are monitored. NICE also noted that there is not much information available on how well the procedure works in people with squamous cell carcinoma. There is a relatively high chance that the carcinoma will return after treatment, and there is a risk that the carcinoma will spread and become more dangerous. NICE has said that patients need to understand these risks before they agree to have PDT. They also need to understand that further treatment may be necessary.

Also in February 2006, NICE published guidance on "Improving outcomes for people with skin tumours, including melanoma". This guidance includes recommendations on the management of patients with suspected precancerous or cancerous skin lesions. It describes PDT including the advantages and disadvantages of this type of treatment and notes that, at present, there is little information available on long-term cure rates. It does however recommend that a number of surgical and non-surgical procedures for the treatment of skin cancer, including PDT, should be available for use by clinicians in relevant teams, subject to locally agreed standards of competence.

There are no plans to ask NICE to produce additional guidance on this treatment.

The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Innovation. The Department is not directly funding research on PDT for cancer, but is providing NHS support through the national cancer research network for two trials of PDT for biliary tract cancers. Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to, and managed by, NHS organisations. Details of individual projects, including a number concerned with PDT, can be found on the Department's website on the national research register at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

Preventive Technology Grant

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the level of the preventive technology grant will be; and how it will be distributed. [68564]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Government are investing a total of £80 million over two years from April 2006 through the preventive technology grant. The grant determination and allocations to local authorities were notified in Local Authority Circular LAC(2006)5 issued on 23 March, a copy of which is on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk.

Psoriasis

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what health technology assessment has been carried out of alternative treatments for psoriasis. [69132]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is currently examining the use of efalizumab and etanercept for the treatment of psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. Details are available on NICE'S website at www.NICE.org.uk.

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many courses of treatment for psoriasis there were in each *(a)* Government office region and *(b)* strategic health authority area in the last three years for which figures are available; what the cost per head of treatment was in each year; how many such courses of treatment used (i) corticosteroids, (ii) artificial phototherapy and (iii) heliotherapy in each case; and what the cost was of treatment of psoriasis by each method in each case. [69219]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In 2004-05, there were 8,283 finished consultant episodes, in total 49,015 bed days, recorded for all psoriatic conditions.

Prescription data cannot provide the number, or cost, of treatments for psoriasis with corticosteroids as these drugs are prescribed for other conditions.

Notes:

Finished consultant episode (FCE)

A FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that the figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.

Section 64 Funding

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will establish contingency plans to mitigate the impact of delays in decisions regarding Section 64 (Health Services and Public Health Act 1968) funding for the voluntary and community sector. [67843]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department understands the implications on voluntary and community sector

organisations on the delay in decisions concerning Section 64 funding for 2006-07. For those organisations with second or third year commitments, the Department has organised for them to receive an interim amount equivalent to the first quarter payment, this will enable them to continue projects without interruption.

Self-harm

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she has issued to hospitals on dealing with patients who self-harm on s[illegible] [69341]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) published self-harm clinical guidelines for NHS mental health provider trusts in 2004. The NICE guidelines cover the care which patients who harm themselves can expect to receive from healthcare professionals in and outside hospital settings and what they can expect from their treatment.

However, NICE guidelines do not attempt to explain self-harm or describe the treatment for this in detail. This is why the Department and the National Institute for Mental Health in England are re-evaluating current treatment approaches for self-harm, by undertaking an exploratory exercise on the appropriate management of self-harm. This will focus on adult service users, predominantly female, who self-harm as a coping mechanism or survival strategy. The exercise started in January 2006 and will run until autumn. It will ascertain the level of support at both local and regional levels and the evidence base for adopting a harm-reduction approach. It will also judge the appropriateness (with NICE) of developing guidelines and training to facilitate a harm-minimisation approach amongst service providers.

Serious Case Reviews

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many serious case reviews for vulnerable adults have been carried out; and in how many cases the serious case review involved the murder of a vulnerable adult. [69218]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not collected centrally. There is no statutory requirement for statutory agencies to carry out serious case reviews for vulnerable adults. This is a matter for local decision.

The Department, together with the Home Office, issued "No Secrets" as statutory guidance under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970. It is designed to help authorities to investigate reports of abuse and develop measures for prevention. It requests local authorities to ensure that local communities are aware of the existence of adult protection procedures and that they know where they can report incidents of abuse.

It provides a complete definition of abuse and a framework for councils to work with the police, the national health service and regulators and other agencies to tackle abuse and prevent it from occurring.

Specialised Commissioning

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her review of specialised commissioning arrangements has included consultation with the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists. [69313]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The review into commissioning arrangements for specialised services was set up to consider the way specialised health care services as a whole are commissioned and has not looked at individual services or groups of services. It has not specifically consulted the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, but over 140 individual written submissions were received from a wide range of clinicians, hospital managers, professional bodies, patients' groups and national health services commissioners.

Transient Families

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent steps she has taken to improve co-operation between the Department and the Welsh Assembly Government on tracking vulnerable adults from transient families; and if she will make a statement. [66940]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Councils locally determine the procedures that ensure information about vulnerable adults, including information relating to risk, is appropriately managed. It is for councils to decide how information, identified through a needs assessment, is to be collected, stored and shared, with due regard to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. The effectiveness of these measures is not monitored centrally.

The social exclusion unit in the Department for Communities and Local Government will publish a report, "Moving On: Reconnecting Frequent Movers", in late spring 2006. The report aims to improve service delivery for people who move frequently. It will include a section on the issues around tracking vulnerable people.

Voluntary Organisations (Compact Agreements)

Dr. Francis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health with which voluntary organisations the Department has a formal national Compact agreement. [50268]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department has no formal national Compact agreements with any individual third sector (voluntary) organisations. The Department does have a strategic agreement with the national health service and the third sector: "Making Partnership Work for Patients, Carers and Service Users" published in September 2004, which is underpinned by and complements the Compact and its codes of good practice.

Wynne Lieberthal

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she has received information from the

Minister of Defence of the Irish Republic about *(a)* the agency known as Medicare Solutions based in Chessington, Surrey and *(b)* Wynne Lieberthal; and if she will make a statement. [49703]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 8 February 2006]:* We have no record of a communication from the Minister of Defence of the Irish Republic on these issues.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 10 May 2006

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Deputy Prime Minister

Peter Luff: To ask the Leader of the House if he will make provision for the Deputy Prime Minister to answer oral questions. [69904]

Mr. Straw: Yes. I have today updated the first oral question rota to reflect ministerial responsibilities of the Deputy Prime Minister, a copy of which is available in the Table Office.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

British Poultry (Japanese Ban)

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations his Department has made to the Japanese Government following their ban on British poultry products. [68648]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* Defra officials continue to liaise with British embassy colleagues in Tokyo, who in turn are in contact with the Japanese authorities about the trade restrictions that were imposed following the recent outbreak of H7N3 in Norfolk.

The Japanese authorities have asked for further information about the nature of the disease, and for details of the remedial action taken. We are doing all we can to have these restrictions lifted as quickly as possible.

Pollution

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer to the hon. Member for Morley and Rothwell (Mr. Colin Challen) of 28 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 843W, on pollution, what the levels for *(a)* international aviation and (b) international shipping were in (i) 1990 and (ii) 2004. [68512]

Ian Pearson: Emissions from international aviation and shipping can be estimated from refuelling from bunkers at UK airports and ports (whether by UK or non-UK operators).

Between 1990 and 2004, emissions from aviation fuel use more than doubled whilst emissions from UK shipping bunker fuel use fell by about an eighth, although UK operators purchase most of their fuel outside the UK.

Mt

	International aviation	*International shipping*
1990	4.3	1.8
2004	9.0	1.6

Source:
Greenhouse gas inventory for aviation and shipping bunkers

Single Farm Payments

David Tredinnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many complaints have been received that payments made under the Single Payment scheme to farmers in the East Midlands have been incorrect. [66634]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* The Rural Payments Agency does not have data available on a regional or subject basis, as complaints are not administered in this way.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Arms Supply (Developing Countries)

6. **Mr. Rob Wilson:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on Government policy on supplying arms to developing countries. [69507]

Hilary Benn: The Government believe that all countries are entitled to provide for their own legitimate defence and security needs, including developing countries. All export licence applications are assessed against the consolidated EU and national arms export licensing criteria, including whether the export would seriously hamper sustainable development in the recipient country.

We do however, need better international regulation of the arms trade. That is why the Government are calling for an arms trade treaty covering all conventional weapons.

Nepal

7. **Mr. Lancaster:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of British aid to Nepal. [69508]

Mr. Thomas: All DFID projects and programmes in Nepal are subject to regular reviews of their effectiveness not least because of the political instability.

I believe our British aid continues to be effective, given the complexities of working in conditions of conflict and political instability.

A further review is now underway to identify the further opportunities for development given the ceasefires and the restoration of Parliament.

Doha

8. **Mr. Ellwood:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent progress has been made in respect of developing countries in the Doha round of trade negotiations. [69509]

Mr. Thomas: The WTO ministerial meeting in Hong Kong in December made just enough progress to keep the current negotiations on track. The most recent end of April deadline to make further substantial progress has been missed. Pascal Lamy has called for a greater sense of urgency in the talks from all delegations. These talks will now move to a more intensive phase in Geneva.

St. Helena

9. **Bob Russell:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will visit St. Helena to discuss improvements to its economy. [69511]

Mr. Thomas: I have no current plans to visit St. Helena. Whenever possible I meet with island councillors and officials visiting the UK and we discuss a wide range of issues. The development of St. Helena's economy remains a priority and was a key factor in last year's decision to build an airport in St. Helena. We are now working closely with the St. Helena Government to develop appropriate policies to facilitate sound and sustainable economic development.

Darfur

10. **Mr. MacDougall:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps the Government are taking to alleviate the humanitarian situation in Darfur; and if he will make a statement. [69512]

Hilary Benn: The UK has played a leading role in the international community's response to Darfur, including support to the Abuja peace talks. Since 2003, we have contributed £113 million to humanitarian relief and a further £52 million in support of the African Union mission in Darfur. We continue to press our international donor partners to contribute more. We are also actively lobbying the Government of Sudan to allow full and unrestricted access for humanitarian agencies to the displaced and vulnerable people across Darfur.

Nigeria

11. **Mark Pritchard:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on UK aid to Nigeria. [69514]

Hilary Benn: The UK committed £70 million of development assistance to Nigeria in 2005-06. This will rise to £80 million in 2006-07. DFID's assistance to Nigeria is focussed on supporting the Nigerian Government's own economic growth and poverty reduction strategy; improving governance and the accountability of Government to the Nigerian people; and on contributing directly to improved human development, in the areas of health, education and HIV and AIDS. DFID works closely with the Nigerian Government at federal level and in selected states to achieve these aims and also works in close partnership with other donors in Nigeria, particularly the World Bank.

HIV/AIDS

12. **Chris Ruane:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what projects his Department is undertaking to tackle HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean and Belize; and if he will make a statement. [69515]

Mr. Thomas: Our spending on HIV/AIDS programmes in the Caribbean will be approximately £3 million over the next three years.

There are three key elements to our HIV/AIDS programme:

tackling stigma and discrimination which experts agree is the key driving force behind the regional epidemic;

getting the private sector more engaged with the issues;

ensuring that resources available to the region for HIV/AIDS are effectively used.

Environmental Sustainability

13. **Ms Celia Barlow:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the integration of policies on climate change and environmental sustainability into his Department's work. [69516]

Mr. Thomas: A new Policy Paper "DFID's Approach to the Environment", published in February 2006, describes how we integrate the environment into our work with developing countries and other donors. The main focus is on how environment contributes to poverty reduction in developing countries.

Afghanistan

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of the impact of the security situation in Afghanistan on the alternative livelihoods programme. [69481]

Hilary Benn: The successful delivery of alternative livelihood programmes is highly dependent on the ability of organisations doing the delivery on the ground being able to operate safely. Security in many parts of Afghanistan is improving, particularly in central, northern and western areas and further progress can be made by strengthening the effectiveness of the Afghan police and criminal justice system. However security remains a particular challenge in the south and east of the country, where the insurgency is most active.

Continuing threats to the safety of Afghan and international staff have meant that some non-governmental organisations and international contractors are finding it increasingly difficult to operate in some parts of the

country. The majority of DFID's livelihoods programme is channelled through the national priority programmes of the Afghan Government. This helps to reduce some of the security risks by using local contractors, but there have been a number of attacks on implementing partners of these national programmes. Although attacks have increased, so far they have not caused widespread suspension of alternative livelihoods programmes.

Helmand province will be a particularly challenging place in which to deliver programmes that will support the development of alternative livelihoods. DFID is currently designing a large multi-year programme to support rural development in Helmand through the national priority programmes of the Afghan Government. This support will only be successful if implementing partners are willing to work in the province. The UK military deployment to Helmand should help to facilitate a greater Afghan Government presence in the province, and improve the capacity of the police and the Afghan National Army to provide the necessary security for development partners to operate effectively.

Burma

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funding he is making available to assist the humanitarian effort for internally displaced people in *(a)* Burma and *(b)* the Karen State; and what funds he has given to non-governmental organisations to monitor these aid efforts. [68655]

Mr. Thomas: Within DFID's programme in Burma, £500,000 has provisionally been allocated in this financial year to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), of which approximately 80 per cent. is attributable to work with conflict-affected populations. In addition, several other projects funded by DFID which provide assistance through local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (for example, to reduce the incidence of communicable diseases, or to enhance food security) include internally displaced people among their recipients.

All of the funding allocated to NGOs implementing projects on behalf of DFID includes an element for monitoring and evaluation. Various projects (including those of the ICRC and those working to reduce the incidence of communicable diseases or to enhance food security) include Karen State within their coverage, but as their funding is not disaggregated by state, it is not possible to provide specific figures for Karen State.

Education Millennium Goal

Mark Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what contribution the UK has made to meeting the millennium development goal on education; and if he will make a statement. [69510]

Hilary Benn: Progress towards the goals of achieving universal primary education and eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2015 has been made globally over the past decade, but the pace is too slow.

The Government will spend some £8.5 billion in support of education over the next 10 years. This compares to a figure of under £2 billion over the past 10 years. This long-term commitment will provide Governments with predictable funding against which they can prepare ambitious 10 year investment plans to achieve the education goals. DFID will continue to implement its girls education strategy, launched in 2005.

Palestinian Authority

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assurances he is seeking from the Palestinian Authority which would allow the full aid programme to be restored. [69513]

Hilary Benn: On 30 March, the Quartet (comprising the United States, European Union, the United Nations and Russia) noted that the new Palestinian Government had not yet complied with the principles of non-violence, recognition of Israel's right to exist and commitment to peace agreements. Without progress against these principles, the UK Government cannot provide support to the Palestinian Cabinet or its Ministries.

Should the Palestinian Government comply with the Quartet's conditions, DFID would resume its support to the Palestinian Authority. Assistance to Palestinian refugees through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) will continue, and the Quartet agreed yesterday that a funding mechanism should be developed to support Palestinian basic needs. DFID is working closely with international partners to take this forward.

PRIME MINISTER

Kyoto Targets

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 8 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 815W, what the evidential basis was for his statement that the Government will meet their Kyoto targets. [68078]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement made on 28 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 57-58WS by my right hon. Friend the then Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mrs. Beckett) on "Climate Change. The UK Programme 2006".

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Corporate Hospitality

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on how many occasions he has accepted corporate hospitality in the last 12 months. [67518]

Mr. Dhanda: Paragraph 5.28 of the Ministerial Code sets out the rules on the registration of hospitality. All ministerial hospitality is conducted in accordance with this.

Departmental Staff

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men are employed in the Department; what the average pay was for (i) women and (ii) men in the Department in (A) 1997 and (B) 2006; what women's average pay is as a percentage of men's average pay; and how many (1) women and (2) men the Department employed in each of the last five years, broken down by grade. [67784]

Mr. Dhanda: The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the Civil Service by Department. The number of *(a)* women and *(b)* men employed in my Department is available in the Library and on the Civil Service website at:

www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/employment/index.asp.

My Department was formed in 2001. The median pay for (i) women and (ii) men in my Department in (A) 2001 and (B) 2006 is shown in the following table.

£

	Women	*Men*
2001	18,210	21,720
2006	25,110	27,720

Note:
The median pay in this table is gross salary rounded to the nearest 10 and includes London and national salaries. For part time staff, the full time equivalent salary has been used.

Women's median pay is 90.6 per cent. of men's median pay.

The number of (1) women and (2) men employed by my Department in each of the last five years, broken down by grade level, is shown in the following table.

	2002		*2003*		*2004*		*2005*		*2006*	
Grade level	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*
SCS	37	72	46	71	50	83	54	78	48	77
G7/6	240	298	258	308	291	317	304	313	317	338
SEO	237	251	301	272	337	297	334	288	329	261
HEO	549	476	644	472	681	469	572	409	528	410
EO	662	371	714	378	739	373	645	325	538	303
AO	607	272	599	293	644	314	515	238	397	189
AA	146	109	142	106	109	100	70	79	48	65
Total	2,478	1,849	2,704	1,900	2,851	1,953	2,494	1,730	2,205	1,643

Note:
Figures are based on a headcount of all staff.

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list *(a)* the websites operated by his Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65208]

Mr. Dhanda: The Department runs the following main URL domains:

dfes.gov.uk
millenniumvolunteers.gov.uk
everychildmatters.gov.uk
childcarecareers.gov.uk
childrights.gov.uk
connexions.gov.uk
connexionsonline.gov.uk
connexions-direct.com
need2know.co.uk
surestart.gov.uk
parentscentre.gov.uk
sendist.gov.uk
teachernet.gov.uk
governornet.co.uk
writehere.org.uk
fasttrackteaching.gov.uk
schoolsadjudicator.gov.uk
foundationdegree.org.uk
admissions-review.org.uk
hestrategy.org.uk
successforall.gov.uk
kingsmillreview.gov.uk
bsf.gov.uk
musicmanifesto.gov.uk
schoolsfoodtrust.co.uk

Note that these include a number of cross-Whitehall websites which the Department runs on behalf of Department collaborations. Also note that this list excludes web addresses that are run by Non-departmental Public bodies, Department agencies or which are redirected to those listed above.

The Department does not keep a list of the reports placed online by month. This is because the technical infrastructure to enable the Department to do so is not yet in place. However, the capability of determining a list of reports placed on the website by month for all Department websites will be delivered over 2007/08.

The majority of reports are available in print form, and placed on the website in a PDF format.

Disabled People

Tom Levitt: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress his Department has made in fulfilling its statutory role as a public body to promote the rights of disabled people. [65815]

Mr. Dhanda: The Department is fully committed to equality and diversity. The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places new duties on public authorities to promote equality for disabled people, 'the Disability Equality Duty.'

Through the Act, we, like many public bodies, have an obligation to publish a Disability Equality Scheme every three years. Our Equality and Diversity Unit has begun work on the Department's first scheme, to be published later this year. Policy officials will be undertaking a full departmental-wide examination of our policies and functions in relation to disability and other equality issues. Action plans will be produced to address all issues and these will be monitored and reviewed through the annual business planning process. The scheme will be published on the Department's website. This information will contribute towards preparations for the Secretary of State's report on progress, due in December 2008. My Department has also provided support on implementing the new duties to a number of other public authorities including schools and other public bodies. Further information on this and other support is shown as follows.

Annex 1

Examples of DfES support for other authorities include:

Schools and early years:

The Department for Education and Skills is holding a series of events in May and June to launch the new resource "Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in schools and early years settings" to help schools and local authorities implement the reasonable adjustments duty and planning duty they have under Part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act by providing:

An explanation of the DDA duties and their relationship to the statutory SEN framework;

a DVD resource filmed in over 40 schools illustrating how schools have made reasonable adjustments to prevent discrimination against disabled pupils and increase their access to education; plus supporting written materials;

templates for schools and local authorities to use in reviewing and revising their statutory accessibility plans;

guidance for local authorities on increasing access to early years settings for very young disabled children.

The resource will help schools and local authorities to make adjustments for their disabled pupils both in the short and longer term by improving access to all aspects of school life. The guidance identifies how schools and local authorities' access planning arrangements will help compliance with the Disability Equality Duty.

The Disability Rights Commission will give a presentation at the events providing an overview of the duties schools and local authorities will have under the Disability Equality Duty. They will also make participants aware of the sixth section that will be added to the resource in the autumn as part of the non statutory guidance being developed for schools by the Disability Rights Commission on the new Disability Equality Duty.

DfES's work with DRC/LSC/FE/HE in preparing for implementation of the new disability duty:

DfES has been participating in a series of round-table workshops over the past year with the Disability Rights Commission (DRC), Learning and Skills Council, Higher Education Funding Council for England and external partners in the Further and Higher Education sectors, to prepare for the forthcoming public sector duty to promote disability equality. DRC plans to publish guidance for the FHE sector in May.

LSC's existing statutory duty to promote disability equality:

Section 14 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000, requires the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), in carrying out all of its functions, to have due regard to the promotion of equality of opportunity in terms of disability, race and gender. In addition, section 13 requires the LSC to pay particular regard to the needs of young people and adults with learning difficulties and disabilities, when performing its duties to secure facilities and provide resources for education and training.

DfES are working with the LSC to run an equalities impact assessment across the skills strategy programme. This will include disability. We aim to complete this by the end of October 2006.

Educational Psychology

Mr. Pope: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he will publish the report of the fundamental review of the function of educational psychologists announced in February 2005. [69688]

Mr. Dhanda: The research contract for the review of the functions and contribution of educational psychologists in England and Wales was awarded to a research team from the School of Education, University of Manchester.

The research team expect to deliver their report to the Department later this month. A date for publication will be determined once we have had the opportunity to consider the report.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many educational psychologist posts are unfilled; and what estimate he has made of the likely ratio of trained educational psychologists to posts over the next five years; [69582]

(2) many educational psychologists have been trained in England in each of the past 10 years; and what the cost of their training was in each year; [69583]

(3) what recent discussions he has had with the British Psychological Society on the funding of the training of educational and clinical psychologists; [69584]

(4) what the cost to his Department of the training of an educational psychologist *(a)* was in 2005 and *(b)* is expected to be in each of the next three years; [69585]

(5) what steps he has taken to ensure that local authorities provide sufficient resources for the training of educational psychologists. [69586]

Mr. Dhanda: The full-time equivalent number of educational psychologists in post in local authorities in England as at January 2005 is 2,156, compared to 1,768 in January 1997. There were 100 vacant full-time permanent posts as at January 2005.

Educational psychologists are employed by local authorities and it is for those authorities to determine how many to employ in light of their assessment of local needs and available resources, and to plan for future needs. The Department makes no manpower planning estimates for this group of local employees, nor do we collect centrally information on the number of EPs trained or the cost of EP training, funding for which is not provided by DfES.

There have been no recent discussions between the Department and the British Psychological Society on funding of EP training. Questions relating to clinical psychologists are for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Heath.

Missing Children

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what steps his Department has taken in relation to the recommendations of the social exclusion unit's report on runaway children; [67605]

(2) if he will publish his Department's strategy for safeguarding runaway and missing children; [67607]

(3) what steps he is taking to safeguard the health of runaway and missing children. [68402]

Mr. Dhanda: The key recommendations in the social exclusion unit's (SEU) report on 'Young Runaways' were that young people at risk of running away should know who they could talk to about their problems, that local services needed to work closer together to make sure young people got help, and that a safety net of community-based emergency accommodation was needed for those who did run away.

The findings of the SEU report, which was published in 2002, influenced the wider Government strategy on children's services, which was set out in the Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' (2003). It is through the 'Every Child Matters: Change for Children' programme currently being taken forward by local authorities, and including the reforms set out in the Green Paper 'Youth Matters', that the Government are promoting measures that respond to the SEU report.

'Change for Children' aims to help local services respond to the full range of children's needs—including their health, their safety and their economic well-being. It is particularly concerned with improving targeted support for those children most at risk of negative outcomes, such as those associated with running away or going missing from home. The programme, drawing on the Children Act 2004 reforms, is enabling local areas to improve integrated working arrangements by establishing multi-disciplinary teams, while adopting a lead professional model—someone who is a single point of contact for a young person who can co-ordinate a package of support when multiple needs are present requiring help from various sources. Improved integrated working at a local level is being accompanied by enhanced information sharing between services, leading to earlier identification of children's needs. This in turn allows young people to be referred to the right source of support, at the right time. New joint inspection arrangements will judge the effectiveness and co-ordination of such local provision.

We have also run six projects to test out how best to provide safe, flexible and responsive community-based services that can be easily incorporated into mainstream children's services. We will disseminate the lessons learnt from these to local authorities later this year.

Skills For Life

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many employees in his Department have attended Skills for Life courses; and how many have been assessed as requiring such courses. [68636]

Mr. Dhanda: Over the last 12 months, 14 members of staff in the Department have been assessed as requiring a Skills for Life course and all have attended one through the Department's learning and development unit. In addition, there will be individuals who have undertaken basic skills development through other routes, or who took part in departmental activities organised locally that incorporate elements of basic skills for which records are not held centrally.

Young Carers

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate he has made of the number of young carers undertaking supervised study in excess of 21 hours each week. [69391]

Mr. Dhanda: This information is not collected centrally.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Account Filing

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many companies were fined by Companies House in the last 10 years for late filing of accounts. [68714]

Margaret Hodge: The number of penalties issued to companies by Companies House in the last 10 years is as follows:

	Number
2005-06	201,889
2004-05	190,946
2003-04	174,013
2002-03	157,426
2001-02	153,624
2000-01	142,235
1999-2000	124,745
1998-99	107,635
1997-98	97,234
1996-97	85,006
Total	1,434,753

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much revenue Companies House received in the last 10 years through fines for late filing of company accounts; and if he will make a statement. [68715]

Margaret Hodge: Companies House does not receive any revenue through fines for late filing of company accounts as it is all paid into the consolidated fund to the Treasury.

However, over the last 10 years the value of penalties issued by Companies House was as follows:

	£ million
2005-06	42.82
2004-05	40. 86
2003-04	37.24
2002-03	34.44
2001-02	32.63
2000-01	30.57
1999-2000	26.85
1998-99	22.71
1997-98	21.94
1996-97	19.36
Total	309.42

As a result of appeals, company dissolutions, etc. not all the penalties issued by Companies House are paid. Over the last 10 years they have therefore remitted to the Treasury the following amounts:

	£ million
2005-06	30.3
2004-05	32.0
2003-04	27.8
2002-03	25.1
2001-02	23.7
2000-01	25.2
1999-2000	21.8
1998-99	19.2
1997-98	18.0
1996-97	15.1
Total	238.2

British Nuclear Group

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has received on plans to privatise the British Nuclear Group. [69332]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has had a number of parliamentary questions and some Members have forwarded letters from constituents asking for an explanation of the rationale behind the sale. The unions have also expressed their views and officials have discussed the sale with these and other stakeholders. A number of potential bidders have approached the Department to express interest in the business and some have sought clarification of how the sale will be operated.

British Summer Time

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many representations he has received on adopting British summer time throughout the year in the last 12 months; and how many *(a)* supported and *(b)* opposed such a change. [68584]

Jim Fitzpatrick: In the past 12 months, the Department has received 77 representations on the question of adopting British summer time throughout the year.

These representations reflect the strong divergence of opinion on this issue, which suggests that the present situation is a satisfactory compromise between those who prefer lighter mornings and those who prefer lighter evenings.

Company Law Reform Bill

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list organisations from which his Department has received representations on the Company Law Reform Bill since November 2005; and whether each representation was made *(a)* in a meeting, *(b)* in writing and *(c)* through another method in each case. [68087]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* There has been extensive discussion and consultation on issues on the Company Law Reform Bill over some seven years during the work of the Company Law Review, the publication of the White Paper and the subsequent consultation on particular clauses in the Bill. A formal consultation, which concerned narrative reporting, closed on 24 March 2006. In a written reply to parliamentary question No. 67492 the Government's decisions in the light of the consultation were set out. A list of the organisations who made representations is available on the DTI website (www.dti.gov.uk).

We have continued to liaise closely on the detail of the Bill with professional and other expert groups. Ministers and officials have received numerous representations in writing and engaged in meetings on various aspects of the Bill, from a wide range of interested parties. It would be disproportionately costly to list these representations in detail.

Electricity Generation

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what funding has been given by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Engineering Physical Sciences Research Council to the development of (i) molten salt reactors, (ii) very-high-temperature reactors, (iii) supercritical-water-cooled reactors, (iv) gas-cooled fast reactors and (v) sodium-cooled fast reactors to generate electricity in each year since 1997. [69374]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The Department has provided no funding to these technologies since 1997.

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council:

The EPSRC invests in basic, strategic and applied research in energy generation, transmission and utilisation. The Council's total expenditure on nuclear fission research in financial years 1997-98 to 2005-06 is given in the following table:

Financial Year	*Expenditure (£)*
1997-98	42,111
1998-99	81,228
1999-2000	61,793
2000-01	127,562
2001-02	324,879
2002-03	307,195
2003-04	212,239
2004-05	111,947
2005-06	951,643

The recently announced £6.1 million "Keeping the Nuclear Option Open" research consortium, led by Imperial College London, will be undertaking research to both underpin and specifically address the Generation IV research agenda. In part as a result of this recent major investment, EPSRC's expenditure on nuclear power research in 2006-07 is projected to rise to in excess of £1.7 million.

EPSRC is unable to identify from its records specific investment in a number of the various Generation IV technologies. EPSRC has recently funded a research project at the University of Manchester on high-temperature gas-cooled reactors—expenditure on this grant, which is included in the total figures stated above, was £13,505 in 2005-06 and is projected to be £14,849 in 2006-07.

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what funding has been given by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Physical Sciences Research Council to the development of (i) liquid metal fast breeder reactors and (ii) lead-cooled fast reactors to generate electricity in each year since 1997. [69375]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has provided no funding to these technologies since 1997.

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council:

The EPSRC invests in basic, strategic and applied research in energy generation, transmission and utilisation. The Council's total expenditure on nuclear fission research in financial years 1997-98 to 2005-06 is given in the following table:

Financial Year	*Expenditure (£)*
1997-98	42,111
1998-99	81,228
1999-2000	61,793
2000-01	127,562
2001-02	324,879
2002-03	307,195
2003-04	212,239
2004-05	111,947
2005-06	951,643

The recently announced £6.1 million "Keeping the Nuclear Option Open" research consortium, led by Imperial College London, will be undertaking research to both underpin and specifically address the Generation IV research agenda. In part as a result of this recent major investment, EPSRC's expenditure on nuclear power research in 2006-07 is projected to rise to in excess of £1.7 million.

EPSRC is unable to identify from its records specific investment in a number of the various Generation IV technologies. EPSRC has recently funded a research project at the University of Manchester on high-temperature gas-cooled reactors—expenditure on this grant, which is included in the total figures stated above, was £13,505 in 2005-06 and is projected to be £14,849 in 2006-07.

Energy Provision

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the average energy cost was of power generation from *(a)* nuclear, *(b)* oil, *(c)* gas, *(d)* coal and *(e)* renewables in each of the past 30 years at today's prices (i) excluding and (ii) including public subsidy. [68030]

Malcolm Wicks: Figures for energy costs of generation since privatisation of the electricity industry are commercially confidential. Pre-privatisation figures may be available in the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) Yearbooks but can be collated only at disproportionate cost.

EU Extremely Large Telescope

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment has been made of the impact of *(a)* light pollution and *(b)* aircraft vapour trails on the location of the EU Extremely Large Telescope. [67315]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The European Extremely Large Telescope (ELT) project is still at the design stage and several possible locations are being surveyed. Many factors are being taken into consideration before a final decision is made as to where such a telescope should be located; including the extent of light pollution and the proximity to high-volume flight paths.

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which organisations are involved in the European Extremely Large Telescope project; and in which country each is based. [67317]

Jim Fitzpatrick: A total of 27 organisations are currently involved in the EU Framework Programme 6 Design Study phase of the European Extremely Large Telescope, led by the European Southern Observatory.

In the UK, the work is led by the UK Astronomy Technology Centre (Edinburgh), with support from the Universities of Durham, Oxford and UCL.

Other partners in the Design Study are:

AMOS (Advanced Mechanical and Optical Systems)—Belgium

ASTRON—Netherlands

The Australian National University—Australia

CIMNE (Centre Internacional de Metodes Numerics en Enginyeria)—Spain

CNRS—France

Fogale—France
Galway University—Ireland
Grantecan—Spain
Institute de Astrofisica de Canarias—Spain
Institute Nazionale di Astrofisica—Italy
ITER—Institute Tecnologico y de Energias Renovables—Spain
JUPASA Transformados Metalicos—Spain
Leiden Observatory—Netherlands
Lund University—Sweden
Max-Planck Institut fur Astronomie—Germany
Media C. I.—Spain
SAGEM (REOSC)—France
SESO—France
Technion—Institute of Technology—Israel
University of New South Wales—Australia
Universite de Nice—France
Universita di Padova—Italy
Universidad Politecnica Catalunia—Spain

EU Manufacturing

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the levels of competition in manufacturing across the European Union; and if he will make a statement. [68738]

Margaret Hodge: The Government make periodic assessments of the level of competition facing particular manufacturing sectors across the European Union. These assessments include the degree of price competition among firms trading from within the EU and the effects of competition from imports from outside the EU. The Government are fully aware of the strong competition UK manufacturers face from European Union partners, both from Western European economies and lower cost Eastern European countries. We are taking action through the Manufacturing Strategy to promote the development of a successful UK manufacturing base with value added operations in order to help companies to respond to these challenges.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department is taking to support the manufacturing industry and promote UK exports. [68741]

Margaret Hodge: The Government support our manufacturing industry as we set out in our Manufacturing Strategy. Our aim is to help manufacturers in the UK move to high value added production through the application of science and innovation, best practice, encouragement of high value investment and by developing a highly skilled labour force. We set up the Manufacturing Advisory Service in 2002, and we estimate that it has generated £213 million of added value throughout the UK. The Manufacturing Forum monitors and drives the delivery of the Manufacturing Strategy throughout the UK.

Support for UK exporters is delivered through UK Trade and Investment (UKTI), the Government organisation that supports UK companies trading internationally and overseas companies seeking to locate in the UK. In 2005, nearly 2,000 companies signed up for UKTI's flagship "Passport to Export" development programme helping them prepare to trade internationally, and nearly 6,000 companies were helped to move into overseas markets new to them. Independent research shows that £65 million spent on four UKTI key trade development schemes generated £1.1 billion additional net benefit by enabling over 6,000 businesses, including manufacturers, to upgrade their international marketing strategies.

Fuel Cell Technology

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what help his Department makes available to companies researching hydrogen fuel cell technology for motor vehicle use through a greater understanding of nuclear energy. [69618]

Malcolm Wicks: The DTI commissioned two reports in 2004 in relation to hydrogen: "Hydrogen Energy Support in the UK" and "A Strategic Framework for Hydrogen Energy Activity in the UK". These reports have been published on the Department's website. The second report identified six potential hydrogen energy chains for the use of hydrogen as a transport fuel. One route is to produce hydrogen from nuclear generation.

On 15 June 2005, I announced the Government's response to the second report "A Strategic Framework for Hydrogen Energy Activity in the UK" which included a funding package of £15 million over four years for a UK wide hydrogen and fuel cell demonstration programme. The details of the demonstration scheme are currently being developed, and requires EC state aid approval.

Home Working

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry under what legislation employees are granted a right to work from home; if he has any plans to introduce further legislation; and if he will make a statement. [69631]

Jim Fitzpatrick: In spring 2005 there were around 3.1 million people in the UK who worked mainly in their own home, or in different places using home as a base. There is no legislation which gives employees a right to work from home, however the Government encourage employers and employees to agree suitable working patterns.

In April 2003 we introduced the right to request flexible working, which includes working from home, for parents of children under six and disabled children under 18. The Work and Families Bill, currently before Parliament, extends this right to carers of adults.

The employment provisions (part 2) of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 require employers to consider reasonable adjustments to job application or selection processes, and to premises, practices or procedures, if these would otherwise put a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage. This might include allowing a disabled person to work from home if such an adjustment was reasonable in all the circumstances of the case.

There are no plans for further legislation relating to working from home.

Miners' Compensation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 26 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1125W, on noise-induced hearing loss (mining), what assessment he has made of the variations in fixed costs between these agreements; what the reasons were for the decision to refuse costs for certain solicitors since 2005; and which of the fixed agreements have been in place since 2001. [67771]

Malcolm Wicks: The variations between agreements have arisen as a result of those agreements having been individually and commercially negotiated. Costs are disputed whenever they appear unreasonably high and the reasons for each dispute will vary. The agreements are commercially confidential so I cannot provide details.

Agreements with the following solicitors have been in place unchanged since 2001:

Ben Hoare Bell, Brian Mcardle, Browells, Campbell Smith, Comes, Drurmmond Miller, Gorman Hamilton, Gorvin Smith Fort, Graysons, Hickmotts, Ingrams, Kidd & Spoor Harper, Lathams, Lopian Wagner, Marrons, Mcardles, McConville O'Neill, Meloy Whittle Robinson, Morisons, Mortons, O H Parsons, Oxley & Coward, Pannone & Partners, Raleys, Randell Saunders, Saffmans, Simpson Miller, Thompsons, Watson Burton.

Natural Environment Research Council

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what the Natural Environment Research Council science budget allocation was for each centre in each year since 1997; [66367]

(2) what the change in budget will be for the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology after the Natural Environment Research Council proposed restructuring plans. [66368]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Science Budget allocation to the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) has doubled since 1997, demonstrating our commitment to maintaining the quality of environmental research in the UK. Following consultation with stakeholders, NERC has announced that it will implement plans to ensure that the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) can contribute to UK environmental science on a sustainable basis in the future.

CEH is wholly-owned by NERC, which determines its budget each year. I shall ask the Chief Executive of NERC to write to the hon. Member concerning his requests.

Post Office

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether he has commissioned a study on the competitiveness of the Post Office in handling *(a)* television licence purchases and *(b)* other payment transactions. [67906]

Jim Fitzpatrick: No. The decision not to renew the television licence contract with Post Office Limited was a commercial one made by the BBC, following a competitive tender exercise. Similarly, decisions relating to Government contracts for handling other payment transactions will be made by respective Government departments or agencies after carrying out competitive tendering exercises to establish best value for money.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what value of business the Post Office Card Account provided to post offices in *(a)* Leeds, *(b)* Yorkshire and *(c)* the UK in 2005-06. [68534]

Jim Fitzpatrick *[holding answer 9 May 2006]:* Revenue received by Post Office Ltd for managing Post Office Card Account are the subject of commercially confidential contracts with DWP.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans the Department has to compensate those post offices which will be adversely affected by the proposed closure of the Post Office Card Account. [68861]

Jim Fitzpatrick *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The future of the post office network and future revenue will depend on many factors including what accounts, other than the Post Office Card Accounts, will be made available after 2010. Post Office Ltd and the Department for Work and Pensions are currently discussing the various options.

Power Supplies

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many interruptions to power supply from *(a)* nuclear, *(b)* oil, *(c)* gas, *(d)* coal and *(e)* renewables generation there have been in each of the past 30 years. [67824]

Malcolm Wicks: There have been no power supply interruptions due to a shortfall in generation leading to an imbalance between supply and demand over the last 30 years.

Regional Development Agencies

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* total budget and *(b)* administrative costs were of each of the regional development agencies in 2005-06; and what the estimated costs are for 2006-07. [66781]

Margaret Hodge: The 2005-06 figures for the total budget and administration costs for the nine regional development agencies are set out in the first table and the indicative budget and estimated administration costs for 2006-07 are set out in the second table.

2005-06

RDA Figures	Budget (£m)	Administration (£000)
Advantage West Midlands	272	20,000
East England Development Agency	129	11,200
East Midlands Development Agency	156	15,000
London Development Agency	373	29,500
North West Development Agency	382	38,792
One North East	240	22,500
South East England Development Agency	157	18,000
South West of England Development Agency	153	19,773
Yorkshire Forward	295	19,510

2006-07

RDA Figures	Budget (£m)	Administration (£000)
Advantage West Midlands	284	20,000
East England Development Agency	134	10,900
East Midlands Development Agency	163	16,000
London Development Agency	391	n/a
North West Development Agency	400	38,144
One North East	251	22,607
South East England Development Agency	163	17,900
South West of England Development Agency	159	21,222
Yorkshire Forward	310	19,290

The London Development Agencies administration budget is subject to the approval of their draft 2006-07 corporate plan by the Mayor.

Renewable Energy

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much was spent by Government on *(a)* research into and *(b)* grants and subsidies to promote renewable energy in each year between 1979 and 1997. [65832]

Malcolm Wicks: It would entail disproportionate cost to identify how much was spent by Government on research, grants and subsidies to promote renewable energy in each year between 1979 and 1997. However, information on how much was spent by Government on renewable energy research, development, dissemination and demonstration, between 1989 and 1997, was published by my hon. Friend, the then Energy Minister to the hon. Member for Lewes, on 24 March 2000, *Official Report*, column 715 W.

The statistics indicate that investment in renewable energy remained broadly unchanged between 1989 and 1996 at under £26 million a year. This compares to Government spending of around £500 million in renewables and other low carbon technologies between 2002 and 2008. The Chancellor also recently announced in the Budget a further £50 million, on top of the £30 million that I had previously announced, for the Low Carbon Building Programme, which supports microgeneration and energy efficiency measures.

Research and Development

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, how much funding his Department has given to research and development via *(a)* grants, *(b)* loans and *(c)* incentive schemes since 1997. [68546]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The net DTI expenditure, leaving aside the research councils, between 1997 and 2006 on R and D via *(a)* 'grants' represents a cost of £2,490.8 million, *(b)* 'loans' are not currently used by the Department to fund R and D, *(c)* 'incentives' in the form of R and D tax credits are owned by the Treasury and as such do not represent an expense on the Department.

Source: Office for National Statistics 2004 Government survey of R and D on website:

http://www.ost.gov.uk/setstats/index.htm

Severn Barrage Project

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the merits of a reappraisal of the Severn barrage project as part of the Government's energy review. [67242]

Malcolm Wicks: We are aware of the potential of a Severn barrage scheme, the most recent study of the case for a reappraisal carried out by the Severn Tidal Power Group (available at www.dti.gov.uk/energy/renewables/publications/Severnbarrage.shtml) being published in 2003.

The Department is currently part way through an energy review that will consider all options and opportunities for ensuring we meet our energy goals in the medium to long-term.

Sexual Harassment (Tribunal Rulings)

Derek Conway: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many employment tribunal rulings on cases of constructive dismissal found in favour of the claimants where allegations of sexual harassment of a subordinate were upheld in each of the last five years. [67961]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Employment Tribunals Service does not record separately figures for claims which specifically relate to constructive dismissal, nor does it hold separately records of claims where allegations of sexual harassment are made.

Small Shops

Mr. Malik: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will take steps to promote the economic viability of small local convenience shops. [65976]

Margaret Hodge: DTI's role is to drive up UK productivity and competitiveness. A key part of that work involves creating the conditions for the success of businesses that help to generate the UK's wealth. The support we provide enhances and encourages innovation, enterprise, best practice and investment. We assess its effectiveness in achieving our strategic goals through rigorous monitoring, analysis and evaluation.

Small local convenience stores are eligible for the same range of support measures as other small businesses. These include a range of grants, funds, loan guarantee schemes and advice available through Business Link. In addition, we ensure that representative bodies of smaller retailers are involved with our key retail fora: Retail Policy Forum (better regulation); Retail Innovation Group (identification and exploitation of good practice); and have been invited to be part of the steering group for the fledgling Regional Retail Strategy that is exploring good practice in working with retail at regional/local level. We also ensure that the main trade associations representing small shops are notified directly about relevant public consultations.

Sub-post Offices

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many sub-post offices have closed in Staffordshire since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [68351]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I understand from Post Office Ltd. that information on the Post Office® branch network has historically only been held at a national level. More recently records have been maintained at a Government office region and at parliamentary constituency level and this level of data commenced from the end of 2001-02.

The number of post offices in the constituencies that cover the Staffordshire county area is as follows:

Number of Post Office® branches[1]

	Staffordshire
2001-02	305
2002-03	297
2003-04	263
2004-05	229

[1] The network totals include 5 branches that are directly managed by Post Office Ltd.

Uranium

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether he has made an assessment of the future security of supply of uranium. [69476]

Malcolm Wicks: In the context of the energy review, DTI is considering a range of assessments of the future security of supply of uranium, including the recent analysis by the Sustainable Development Commission.

In addition, a comprehensive report of uranium supply and production is published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)—"Uranium 2003: Resources, Production and Demand" (The Red Book). An updated version of this report is due for publication on 22 May 2006.

Vehicle Licensing Tax

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment the Government have made of the impact that their policy of encouraging drivers to renew their vehicle licensing tax by *(a)* telephone and *(b)* the internet is having on rural post offices. [68387]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Decisions relating to vehicle licensing are the responsibility of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). Post Office Ltd. continues to act as an agent for the DVLA with 95 per cent. of the population within two miles of a Motor Vehicle Licence issuing office.

Government continue to broaden the way that they offer their services to reflect a changing world and to respond to the new ways that the public wish to access these services. The Post Office is one of a number of ways to deliver Government services and still has an important role to play. We want to see a Post Office network that meets the needs of today and the future and not those of 20 or 30 years ago and have made an unprecedented investment of over £2 billion in the network since 1999, including £750 million to help maintain the rural network to 2008.

TRANSPORT

A1

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average traffic levels were at each interchange of the A1 Western bypass from North Gosforth to the New Tyne crossing, Newcastle in each of the last five years. [69573]

Dr. Ladyman: The following table provides the average annual daily totals (AADT) of vehicles using the A1 between the interchange of the A1 with the A1056, north of Gosforth, to the A1 interchange with the A694, to the south of the New Tyne crossing.

	2001 AADT			2002 AADT			2003 AADT		
Location	NB[1]	SB[2]	Total	NB[1]	SB[2]	Total	NB[1]	SB[2]	Total
A1056-A696	33,000	33,400	66,400	34,400	34,300	68,700	35,900	35,500	71,400
A696-A167	38,900	—	—	41,000	—	—	42,600	42,600	85,200
A167-A69	43,500	42,500	86,400	43,500	43,900	87,400	46,500	47,700	94,400
A69-A694	44,000	41,600	81,900	45,500	43,500	89,000	46,500	45,000	91,400

	2004 AADT			2005 AADT		
Location	NB[1]	SB[2]	Total	NB[1]	SB[2]	Total
A1056-A696	36,500	36,800	73,300	37,700	37,500	75,200
A696-A167	44,300	44,100	88,500	44,300	43,600	87,900
A167-A69	48,400	51,000	99,400	48,700	47,900	96,600
A69-A694	48,100	46,400	94,500	48,500	46,800	95,300

[1] NB = Northbound.
[2] SB = Southbound.

DIRECTS Report

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place a copy of the report into the DIRECTS project in the Library. [69566]

Dr. Ladyman: The data collection phase of the DIRECTS (Demonstration of Interoperable Road user End-to-end Charging and Telematics Systems) project concluded at the end of March 2006. I expect the analysis and conclusions will be published in the 4th quarter of 2006 and a copy of the report will be made available to the Library and published in the usual way on the Department's website.

Equal Pay

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps are undertaken within his Department to ensure that women are obtaining equal pay to men doing work of equal value. [65847]

Derek Twigg: The Department of Transport (Centre) and each of the Department's agencies are individual business units. Each unit is an equal opportunity employer.

Each unit has carried out a full equal pay review for staff below the senior civil service within the last three years with further full reviews to be undertaken this year. If any disparities are identified these are to be investigated and rectified accordingly. Pay systems are reviewed on an annual basis.

Home Working

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people in his Department have been enabled to work from home in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [67990]

Derek Twigg: The following numbers of DfT staff have been enabled to work away from the office over the last three years:-

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
DfT (Central)	384	292	477
DVLA	49	94	188
HA	59	66	64
MCGA	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
VOSA	2	2	2
VGA	30	40	46
GCDA	6	6	8
DSA	0	0	2

[1] Figures unavailable.

The figures represent those enabled to work away from the office by means of remote access IT links. This will include home working, but also working from other official locations. The Department and its agencies have a flexible approach in helping staff meet work life balance commitments. Although the Department does not have a formal home working policy, it has other policies which cover a variety of working patterns, such as flexible working hours, staggered hours, part-time working and job share. Requests to work from home on an ad hoc basis are subject to line agreement.

Kingston Park Shopping Centre

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Highways Agency has issued article 14 directions on the proposed redevelopment and expansion of the Kingston Park shopping centre in Newcastle. [69574]

Dr. Ladyman: Newcastle city council have not yet consulted the Highways Agency on this application as part of the planning process. However the Agency has asked for a copy of the relevant Transport Assessment to enable them to review the proposals and any potential impact on the trunk road network. This review will determine whether an article 14 direction is required.

Ministerial Cars

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many ministerial cars are used in each Government Department; what the cost was of maintaining ministerial cars, broken down by Department, in the last year for which figures are available; who supplies ministerial cars; and what discounts the Department receives in relation to the *(a)* purchase and *(b)* hire of ministerial cars. [68885]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Wimbledon (Stephen Hammond) on 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 701W. This information was correct as of 4 May. Information on the cost of maintaining each ministerial car is not readily available and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

The Government Car and Despatch Agency is responsible for providing ministerial cars and drivers. Vehicles are purchased through a number of Government-wide contracts in accordance with relevant European and domestic procurement legislation. The contracts provide for a range of discounts, but it would not be in the public interest to disclose commercially sensitive details.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has carried out of the *(a)* emission levels, *(b)* fuel economy, *(c)* cost and *(d)* safety of ministerial cars. [68886]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government Car and Despatch Agency has responsibility for the provision of ministerial cars. In establishing whether a particular car is suitable for ministerial use the Agency must satisfy me that it is achieving value for money, that it meets with the Prime Minister's guidance "Travel by Ministers" and that the Agency complies with relevant procurement legislation. The Agency periodically evaluates a range of cars against a number of criteria including emission levels, fuel economy, cost and residual value, and safety. The last review, carried out in 2005, resulted in the provision of either the diesel powered Jaguar XJ or the hybrid electric/petrol Toyota Prius for Cabinet Ministers, and either the diesel powered Vauxhall Vectra or the Toyota Prius for other Ministers.

Railways

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many prosecutions have been brought by the British Transport police during the past 12 months for antisocial behaviour on the railway network; and if he will make a statement. [65429]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The British Transport police (BTP) have informed me that between 1 April 2005 and 31 March 2006 the total number of offenders prosecuted for antisocial behaviour offences recorded by the force numbered 5,567. This figure excludes graffiti offences as they are recorded as 'criminal damage' offences on the justice administration system (JAS). During the same period the BTP secured 124 antisocial behaviour orders.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the train operating companies that have requested compensation payments for losses incurred as a result of industrial action from *(a)* the Strategic Rail Authority and *(b)* the Department for Transport in each month since 2003. [58390]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 20 March 2006]:* The information for each train operating company is a matter of commercial confidentiality and it would be inappropriate to make it available.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the train operating companies which requested compensation payments from *(a)* the Strategic Rail Authority and *(b)* his Department for losses incurred as a result of industrial action in each month since January 2003. [65320]

Derek Twigg: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I have given him today [UIN 58390].

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent research has been conducted into the economic value of the cross-country rail network; and if he will publish the findings. [63367]

Derek Twigg: The Department follows the new approach to transport appraisal (NATA) which includes socio-economic benefits. The NATA guidelines are available on webtag. (www.webtag.org.uk)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the passenger growth on the Tamworth to Birmingham railway line was in each year between 1994 and 2005. [68357]

Derek Twigg: Information between 1994 and 2005 is not available in the form requested. The percentage change in the number of passengers travelling to and from the named stations is shown in the following tables (this information does not include passengers joining or alighting between these stations or making journeys beyond):

(a) Tamworth to Birmingham

Year[1]	Percentage passenger growth
2002-03	1.9
2003-04	16.7
2004-05	4.8
2005-06	-3.0

(b) Birmingham to Tamworth

Year[1]	Percentage passenger growth
2002-2003	27.1
2003-2004	15.0
2004-2005	-3.9
2005-2006	12.2

[1] Rail reporting year which is April to March.

Sea Defences

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will take steps to attract resources from the European Regional Development Fund to reinstate the old Southern Railway route in Devon in the event of a failure of railway sea defences at Dawlish. [69130]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 9 May 2006]:* It falls to Network Rail to continue to monitor the likelihood of risks to the safety and operational integrity of the railway in the Dawlish area, arising from possible increases in sea levels associated with climate change; and to propose further appropriate measures of protection from flooding and coastal erosion.

Network Rail advises me that it does not believe the railway sea defences in the Dawlish area are likely to fail in the foreseeable future. Were this to become more likely, Network Rail would identify and consider a range of options to address any problems, taking account of value for money and affordability.

Stockport Station

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passenger trains have used platform 0 at Stockport railway station since it became operational. [67254]

Derek Twigg: Since January 2006 17 trains have used platform 0 each Sunday to accommodate engineering works. Usage of the platform will increase from the June 2006 timetable change date.

Transport Regulations

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the operation of Road Vehicle (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 1971; and what recent representations he has received about the operation of these regulations. [69637]

Dr. Ladyman: The Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 1971 have been superseded by the Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 2002. Recent representations in relation to those regulations have focussed on the release of information from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's (DVLA) vehicle register.

Regulation 27(1)(e) of the 2002 regulations requires that DVLA release particulars held on its vehicle register to anyone who can demonstrate 'reasonable cause' for having the particulars made available to him. The term 'reasonable cause' is not defined in the legislation and each request is considered on its merits.

These regulations consolidate legislation that has been in force and working efficiently for over 40 years. However, when the provisions were originally introduced they did not anticipate the introduction of electronic databases, the large number of vehicles on the roads, or the range of bodies now requesting access. Concerns have also recently been raised about the breadth of organisations that have access to the register. For these reasons, I announced a review of the regulations governing the release of information. A consultation paper was published on 16 February which sought to address all aspects of the release of information from the vehicle register. The consultation period closed on 31 March 2006 and our conclusions will be published in the near future.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the operation of the Road Traffic (Driver Licensing and Information Systems) Act 1989; and what recent representations he has received about the operation of this Act. [69640]

Dr. Ladyman: The Road Traffic (Driver Licensing and Information Systems) Act 1989 abolished special licences for driving heavy goods and passenger service vehicles (now known as large goods vehicles (LGV) and passenger carrying vehicles (PCV)).

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency ensures the continuing operation of this Act by integrating within a single licence both car and LGV and PCV entitlements.

No recent representations have been received.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

James Miller/Tom Hurndall

Nick Harvey: To ask the Solicitor-General if he will seek to gain access to evidence regarding the cases of James Miller and Tom Hurndall from the Israeli authorities; and if he will make a statement. [68804]

The Solicitor-General: On 5 May 2006 the Attorney-General met the families of James Miller and Thomas Hurndall together with their lawyers. The Attorney-General is considering the issues raised by both families.

Northern Ireland High Court (Crown Appeals)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Solicitor-General on how many occasions there have been Crown appeals against the length of a sentence in Northern Ireland's High Court in the last three years. [69471]

The Solicitor-General: During the three years 2003 to 2005 there were 28 cases referred to the Northern Ireland Court of Appeal as being potentially unduly lenient. In 2006 there have been two cases referred to date.

TREASURY

Bank of England

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many nominees he considered for the post of Deputy Governor of the Bank of England apart from Sir John Gieve; and what the process of selection was before he made his nomination; [68326]

(2) when he nominated Sir John Gieve to be Deputy Governor of the Bank of England; and whether he interviewed Sir John personally. [68468]

Ed Balls: Under the Bank of England Act 1998, the Queen is responsible for appointing the Deputy Governor of the Bank of England. The appointment of Sir John Gieve was made on the recommendation of the Prime Minister who in turn was advised by the Chancellor on 11 October of last year. The Chancellor did not interview Sir John Gieve and eight candidates were considered alongside Sir John Gieve.

This appointment process does not fall within the remit of the Commissioner for Public Appointments because it is highly market sensitive. In common with other highly market sensitive appointments the Chancellor's recommendation to the Prime Minister was based on a considered appraisal of a number of suitable candidates.

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the staffing requirement of the Bank of England to meet its statutory financial supervision and regulatory obligations in each year since 1996. [68587]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Under the Bank of England Act 1998, responsibility for management of the Bank's affairs resides with the Bank's court of directors.

Since 1998 statutory responsibility for financial supervision and regulation has resided solely with the Financial Services Authority. The Bank is only responsible for contributing to the overall stability of the financial system as a whole.

Biofuels

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the quality criterion will be available for inclusion of biofuel manufacturers using pure vegetable oil, within the current 20 pence per litre duty reduction, with particular reference to rape seed oil. [68668]

John Healey: Fuel produced from vegetable oil, including rape seed oil, is eligible for the rate of duty for biodiesel (currently 27.10 pence per litre) if it meets the legal definition of biodiesel for tax purposes set out in section 2AA of the Hydrocarbon Oil Duties Act 1979 (HODA). In other cases it is liable to duty at 47.10 pence per litre. Conformity with this definition rather than the source of the oil or method of production determines whether a fuel is deemed as a biodiesel for tax purposes.

As announced at Budget 2006, the Government are reviewing the current definition of biodiesel in HODA to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and enables environmentally friendly fuels, which meet fuel quality standards, to receive recognition through the duty system. HM Revenue and Customs will hold discussions with stakeholders in the coming months and the Government will report on progress at the pre-Budget report.

Centenarians

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of people aged 100 or over there are in each county in England. [68392]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent parliamentary question regarding the number of people aged 100 or over there are in each county in England. (68392)

The attached table provides the information requested. The figures are taken from 2001 Census table S001 which is available on the 'CD supplement to the National Report for England and Wales and Key Statistics for local authorities in England and Wales'. Data are shown for current administrative counties. For completeness, figures are also shown for other 'non-county' areas (i.e. London boroughs, metropolitan districts, and unitary authorities).

Age information for annual mid-year population estimates is available up to age 89 and then 90 and over. It is not possible to calculate reliable annual population estimates for centenarians for sub-national areas.

Population aged 100 and over, English counties, 2001 Census

County	*Population aged 100 and over*
Other areas	
Bedfordshire	50
Buckinghamshire	84
Cambridgeshire	92
Cheshire	126
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	107
Cumbria	89
Derbyshire	106
Devon	151
Dorset	92
Durham	67
East Sussex	143
Essex	198
Gloucestershire	111
Hampshire	229
Hertfordshire	145
Isle of Wight	41
Kent	271
Lancashire	184
Leicestershire	83
Lincolnshire	105
Norfolk	154
North Yorkshire	114
Northamptonshire	97
Northumberland	48
Nottinghamshire	112
Oxfordshire	91
Shropshire	53
Somerset	119
Staffordshire	138
Suffolk	133
Surrey	196
Warwickshire	74
West Sussex	190
Wiltshire	84
Worcestershire	92
Barking and Dagenham	18
Barnet	75
Barnsley	26
Bath and North East Somerset	32
Bexley	29
Birmingham	149
Blackburn with Darwen	12
Blackpool	20
Bolton	36
Bournemouth	61
Bracknell Forest	10
Bradford	77

Population aged 100 and over, English counties, 2001 Census

County	Population aged 100 and over
Other areas	
Brent	33
Brighton and Hove	53
Bristol	54
Bromley	54
Bury	23
Calderdale	31
Camden	32
City of London	0
Coventry	37
Croydon	50
Darlington	19
Derby City	36
Doncaster	43
Dudley	51
Ealing	45
East Riding of Yorkshire	53
Enfield	37
Gateshead	27
Greenwich	29
Hackney	29
Halton	10
Hammersmith and Fulham	25
Haringey	32
Harrow	31
Hartlepool	12
Havering	33
Herefordshire, County of	35
Hillingdon	31
Hounslow	21
Islington	21
Kensington and Chelsea	19
Kingston upon Hull	38
Kingston-upon-Thames	25
Kirklees	54
Knowsley	15
Lambeth	21
Leeds	115
Leicester City	44
Lewisham	38
Liverpool	60
Luton	27
Manchester	67
Medway	22
Merton	28
Middlesbrough	19
Milton Keynes	26
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	37
Newham	23
North East Lincolnshire	18
North Lincolnshire	37
North Somerset	55
North Tyneside	42
Nottingham City	44
Oldham	33
Peterborough	10
Plymouth	39
Poole	33
Portsmouth	29
Reading	15
Redbridge	29
Redcar and Cleveland	20
Richmond-upon-Thames	35
Rochdale	29
Rotherham	32
Rutland	3
Salford	34
Sandwell	40
Sefton	67
Sheffield	70
Slough	11
Solihull	24
South Gloucestershire	36
South Tyneside	36
Southampton	28
Southend	49
Southwark	33
St Helens	25
Stockport	41
Stockton on Tees	17
Stoke on Trent	28
Sunderland	36
Sutton	23
Swindon	28
Tameside	28
Telford and Wrekin	16
Thurrock	12
Torbay	33
Tower Hamlets	28
Trafford	20
Wakefield	42
Walsall	32
Waltham Forest	37
Wandsworth	50
Warrington	27
West Berkshire	21
Westminster, City of	22
Wigan	30
Windsor and Maidenhead	27
Wirral	50
Wokingham	16
Wolverhampton	27
York	26

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list primary care trusts in order of *(a)* average age of population, *(b)* the proportion of over-65s, *(c)* the proportion of over 25s and *(d)* the proportion of over 85s in their areas. [68393]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your parliamentary Question requesting lists of primary care trusts in order of (a) average age of population, (b) the proportion of over 65s (c) the proportion of over 25s and (d) the proportion of over 85s in their areas. (68393)

The attached Tables A-D, which I am placing in the House of Commons Library, provide the requested information. The tables are based on mid-2004 population estimates; these are the latest

available. The tables provide information on all Primary Care Organisation areas in England: 300 Primary Care Trusts and the 3 Care Trusts (Bexley, Northumberland, and Witham, Braintree & Halstead). The 'median age' measure of average age is used.

Compensation Payments

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his letter of 21 March Ref: 4/25060/06, when the constituents of the hon. Member for West Worcestershire can expect to receive the compensation payment of £100 from HM Revenue and Customs. [66359]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* HMRC sent the payment in question on 27 April 2006.

Consultancy Firms

Mike Penning: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what records are held centrally by the Government on consultancy firms hired by Government Departments. [68502]

John Healey: Information about specific consultancy engagements, or those consultants hired by Government are not held centrally.

Corporate Hospitality

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on how many occasions he has accepted corporate hospitality in the last 12 months. [67534]

Ed Balls: Paragraph 5.28 of the Ministerial Code sets out the rules on the registration of hospitality.

Correspondence

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Paymaster General will reply to the hon. Member for Edinburgh West's letter of 24 February 2006 regarding his constituent Ms P Duff. [64410]

Dawn Primarolo: I have done so.

Doncaster, North (Statistics)

Edward Miliband: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many Doncaster, North residents were employed in mining in *(a)* 1981, *(b)* 1991, *(c)* 2001 and *(d)* the most recent year for which figures are available. [68294]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about employment in the mining industry in (a) 1981, (b) 1991, (c) 2001 and (d) the most recent year for which figures are available. (68294)

The information requested is available from 1991 and 2001 Censuses of Population. Equivalent information from the 1981 Census is not available.

The 1991 Census shows 132 people resident in the Doncaster North constituency employed in mining. The 2001 Census shows 351 persons aged 16 to 74, resident in the Doncaster North constituency employed in mining and quarrying.

The 1991 data have been taken from table S73 in the 1991 Census Small Area Statistics which is available on request from Census Customer Services (census.customerservices@ons.gsi.gov.uk). The 2001 data have been taken from table KS11a in the "Census 2001 Report for Parliamentary Constituencies" which is available in the House of Commons Library.

Edward Miliband: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit recipients there were in each ward in Doncaster, North in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* the most recent year for which figures are available; and what the average award was in each year in each case. [68299]

Dawn Primarolo: Information on the number of families who were receiving family credit in 1997 is not available at ward level.

Reliable estimates of the number of families receiving child and working tax credits are also not available at ward level. However, estimates of the number of recipient families in each constituency and local authority at various dates are published on the HMRC website at: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/cwtc-qeog-stats.htm.

Edward Miliband: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many ethnic minority residents there were in Doncaster, North *(a)* in (i) 1981, (ii) 1991 and (iii) 2001 and *(b)* according to the most recent figures available. [68305]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many ethnic minority residents there were in Doncaster, North (a) in (i) 1981, (ii) 1991 and (iii) 2001 and (b) according to the most recent figures available. (68305)

A question on ethnicity was not asked in the 1981 Census and consequently no data are available. Data from the 2001 census are the most recent figures available.

Doncaster, North parliamentary constituency

	1991	*2001*
All people	83,834	82,767
White		
Total White	83,235	81,909
British	[1]n/a	81,191
Irish	[1]n/a	357
Other White	[1]n/a	361
Non-White	599	858

[1] In the 1991 Census there was no sub-division of the "White" ethnic category.

Sources:

Table G in the "Census 1991 New Parliamentary Constituency Monitor for Yorkshire and the Humber" and Table KS06 in the "Census 2001 Report for Parliamentary Constituencies"

The 1991 data have been taken from the counts supporting table G in the "Census 1991 New Parliamentary Constituency Monitor for Yorkshire and the Humber" which is available on

request from 2001 Census Customer Services (census.customerservices@ons.gsi.gov.uk). The 2001 data have been taken from KS06 in the "Census 2001 Report for Parliamentary Constituencies" which is available in the House of Commons Library.

Differences in the ethnic group questions, coding and in the methods for treatment of under-enumeration complicate the making of direct comparisons between 1991 and 2001. More information is provided in the 'Guide to comparing 1991 and 2001 Census ethnic group data' and can be found on the ONS website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/article.asp?ID=1471&Pos=1&ColRank=1&Rank=64.

Edward Miliband: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many residents of Doncaster, North worked outside the constituency in *(a)* 1981, *(b)* 1991, *(c)* 2001 and *(d)* the most recent year for which figures are available. [68320]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many residents of Doncaster, North worked outside of the constituency in (a) 1981, (b) 1991 and (c) 2001 and (d) the most recent year for which figures are available. (68320)

As Doncaster North Parliamentary Constituency did not exist in 1981 no data is available for this year. Data from the 2001 census are the most recent figures available.

Doncaster, North parliamentary constituency

	Works in Doncaster North	*Works Outside Doncaster North*
1991	[1]14,400	[1]15,270
2001	13,327	19,770

[1] In 1991 responses to workplace questions were only processed for approximately 10 per cent. of the population. The figures in this table have been groised up by a factor of 10.16 to account for this.

Source:
1991 and 2001 Census Data

Edward Miliband: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people with disabilities were resident in Doncaster, North constituency in *(a)* 1981, *(b)* 1991, *(c)* 2001 and *(d)* the most recent period for which figures are available, broken down by disability. [68328]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning how many people with disabilities were resident in Doncaster, North constituency in *(a)* 1981, *(b)* 1991 and *(c)* 2001 and *(d)* the most recent year for which figures are available, broken down by disability. (68328)

The Census is the only data source suitable for local area statistics of this nature. The Census question asked whether the respondent perceived themselves to have a long-term limiting illness, health problem or disability which limits their daily activities or the work they can do, including problems that are due to old age. This is a "yes" or "no" question and no breakdown of illness of disability is available. The figures in the table below therefore cover not only disability but also health problems and old age. This question was first asked in the 1991 Census and therefore data for 1981 is unavailable. Data from the 2001 census are the most recent figures available.

Doncaster, North parliamentary constituency

	All people	*Has a limiting long-term illness*
1991	83,834	14,350
2001	82,767	19,933

Source: Tables 12 and 13 in the 1991 Census Small Area Statistics and UV22 in the Census 2001 Census Area Statistics for Parliamentary Constituencies

The 1991 data have been amalgamated from tables 12 and 13 in the 1991 Census Small Area Statistics which is available on request from Census Customer Services [census.customerservices@ons.gsi.gov.uk]. The 2001 data has been taken from table UV22 on the CD supplement to the Census 2001 Census Area Statistics for Parliamentary Constituencies which is available in the Statistical Research Unit in the

Euro Preparations Unit

Michael Gove: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total costs of the Treasury's Euro Preparations Unit were in *(a)* 2002-03, *(b)* 2003-04, *(c)* 2004-05 and *(d)* 2005-06; how many (i) full and (ii) part-time staff there were in each year; what the programme budget was for each year; what projects were undertaken in each year; and if he will make a statement. [64061]

Ed Balls: The costs of the Euro Preparations Unit (EPU) in each of these years were met from within the Treasury's departmental expenditure limit. The number of staff in EPU varied within each year, reflecting normal staff turnover. The mid-year figures were:

As at September	*EPU staffing*[1]
2002	17
2003	13
2004	10
2005	9

[1] Full-time equivalents

The projects and activities of the Euro Preparation Unit are set out in the reports on euro preparations available on the Treasury's public website (www.euro.gov.uk). Central planning documents including the managed transition plan and the consumer protection framework are well developed and the focus of EPU is now on maintaining these and the network of expert stakeholders.

General Practitioners

Steve Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what criteria HM Revenue and Customs uses in determining that GPs are regarded as self-employed for tax purposes; and if he will make a statement. [69617]

Dawn Primarolo: There is no statutory definition of employment and self-employment for tax and national insurance contributions (NICs). HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) use 'case law' defined by the courts, as an outline principle when they give an opinion on employment status for tax and NICs.

General practitioners can be engaged on employed or self-employed terms, there is no one answer to cover all situations. In practice, however, common features, such as the autonomy that general practitioners have over the way their practices are administered and arranged usually mean that it is HMRC's view that they are likely to be self-employed.

Informal Economy

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps his Department is taking to reduce the size of the informal economy in the West Midlands. [68363]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC is currently restructuring its approach to tackling the informal economy. This builds on and brings together the work previously undertaken by the Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise in this area.

Nationally new teams are being set up dedicated to identifying individuals and businesses who should be registered for income tax and VAT. At the same time HMRC has been running extensive media campaigns promoting awareness of the need to register as well as a Hotline focussing on increasing intelligence relating to the informal economy.

HMRC is also participating in the Joint Workplace Enforcement Pilot, led by Home Office and based in the West Midlands. This is a three-year pilot to explore the scope for closer co-ordinated working between Government workplace enforcement and compliance departments for the purpose of tackling both the use and exploitation of illegal migrant workers.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the size of the informal economy in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* the West Midlands and *(c)* Tamworth constituency. [68364]

Dawn Primarolo: There is no reliable estimate of the size of the informal economy in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* the West Midlands or *(c)* Tamworth constituency.

Kidney Failure

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in *(a)* England and *(b)* Dorset died as a result of kidney failure in 2005. [68311]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning how many people in (a) England and (b) Dorset died as a result of kidney failure in 2005. (68311)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2004. Numbers of deaths in 2004 where kidney failure was mentioned anywhere on the death certificate are included in the attached table.

Kidney failure can be the result of a number of different conditions or diseases, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, or infections. In most cases the underlying cause of death will be one of these causes rather than kidney failure. To provide more complete figures, numbers of deaths with a mention of kidney failure have therefore been provided rather than deaths where this was the underlying cause.

Deaths with a mention of kidney failure,[1] England and Dorset,[2, 3] 2004[4]

	Number of deaths
England	26,207
Dorset	237

[1] Deaths with a mention of kidney failure were defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10). The codes used are listed as follows: Renal failure—ICD10 N17-N19
[2] Figures for Dorset are for the current county which excludes the unitary authorities of Bournemouth and Poole, created in 1997.
[3] Usual residents of these areas.
[4] Deaths registered in the 2004 calendar year.

Married Person's Tax Allowance

Mr. Paice: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in how many cases HM Revenue and Customs has discovered that taxpayers have been wrongly receiving married person's tax allowance in each year since it was abolished. [67927]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 10 May 2006]:* Married Couple's Allowance was abolished from 2000-01 but only for those born after 6 April 1935. Information is not available about the numbers of taxpayers who may have claimed and been given the allowance incorrectly.

Ministerial Flights

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for North Devon (Nick Harvey), of 26 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1173W, on ministerial flights, whether air passenger duty is payable on flights other than commercial flights taken by *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* members of the Royal Family. [68511]

John Healey: In the event of Ministers and members of the Royal Family taking other than commercial flights, it is likely that they would use the Royal Air Force. Since the Royal Air Force is not deemed to be an Air Transport Undertaking under the Air Navigation Order 1982, its flights are not liable to air passenger duty.

Newhaven Port

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many individuals used the facility installed at Newhaven port to allow them to declare goods remotely by telephone in 2005. [68467]

Dawn Primarolo: Currently travellers and vehicles arriving at the port of Newhaven arrive directly from another EU member state. As declarations are only required from individuals arriving from outside the EU, no declaration point is required and no 'Red Point' telephone is installed.

Private Healthcare (Taxation)

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of pensioners in occupational pension schemes who will opt out of private healthcare provision in order to avoid it being taxed as a benefit in kind following the recent changes in the tax treatment of such provision. [69283]

Ed Balls: It is difficult to estimate the behavioural effect of a change of this type. We expect that the overall number of people affected by this change will be small.

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the revenue to be raised in the tax year 2006-07 from the decision to treat employer contributions to private medical schemes for people in retirement as a benefit in kind. [69284]

Ed Balls: A Regulatory Impact Assessment ('Regulatory Impact Assessment for Simplifying the taxation of pensions' Update) was published on 22 March 2006 setting out the Government's assessment of the impact of the changes to the new simplified regime for pensions taxation introduced in the 2006 Budget. This is available at www.hmrc.gov.uk/ria/ria-pensions-simplification.pdf. The Government estimate that pensions tax simplification will have an overall cost to the Exchequer building up to £250 million per year.

Stamp Duty

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many individuals paid stamp duty on *(a)* residential and *(b)* commercial property transactions, in (i) each Government office region, (ii) Wales, (iii) Scotland and (iv) Northern Ireland in each financial year since 1996-97. [26939]

Ed Balls: The estimated number of residential and non-residential transactions, where stamp duty was payable on account of the value of the transaction being higher than the stamp duty threshold, is given in the following tables for the years and regions for which information is available. The stamp duty threshold for residential transactions was £60,000 up to 16 March 2005 and £120,000 from 17 March 2005. For non-residential transactions the threshold was £60,000 up to 30 November 2003 and £150,000 from 1 December 2003 to the end of 2004-05. Residential transactions from 30 November 2001 with values above £60,000 and up to £150,000 in designated disadvantaged areas were relieved from stamp duty and have been excluded from these figures. However non-residential transactions which were valued above the threshold but paid no duty due to the operation of reliefs (e.g. disadvantaged area relief, charitable relief) are included in the table because reliable estimates of all relieved transactions are not available.

Number (Thousand)

	1996-97	*1997-98*	*1998-99*	*1999-2000*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Residential									
England	531	630	640	806	786	925	1,001	878	981
North East	11	17	14	18	17	19	22	33	32
North West	43	47	53	67	73	84	94	86	99
Yorkshire and the Humber	31	35	36	48	48	41	58	57	80
East Midlands	29	34	38	48	51	45	74	64	89
West Midlands	44	48	51	60	65	69	85	64	84
East of England	65	79	82	102	102	125	124	111	130
London	116	139	139	178	158	172	169	139	150
South East	129	157	152	189	170	233	233	191	198
South West	64	75	76	98	101	136	142	134	119
Wales	17	19	19	26	24	34	42	47	38
Scotland	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	56	66	80	n/a
Northern Ireland	13	17	18	26	21	21	32	24	27
Commercial									
England	42	53	48	49	39	48	52	48	33
North East	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1
North West	4	5	5	5	4	5	7	7	4
Yorkshire and the Humber	3	4	4	4	3	6	7	5	3
East Midlands	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3
West Midlands	5	6	5	5	4	4	4	5	4
East of England	6	7	6	6	4	4	5	5	3
London	7	8	8	8	7	10	8	5	5
South East	7	10	7	9	6	9	7	8	5
South West	4	6	7	6	5	7	8	7	4
Wales	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	4	2

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
								Number (Thousand)	
Scotland	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	6	7	7	n/a
Northern Ireland	1	2	2	3	2	3	4	3	3

n/a = not available

Tax Credits

Philip Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much tax credit fraud has been perpetrated by HM Revenue and Customs' employees; and how many HM Revenue and Customs' employees have been prosecuted for tax credit fraud. [64822]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has robust procedures in place to identify abuse of the tax credits system, and has identified the false use of the names of a number of DWP staff, as outlined in the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1357W.

No fraud has been found to have been perpetrated by HMRC employees as a result of this investigation, but prosecution will always be pursued against the very small number of HMRC's 98,000 staff who abuse their position of trust. There are four HMRC employees who are currently being prosecuted for other alleged tax credit fraud involving amounts totalling £500,000. These cases have yet to be concluded in the courts.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the morale of staff working at the tax credits office; and if he will make a statement. [62032]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC takes the morale and well-being of its staff very seriously, including those working at the tax credit office, and takes very seriously the maintenance and improvement of staff well-being.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 30 March, *Official Report*, column 117W, on tax credits, how many monetary payments have been agreed between HM Revenue and Customs and recipients of tax credits where people have deliberately or negligently made incorrect statements *(a)* in total and *(b)* in each compliance office in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight in the last year for which information is available; and how many involved payments of (i) less than £250, (ii) £250 to £499, (iii) £500 to £999 and (iv) £1,000 and over. [63954]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* The following table provides details of the number of penalties imposed in total and in the Claimant Compliance Offices that cover Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Penalties: Period 26 March 2005 to 21 March 2006

Penalty bands	*CCC E.Hants/Wight*	*CCC Surrey/N.Hants/ Berks*	*CCC W.Hants*	*Total*
Under £250				
Number of cases with penalties	0	1	2	3
Sum of penalties (£)	0.00	66.00	210.00	276.00
£250-£499				
Number of cases with penalties	34	14	22	70
Sum of penalties (£)	10,473.00	4,275.00	6,929.00	21,677.00
£500-£999				
Number of cases with penalties	0	10	12	31
Sum of penalties (£)	5,375.00	5,200.00	6,003.00	16,578.00
National				
Number of cases with penalties	—	—	—	2,148
Sum of penalties (£)	—	—	—	825,235.16

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many individuals in the Peterborough constituency were overpaid tax credits in the financial year 2004-05; and if he will make a statement. [67479]

Dawn Primarolo: Tax credits are awarded to families rather than individuals. For the number of 2004-05 awards to families that have been overpaid, by constituency, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to hon. Friend the Member for West Lancashire (Rosie Cooper) on 24 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 878W.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many disabled adults have claimed tax credits in Tamworth constituency in each month since April 2003. [68362]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates of tax credits recipients in each constituency are based on a sample of cases. Any estimates of the number of disabled adults in families receiving tax credits in any constituency would be subject to a very large relative sampling uncertainty and therefore no reliable estimates are available.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many joint claims for tax credits were terminated in *(a)* 2003-04, *(b)* 2004-05 and *(c)* 2005-06. [63324]

Dawn Primarolo: The majority of awards are terminated because of a failure to renew the previous year's award. Therefore in 2003-04 very few tax credit awards to couples were terminated after the start of the year. We estimate that about 135,000 awards for 2004-05 were terminated after the start of the year, and about 160,000 awards for 2005-06 were terminated after the start of the year.

Tax Returns

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the Government's response to the Carter Committee's recommendations on bringing forward the tax return filing deadline. [68322]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentleman to paragraph 5.81 of this year's Economic and Fiscal Strategy Report (HC 968).

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment the Government have made of the potential impact of advancing the tax return filing deadline on *(a)* business and *(b)* the capacity of HM Revenue and Customs to process returns quickly and without error. [68327]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government are currently assessing the impacts on businesses of implementing the recommendations of Lord Carter of Coles' Review of HMRC Online Services, and HMRC has published a partial regulatory impact assessment which invites comments and evidence to inform the final assessment. The document can be viewed at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/ria/pria-online-services.pdf.

The proposed changes to the income tax self assessment return filing deadlines will promote online filing leading to fewer processing errors and cleaner data. The new deadlines will also enable HMRC to calculate the tax for all paper filers and tell them what to pay before the 31 January payment deadline and help to ensure that PAYE coding notices are up to date by the start of the following tax year.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what information the Valuation Office Agency will have access to as a consequence of the implementation of the Valuebill project. [66256]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The only additional information that the VOA receives through the Valuebill initiative that was not available previously is the National Land and Property Gazetteer unique property reference numbers (UPRN) and co-ordinates of the property, both of which are used to correctly identify the property concerned.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which representatives from the Valuation Office Agency attended the Property Information Systems Common Exchange Standard (PISCES) home information packs workgroup meeting on 30 March. [66656]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

None.

Value Added Tax

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the potential cost to the Treasury of introducing a zero VAT rating on authors; and if he will make a statement. [67704]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* No estimate has been made.

Voluntary Shops

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer under what fiscal regime a voluntary shop in a rural area operates; and what assessment he has made of the impact on such business of recent changes in corporation tax. [67773]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* A 'voluntary shop in a rural area' has been taken to refer to a shop that is set up and run by volunteers. Such shops will generally pay corporation tax on any profits in the usual manner.

However where such shops operating within the charge to corporation tax donate all or part of their profits to community or other charities under Gift Aid, there will be no tax paid on the profits donated.

The replacement of the starting and non-corporate distribution rates of corporation tax with a single banding for small companies set at the current small companies' rate, announced at Budget, will only impact on voluntary shops that are liable to pay corporation tax, and to the extent that they do not donate their profits to charities under Gift Aid.

A full regulatory impact assessment can be found at: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/ria/ria-corporation-tax.pdf.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

House Mail Services

Mr. Dismore: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission (1) whether the Commission has discussed with Royal Mail *(a)* a bulk purchase contract and *(b)* a business mail discount; and if he will make a statement; [68526]

(2) what consideration the Commission has given to using alternatives to Royal Mail for the House's mail. [68527]

Nick Harvey: Royal Mail offer a range of products that provide bulk purchase and business mail discounts, but these apply only where there is a central point of posting and administration which enables Royal Mail to use their automation of bulk postings to

reduce operational costs. As Parliament's pre-paid envelope service provides the ability to post in constituencies anywhere in the UK, often in small volumes, these services are not applicable. Given a background of increasing deregulation within the mail industry the House authorities keep the possibilities of alternative contracts under continuous review.

A thorough evaluation of the external market through the *Official Journal* of the European Commission was also carried out in 2005 in respect of Parliament's own mail service. Four firms were short-listed and Royal Mail won a new three year contract after they were able to convince the evaluation panel that they could deliver to a demanding specification and provide value for money.

Stationery Supplies

Mr. Dismore: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what recent discussions the House authorities have had with stationery suppliers on procuring alternative cheaper stationery for use by Members. [68486]

Nick Harvey: The House authorities regularly re-tender the contract for the supply of stationery. During the contract term they have regular meetings with the contractor in order to monitor the service and costs, most recently in April 2006. Costs are presently lower than they were in 2002 and the contract is due to be re-let in competition in 2007. Members' bespoke stationery is high quality comprising specially designed and milled environmentally friendly paper and envelopes. The stationery contract includes the provision of a next day delivery anywhere in the UK and a unique management system which allows two accounts to be held for each Member—one for their own stationery and one for the bespoke stationery provided separately by the House.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 10 May 2006

DEFENCE

771 Search and Rescue Squadron

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent assessment he has made of the contribution which the 771 search and rescue squadron at Royal Naval Air Station makes to *(a)* the protection of lives of those at sea and on the coast in western waters and Cornwall and the south west, *(b)* the training of and experience available to naval pilots and crew and *(c)* anti-terrorism activities. [67002]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* In contributing to Search and Rescue (SAR) in the coastal waters of the south west extending 200 miles out to sea, 771 Squadron of the Royal Navy was scrambled 211 times last year and rescued 154 people.

As the Royal Navy's sole Sea King training unit, 771 Squadron trains aircrew for its own SAR duties at Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose and for HMS Gannet SAR Flight at Prestwick Airport. Additionally, through duties within the SAR roster, pilots and aircrew of 771 Squadron gain extensive experience of SAR operations in diverse and challenging weather conditions.

The Squadron is also committed to providing aircraft and crews to UK Homeland Defence which includes counter terrorism operations.

Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objection

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many cases have been heard by the Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objection in each of the last five years; and in how many of those cases the claims were upheld. [68519]

Mr. Watson: The Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objection (ACCO) hears appeals against non-approval by the Service Authorities of applications for administrative discharge from the armed forces on grounds of conscientious objection. There have been no appeals to the ACCO in the last five years.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many times the Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objection has met in each of the last five years. [68520]

Mr. Watson: The Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objection (ACCO) is only required to meet when an application for discharge on grounds of conscientious objection is put before them. As there have been no cases brought before ACCO in the last five years there has been no requirement for it to meet.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the costs were of the Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objection in each of the last five years. [68521]

Mr. Watson: As the Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objection (ACCO) has not sat in the last five years the associated cost of the committee for this period is nil.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures are in place to ensure that members of the armed forces are aware of the existence of the Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objection. [68522]

Mr. Watson: Detailed guidance on the Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objection (ACCO) and procedures for making an appeal to the committee are available to all service personnel. Personnel informing their chain of command of a conscientious objection to military service will be provided with the appropriate advice and assistance.

Afghanistan

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations his Department has received from Army officers requesting an increase in the troop numbers allocated to Afghanistan. [67539]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 4 May 2006]:* As I made clear in my answer of 1 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 735 W, the force package that the UK will send to Southern Afghanistan meets the requirements identified by the relevant military planning staffs and has been fully endorsed by the chiefs of staff.

Furthermore, during the previous Secretary of State's recent visit to theatre, the Commander of the British Forces again confirmed that he was content with the force package deploying. This package will be kept under review and adjusted were deemed necessary—as recently demonstrated by the announced extension to the GR7 Harrier deployment.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent assessment he has made of the impact of the eradication of poppy production on the security situation in Helmand province, Afghanistan. [69482]

Mr. Ingram: The Afghan-led eradication of poppy has had little impact on the overall security in Helmand, which remains fragile.

Armed Forces (Voting)

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with the Electoral Commission concerning the provision of postal and proxy voting forms to members of the armed forces in advance of the Scottish parliamentary election in 2007; and if he will make a statement. [69320]

Mr. Watson *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* Regular discussions are held with the Electoral Commission concerning Service voting issues, including the provision of postal and proxy voting forms to members of the armed forces. The Ministry of Defence and the Electoral Commission plan a joint electoral registration campaign in the autumn, in advance of the Scottish parliamentary election in 2007, which will include ensuring postal and proxy voting forms are available to all members of the armed forces.

Postal and proxy voting forms for members of the armed forces are also available year round from the Electoral Commission's website.

Army Drugs Policy

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what Army disciplinary policy is on *(a)* soldiers and *(b)* officers found to be (i) selling, (ii) distributing, (iii) in possession of and (iv) under the influence of class (1) A and (2) B drugs; [66847]

(2) in what circumstances a soldier might not be discharged automatically for possession of a class A drug; and how many times in the most recent 12 month period for which figures are available *(a)* a soldier and *(b)* an officer found in such possession has been permitted to remain (i) at his or her rank and (ii) at his or her post in the Army. [66848]

Mr. Watson: Soldiers and Officers found to be selling, distributing, possessing or under the influence of drugs are subject to disciplinary proceedings under the Army Act 1955. The Act states that after a finding of guilty in any drugs case, Commanding Officers are to apply for the discharge of the soldier under the provisions of Queens Regulations para 9.404. The regulations go on to state that retention in the Service should only be recommended in the most exceptional of extenuating circumstances.

In the last 12 months no Soldiers or Officers have been allowed to stay in the Army after being found guilty of possession of class A drugs.

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many drugs tests on Army personnel have produced positive results in each quarter since January 2000, broken down by *(a)* class of drugs and *(b)* regiment concerned. [58313]

Mr. Watson: Due to the length of the response, the information has been placed in the Library of the House. The results of tests under the CDT programme are recorded by unit and some of the regimental returns may include individuals from a different cap badge.

The Army has in place a robust drug policy based on prevention, detection and disciplinary or administrative action. This triple approach aims to reduce drug taking in the Army as far as is possible in order to maintain the integrity of the force. CDT is a part of this approach by providing an active deterrent to drug taking. The Army tests 85 per cent. of the force annually for all controlled drugs and those who are caught are almost always discharged. Additionally, education and information strategies for substance misuse, including drugs and alcohol, have been developed and are implemented at all stages in the careers of soldiers wherever they are based and on at least an annual basis.

Astute Submarines

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether there are plans to procure further Astute Class submarines beyond Astute, Ambush and Artful. [68941]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* Three Astute Class submarines are on order with BAE Systems, and further boat orders are currently being considered, subject to affordability. We are working with Industry as part of the Defence Industrial Strategy (DIS) to achieve an affordable and sustainable submarine programme. In support of this we have ordered long-lead items for Boat Four.

Camp Breadbasket Inquiry

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the findings of the senior military officer appointed by General Sir Mike Jackson to examine the lessons from Camp Breadbasket in Iraq have been published; and if he will make a statement. [66765]

Des Browne: The review, announced by General Sir Mike Jackson is still ongoing. The findings will be published when the review has concluded.

Central Wales Tactical Training Area

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many flight movements were carried out at between 250 and 100 feet in the Central Wales Tactical Training Area between 1993 and 2005. [69485]

Mr. Ingram: The amount of military low flying that takes place in the United Kingdom is better expressed in hours rather than by number of sorties, which can vary significantly from minutes to several hours. The information is only available for the last seven training years, as previous data was compiled in a different manner. The figures for the training year 2005-06 are shown in the following table and are due to be published in the next statement on the pattern of military low flying that will be made available in the Library of the House in summer 2006.

The following information reflects the actual amount of operational low flying carried out between 100 and 250 feet within 7T, the tactical training area in mid-Wales. These statistics are consistent with the information provided annually in the statement on the pattern of military low flying.

Training year	*Hours-minutes*
1999-00	38.8
2000-01	25.21
2001-02	30.23

Training year	Hours-minutes
2002-03	33.12
2003-04	32.12
2004-05	27.15
2005-06	13.49

Chaplains

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women serving in each of the armed forces visited a Christian chaplain in each of the last 12 months. [68513]

Mr. Watson: Chaplaincy is proactive and all chaplains make every effort to speak to as many of the personnel on their ship, unit or base as often as possible. Similarly, Service personnel often approach the Chaplain on an informal basis without an appointment. Most of this contact therefore goes unrecorded.

This does not mean that the matters discussed are not important or the moral or pastoral care provided has no value. On the contrary, the ability to share fears or concerns, especially when deployed abroad and on operations, has particular value in the support of the moral component of fighting power.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* Muslim, *(b)* Hindu, *(c)* Sikh, *(d)* Jewish and *(e)* Buddhist chaplains there are in each of the armed forces. [68524]

Mr. Watson: There is one Muslim, one Hindu, one Sikh, and one Buddhist chaplain to the armed forces. The post-holders are Ministry of Defence civil servants but are fully integrated into the armed forces chaplaincy organisation. In respect of the Jewish faith there is one honorary Jewish chaplain to the armed forces. These chaplains have tri-service responsibilities.

Civil Servants

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many non-industrial civil servants from his Department are based in Northern Ireland; and how many will be offered redundancy over the next 12 months. [68427]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* There are some 1,900 non-industrial Ministry of Defence (MOD) civil servants based in Northern Ireland as at 1 April 2006.

We are still working to establish the full impact of the security normalisation programme on MOD civilian staff in Northern Ireland. Once this work has been completed, we will be consulting with the trade unions on implementation but, until then, it is not possible to assess the total number of MOD non-industrial staff that might become surplus over the next 12 months.

Colombia

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his Answer of 25 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1021-2W, on Colombia, how much bespoke counter-narcotic assistance has been granted to Colombia, broken down by main budget heading. [68753]

Mr. Ingram: UK armed forces have been able to provide some counter-narcotic assistance to the Colombian authorities as part of HMG's wider engagement with Colombia on counter-narcotics co-operation. However, I am withholding information on the bespoke training provided because its disclosure would be to the detriment of the safety of individuals, the prevention and detection of crime and international relations.

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 4W, on Colombia, if he will list the evaluation criteria for each type of training provided to the Colombian armed forces. [69427]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to my right hon. Friend and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 4W, on Colombia, by what criteria the level and nature of UK military assistance and training to Colombia is reviewed. [69428]

Mr. Ingram: The level and nature of our military assistance to Colombia is based, and regularly reviewed on: the identification of training needs in the Colombian armed forces through our discussions with the Colombian authorities; the capacity and expertise the UK has to provide such training; and our satisfaction that those undertaking it have not been involved in activities that violate human rights, aid internal repression nor are in collusion with illegal armed groups.

Courts Martial

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the average delay has been in each of the last five years for military personnel accused of serious offences between being charged and appearing at courts martial [55462]

Des Browne: *[pursuant to the reply, 21 March 2006, Official Report, c. 360W]:* A note should have appeared after the table. The table is repeated as follows with the note:

	Royal Navy	Army	Days RAF
2001	129	416	77
2002	179	387	105
2003	184	343	84
2004	124	367	91
2005	115	399	56

Notes:
1. Royal Navy figure shows the average delay between charge and appearing at court martial and the year in which court martial was convened.
2. Army figure shows the average delay between the date of the offence and appearing at court martial and the year in which the court martial was convened.
3. Royal Air Force figure shows the average delay between the point that the case papers are received by the Court Administration Unit (which administers arrangements for the court martial) to the trial date and appearing at court martial and the cases that commenced in 2005.

Deepcut Barracks

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what studies his Department has carried out on the impact on armed forces recruitment of the Deepcut incidents since 2003. [68095]

Mr. Watson: The armed forces have not undertaken any specific research or study into the impact of Deepcut on recruitment levels. Nevertheless, the Services continually monitor recruitment and seek to identify the reasons for any significant variation in the number of enquiries received. There is some evidence to suggest that the media coverage of Deepcut has been a factor in depressing encouragement from parents and teachers for those in the target audience to join.

Defence Export Services Organisation

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which Ministers attended the Defence Export Services Organisation symposium on 22 March. [68110]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 4 May 2006]:* My noble Friend the Minister for Defence Procurement participated in the Defence Export Services Organisation Symposium on 22 March.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of Defence Export Services Organisation staff, funded by the Government, work on defence export services to Saudi Arabia. [68593]

Mr. Ingram: About one per cent of UK-government-funded staff of the Defence Export Services Organisation undertake work on the promotion of defence exports to Saudi Arabia. The costs of staff working on the Saudi armed forces project are met from a management fee received from the Saudi Arabian Government.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with his counterparts in the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on the work of the Defence Export Services Organisation and its relevance to the work of those departments on counter-proliferation and conflict resolution; and if he will make a statement. [68594]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO) of the Ministry of Defence implements Government policy in support of responsible defence exports consistent with Government commitments on export licensing policy. Responsibility for the Department's contribution to policy on counter-proliferation and conflict resolution rests with other areas of the Department, but DESO's activities are guided by the Government's policies on these subjects.

Disposal Contractors

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence in relation to the case of arbitration referred to in the answer on 9 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1177W, when the disposal contractor first sought resolution of contractual differences; what attempts were made, and on what dates, by the Department to resolve matters through negotiation or mediation; and when legal process commenced. [67842]

Mr. Ingram: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Eurofighter

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions officials from his Department have had with British Aerospace Systems concerning the impending order of Eurofighter Typhoon aircraft by Saudi Arabia; and what effect he expects this contract to have on the delivery of Eurofighters to the RAF. [67859]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* There have been numerous, confidential discussions between MOD officials and BAE Systems representatives on a wide range of commercial and technical issues concerning the Typhoon programme and the implications of the proposed supply of the aircraft to Saudi Arabia. Negotiations continue between Her Majesty's Government, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and representatives of BAE Systems. Until these negotiations have concluded it is not possible to define precisely the implications for the Royal Air Force.

Iraq Service Medal

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British police officers have been seconded as advisers in Iraq since 2003; and how many of them have received an Operation Telic medal. [67774]

Mr. Watson: Since 2003, there have been 35 Ministry of Defence Police officers seconded as advisers in Iraq. None of these officers has received an Operation Telic medal.

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many servicemen have served in Iraq for the qualifying period for receiving the Iraq service medal; and how many such medals have been awarded to servicemen. [68504]

Mr. Watson: The information is not held in the format requested. However, as at 28 April 2006, 107,197 applications for the Iraq medal had been received from service personnel. Of these, 105,064 have been found eligible. 100,930 medals have been despatched and 4,134 are awaiting engraving and despatch.

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 27 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 20, on the Iraq service medal, what the nature is of the qualifications required for contractors to be awarded the Iraq service medal; what the procedure is for awarding the medal; how many further such awards are under review; and if he will list the companies involved. [68693]

Mr. Watson: Ministry of Defence Contractors on Deployed Operations (CONDO) in Iraq are eligible to receive the Ministry of Defence Iraq Medal, provided they meet the stipulated eligibility criteria. Sub-contractors employed by CONDOs, not directly under contract by the MOD, are ineligible for the award of the MOD Iraq Medal. A list of companies who are MOD CONDOs is set out as follows:

Ably Resource Solutions
AEI
AES
Aldershot Legal Services
Alenia Marconi Systems
Alvis Vickers
AMS Systems
Anteon UK Ltd.
Babcock Naval Services
BAE Integrated System Technologies
Barrett Europe Ltd.
Circuit Electric AS
Corinth Healthcare Services Ltd.
EDS
Fernau Avionics Ltd.
Frontier Medical Services
Fujitsu Services Ltd.
G3 Systems Ltd.
General Dynamics UK Ltd.
Goodrich
Harris Systems Ltd.
Jones and Attwood Ltd.
Kellogg Brown and Root
Kudos (UK) Ltd
L3 Communications
Life Fitness
Lightfoot Refrigeration Company
Lockheed Martin
MAN B&W Diesel Paxman
Marshall SV
McAlpine Business Services Ltd.
Midland Medical Services
Midway Road Tanker Services
MSV
Nowledgepool
Orient Freight Group & Willie Betz Transport
Paradigm Services Ltd.
Park Air Ltd.
PSP Safety Products Ltd.
Quench
Rima Alco
ROFI Industries Ltd.
Rolls-Royce
Royal Surrey Health Trust
Seabulk Offshore
Seafast Logistics
Serco
SFS/3663 (MOD Prime Food Contractor)
SSVC
STN Atlas Electronik
Supreme Food Service
Swire Pacific Offshore
Titan Airways
TSC
Thales Communications
Thales Optronics Ltd.
Turner Facilities Management
Vosper Thornycroft
Wiess

Applications from CONDO personnel are verified against the eligibility criteria by the Ministry of Defence Permanent Joint Headquarters before being sent to the Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency, Ministry of Defence Medal Office, for the medal to be despatched to the recipient.

At the end of June 2005, the Prime Minister announced that the Queen had agreed a special medal to recognise service by UK civilians in Iraq. The eligibility criteria for this second Iraq medal is currently being considered by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and will be announced in due course.

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 27 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 20, on the Iraq service medal, if he will list the civilian journalists who have received Iraq medals; and which were *(a)* applied for by the recipient and *(b)* handed over in a medal ceremony. [68694]

Mr. Watson: In June 2004, media organisations with employees who deployed as War Correspondents with United Kingdom forces during Operation Telic were informed of their entitlement to the award of the campaign medal in accordance with DCI Gen 170/04. As a result, the Ministry of Defence received 74 requests for the medal with clasp, of which 61 had been distributed to the recipients as at 4 May 2006. The remaining 13 are held pending collection or confirmation of required postal address. There has not been any awards ceremony, all medals were either sent via registered post or collected by hand from the MOD.

The term war correspondent includes media support staff as well as journalists and broadcast reporters; thus camera/sound crew, producers, editors and other support staff who were part of the deployed team are included in the definition. These personnel are also entitled to the medal as detailed in the DCI and are included among the 74 requests made to the MOD.

Joint Strike Fighter

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what progress has been made on the Joint Strike Fighter project; and whether the project is on schedule; [68939]

(2) what progress has been made in the negotiations to secure the UK's rights to the source codes of the Joint Strike Fighter; and if he will make a statement. [68940]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1270W, 1271W and 1272W, to the hon. Member for Wellingborough (Mr. Bone). Negotiations are currently underway to secure the information access we require for operational sovereignty. These are expected to conclude later this year.

Substantial progress has been made in the System Development and Demonstration phase of the JSF programme with the recent completion of the Critical Design Review for the Short Take Off and Vertical Landing (STOVL) variant. Progress in building development aircraft is on schedule with assembly of the first development Conventional Take Off and Landing variant now complete and first flight expected toward the end of this year. In conjunction with the US and the other international partners within the Joint Strike Fighter Programme, we are negotiating the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding for the co-operative Production, Support and Follow on Development Phase.

Michael White

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what disciplinary action has been taken against those involved in the death of Warrant Officer Michael White following his death in a live fire exercise near Newcastle, Co. Down in December 2001. [67689]

Mr. Watson: No disciplinary action has been taken against any individual following the death of Warrant Officer Michael White.

Ministerial Activities

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* public speeches and *(b)* official visits he has made since 5 May 2005; and how many letters he sent in this period. [55704]

Des Browne: My right hon. Friend the Member for Airdrie and Shotts (John Reid) made 15 public speeches and some 36 visits up to the end of February 2006. All speeches and visits were made in accordance with the Ministerial Code. He also replied to a total of 623 letters from right hon. and hon. Members over the period.

Private Americk Hayer

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what disciplinary action has been taken against the army instructor charged with grievous bodily harm upon Private Americk Hayer of the Royal Welch Fusiliers in the course of training at Warcop, Cumbria; [66934]

(2) what rank the officer was who informed the family of Private Americk Hayer of his hospitalisation in September 2005; what rank the officer was who visited him in hospital; when each event took place; and what the reason was for the time taken in each case; [66935]

(3) what steps have been taken to ensure that the Royal Welch Fusiliers tackled the racism and violence that led to assault and severe injuries for a trainee recruit in September 2005. [66936]

Mr. Watson: The incident happened on 26 August 2005 at Warcop Cumbria and involved personnel from Somme Company, the Infantry Training Centre (Catterick) where Fusilier (Fus) Hayer was a phase 2 trainee. Immediately following the incident normal notifications were instigated. A notification of casualty signal was sent and attempts to contact Fus Hayer's mother were made. There was no reply from the contact number and the company commander, a major, left a message on her answering service asking her to contact him. The company commander spoke to Mr. Hayer, Fus Hayer's stepfather, on 27 August 2005.

While Fus Hayer was in hospital, he was visited on 26 August 2005 by a captain and, on 30 August 2005, by a lieutenant. His company commander also spoke to him on the telephone on 28, 29 and 30 August 2005 as did his company sergeant major on 31 August. On his discharge from hospital on 2 September 2005, Fus Hayer was collected by the company sergeant major and returned to ITC Catterick.

At a district court martial held in Aldershot from 4 to 5 April 2006 Corporal L Orgill, of the 2nd Battalion Royal Welsh (1st Battalion the Royal Regiment of Wales), was found not guilty of unlawfully and maliciously inflicting grievous bodily harm. Internal administrative action is being considered.

There is no evidence to suggest that there is an issue of institutionalised racism or violence within the 1st Battalion Royal Welsh (1st Battalion Royal Welch Fusiliers).

RAF Rescue Missions

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the average cost was of a rescue mission carried out by the RAF in 2005-06. [67566]

Mr. Ingram: This information is not held centrally and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what charge is made to the Scottish Ambulance Service for use of RAF search and rescue helicopters for air ambulance flights. [67567]

Mr. Ingram: The current charge to the Scottish Ambulance Service for use of RAF search and rescue helicopters for medical evacuation is £2,018 plus VAT per hour.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on how many occasions in each year since 1996 RAF search and rescue helicopters have been used for air ambulance flights in *(a)* Orkney, *(b)* Shetland and *(c)* the Western Isles; and what the average cost was in each case. [67568]

Mr. Ingram: The following table shows the number of occasions RAF search and rescue helicopters have been used for medical evacuation flights in the isles of Orkney, Shetland and Western Isles in each year since 1999.

	Orkney Isles	*Shetland Isles*	*Western Isles*
1999[1]	0	0	0
2000	0	0	2
2001	1	0	2
2002	1	0	6
2003	0	1	1
2004	1	2	1
2005	1	1	0
2006	3	4	0
Total	7	8	12

[1] Data are only held from 24 August 1999

Figures are not held centrally for the average cost of helicopter flights and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Recruitment

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on recruitment, search and selection agencies in each of the last five years. [68345]

Mr. Watson: This information is not held centrally as the authority for such expenditure has been delegated to business areas for some years. The Ministry of Defence is currently undertaking a major review of its HR processes, including recruitment and aims to transform the current recruitment systems later this year. As part of this transformation process we have introduced a new data management system, HRMS, based on a Peoplesoft Human Resource management product. When the new system is fully operational, it is planned that data on how much the Department spends on recruitment, search and selection agencies will be available centrally. Until such time the cost involved in providing the information requested will continue to be disproportionate.

Redress of Grievance Cases

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many redress of grievance cases in each of the armed forces have resulted in *(a)* a conviction and *(b)* other forms of punishment in the last 12 months. [68517]

Mr. Watson: A redress of grievance is a complaint made by a service person on any matter relating to their service. Any criminal or disciplinary proceedings against other individuals that may result from an investigation into those grievances are separate matters and it is not possible to provide the information in the form that has been requested.

Evacuation/Hospital Treatment

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the UK hospitals *(a)* where service personnel have been treated and *(b)* for injuries sustained in theatre of active operations in each of the last five years; and how many such personnel each hospital treated in each year. [66541]

Des Browne *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* In the last five years, Service personnel requiring hospital treatment in the UK, including those suffering from injuries sustained in theatre, have been treated at the following six MOD Hospital Units (MDHU):

MDHU Birmingham (part of the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine), Selly Oak Hospital, University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust

MDHU Derriford, Derriford Hospital, Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust

MDHU Frimley Park, Frimley Park Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

MDHU Northallerton, Friarage Hospital, South Tees Hospitals NHS Trust

MDHU Peterborough, Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

MDHU Portsmouth, Queen Alexandra's Hospital, Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust

Our records show that the number of Service personnel treated at each MDHU in each of the last five years is as follows:

MDHU	*Out/In-patients*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*[1]2004-05*
Birmingham	Out	[2]—	513	3,360	4,116	4,898
	In	[2]—	511	563	1,024	1,175 [3]
Derriford	Out	1,886	1,809	2,142	2,155	2,258
	In	671	1,147	1,129	1,151	1,323
Frimley Park	Out	[2]—	7,064	12,509	11,798	11,758
	In	[2]—	891	1,476	1,327	1,442
Northallerton	Out	2,620	2,583	2,811	6,461	2,682
	In	1,570	1,455	1,648	1,725	1,800

MDHU	Out/In-patients	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	[1]2004-05
Peterborough	Out	8,400	7,650	7,166	6,974	7,279
	In	1,802	1,477	1,584	1,508	1,712
Portsmouth	Out	[2]—	[2]—	5,952	5,322	4,942
	In	[2]—	[2]—	3,095	2,355	1,999

[1] 2004-05 is the latest year for which figures are currently complete
[2] Figures for this period are no longer held on file. To obtain them would require a manual trawl of the individual hospital records which could only be undertaken at disproportionate cost.

It is not possible to break down these figures by operational and non-operational injury/illness. Such information is not held centrally and to obtain it would require the examination of the individual medical records of every patient. These can only be viewed for non-clinical reasons with the express consent of the individual concerned, to protect patient confidentiality. To seek permission, and then to extract the information from the records, could only be done at disproportionate cost.

Since 2001, the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine has been the main receiving unit for patients aeromedically evacuated from an operational theatre. If a long stay is expected, patients can be transferred to a hospital local to their home for less acute treatment, enabling them to be nearer to their family. Indeed, a significant proportion of service personnel requiring hospital treatment in the UK in general are treated, both as emergencies and electively, at other NHS hospitals. The decision to do this is based on relative waiting times and on convenience for the individual patient and the patient's family. Additionally, patients requiring more complex rehabilitation for musculo-skeletal conditions can be referred, where appropriate, to the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre at Headley Court.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the UK military hospitals that British military casualties are sent to after evacuation from *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan. [65449]

Mr. Watson: There are no longer any stand-alone military hospitals in the United Kingdom. As part of the 1994 "Defence Costs Study", most of these were closed in the 1990s when it became clear that they no longer had sufficient patient volume and case mix to develop and maintain the skills of our medical personnel to the appropriate operational and NHS standards. They have been replaced by Ministry of Defence Hospital Units (MDHUs) located within University hospital Birmingham, South Tees, Frimley Park, Peterborough, Plymouth, and Portsmouth hospitals NHS trusts. Where necessary, we could also use the hospital facilities in Cyprus for treatment, or as a staging post prior to treatment in the UK.

When casualties are aeromedically evacuated to the UK, the usual receiving hospital is the University hospital Birmingham. However, at times where there are a large number of casualties, the decision as to which hospital they should be treated at is made in conjunction with the Department of Health, based on clinical need and bed availability.

Staff Development

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total cost was of *(a)* staff away days and *(b)* staff team building exercises in his Department in each of the last three years. [69115]

Mr. Watson: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Territorial Army

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what spending has been allocated to Territorial Army recruitment for *(a)* the last three quarters of 2005, *(b)* the first quarter of 2006 and *(c)* 2006-07. [43677]

Mr. Watson: It is not possible to provide comprehensive and accurate details on Territorial Army (TA) recruiting spend alone nor break it down into the detail requested. Spending on TA recruitment is a multi-layer activity involving disparate formations, units and agencies spanning a number of different budget areas, which allocate funds over a financial year, not by quarters.

The overall national marketing spend for financial year (FY) 2005-06 for the Army (both Regular and TA) was £38.4 million and the national marketing budget for FY 2006-07 is £25.8 million. This includes £5 million and £2.3 million specifically earmarked for TA activities. However, the TA also benefits further from many elements of the rest of the national Army marketing budget, which are aimed at both the Regular Army and the TA. These encompass television and press advertising, the production of DVDs, leaflets, pamphlets and brochures as well as the overarching production and design costs.

In addition, £12.9 million was spent on various TA recruiting (and in some cases retention) initiatives in FY 2005-06 and £12.5 million is allocated for 2006-07. These initiatives include the establishment of additional posts to further improve TA recruiting hierarchy and infrastructure, the establishment of Brigade Recruitment and Advisory Teams, improvement of recruiting Reception Centres and other ad hoc recruiting drives.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the main areas of the Territorial Army are identified *(a)* as undermanned and *(b)* for increased recruitment. [43691]

Mr. Watson: Territorial Army (TA) manning has been under pressure for a number of years and the Army faces a growing challenge in recruiting sufficient

officers and soldiers of an appropriate quality for all branches of the TA. Particular areas for recruiting focus on increasing the number of young officers joining the TA, medical technicians, specialist trades in the Royal Logistics Corps, communications technicians and other more general trade soldiers in the Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, Infantry and Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. A major change programme, known as Project One Army Recruiting is under way to improve recruiting into the Regular and Territorial Army by integrating the recruiting operations of the two organisations.

Type 45 Destroyers

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate the naval staff have made of the total number of Type 45 destroyers required to protect *(a)* a carrier task group and *(b)* an amphibious task group against aerial attack. [67918]

Mr. Ingram [*holding answer 3 May 2006*]: There are many variables involved when determining the number of air defence ships required to defend a carrier or amphibious task group. These include the level of the threat, the various readiness levels of the ships, the level of multinational involvement and the scale of the operation. It is the capability provided by the ships, rather than their numbers, that determine the level of protection provided.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the effect on employment at shipbuilders' yards of a decision not to build the seventh and eighth Type 45 destroyers. [67920]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 3 May 2006]*: No decision has yet been made on ordering the seventh and eighth Type 45 destroyers. When approval is sought, all factors will be taken into account. In particular, any decision will be made in the context of our defence industrial strategy, a key element of which is to retain onshore the ability to deliver a number of strategic capabilities, including those required to build and integrate complex ships in the United Kingdom.

To that end, we are working with industry to develop a common understanding of the core load required to sustain the industrial capabilities we identified as important to sustain in the DIS. We expect industry to restructure itself to improve its performance and address the fundamental issues of affordability and productivity to deliver the equipment we need; to sustain onshore the industrial capabilities we require for national security; and to provide a sustainable and profitable industry, with clearer employment prospects.

UFOs

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his Answer to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) of 28 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 904W, on unidentified flying objects, on how many occasions there has been an assessment of evidence of risk to the integrity of UK airspace in the last five years; and what the job title is of desk officers assigned to this task. [68757]

Mr. Watson: Over the last five years evidence of risk to the integrity of UK airspace from a reported unidentified flying object has been assessed on 12 occasions; in no case was there considered to be any actual risk. Analysis of reports for this purpose is made by the military desk officer responsible for airspace integrity within the UK operations branch.

CABINET OFFICE

Land Ownership (Shropshire)

Mark Pritchard: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much land is owned in Shropshire by the Duchy of Lancaster. [68806]

Hilary Armstrong: The Duchy of Lancaster owns approximately one hectare of land in Shropshire.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Food Advertising Control

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will respond to the Ofcom proposals for greater controls on food advertising of foods high in fat, sugar and salt. [68566]

Mr. Woodward: The Government welcomes Ofcom's consultation on options to strengthen the rules on broadcast food promotion to children and we look forward to discussing the issues further with them in the light of the responses to their consultation.

Ministerial Cars (Fuel Costs)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the fuel costs were for ministerial cars used by her Department in each of the last five years. [67019]

Mr. Caborn: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my hon. Friend the Minister of State for Transport my hon. Friend the Member for South Thanet (Dr. Ladyman) on 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1226W.

Olympic Games 2012

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what progress has been made in providing a manual of facilities identified as suitable for training camps by National Olympic and Paralympic Committees for the Olympic games in 2012; [68848]

(2) what progress has been made in providing interested organisations with the guidelines and requirements for training camps for the run up to the Olympic games in 2012. [68849]

Mr. Caborn: It is expected that guidelines and technical requirements for facilities and organisations will be available on the website of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic games (www.london2012.com) by the end of May. Facilities will shortly be invited to submit their interest in being assessed for inclusion in the manual.

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 27 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 214-5W, on the London Olympics, what the most recent estimate made by KPMG is of the cost of the 2012 Olympics. [69425]

Tessa Jowell: The review of the cost of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games is still ongoing. Any revised estimates will be reported only when they have been agreed and when the cost review has been completed.

Public (Arts Organisation)

Mr. Bailey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many times the chief executive of the Arts Council of England, West Midlands, was invited to attend the Board of the arts organisation, the Public, in each of the last three years; and how many times she attended. [68482]

Mr. Lammy: The Regional Executive Director of Arts Council England West Midlands has attended one board meeting in 2005. She has attended The Public's stakeholder meetings. Arts Council staff have attended at least 17 board meetings over the last three years. These have mostly been attended by the lead officer or the Director of Arts.

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport who the lead officer was from the Arts Council responsible for liaison on the construction of the building to house the Arts Organisation, the Public based in West Bromwich. [69531]

Mr. Caborn: The chief executive of Arts Council England, Peter Hewitt, is the accounting officer for the organisation.

Schools Strategy

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the National Strategy for Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links; how much her Department has *(a)* allocated and *(b)* plans to allocate to the initiative; and if she will list those schools which will take part in the initiative. [68846]

Mr. Caborn: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Education and Skills are working together to deliver the National School Sport Strategy. From 2003-06 DCMS invested £150 million in the strategy, and between 2006-08 the Department has allocated another £89 million. From September 2006 all maintained schools will be part of a School Sport Partnership.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum/Immigration

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers who were normally resident in *(a)* Peterborough and *(b)* Cambridgeshire in the 12 months after entering the United Kingdom have been (i) refused asylum and (ii) removed from the United Kingdom in each year since 1999; and if he will make a statement. [68762]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 8 May 2006]*: Statistics on the location of asylum seekers who were refused asylum and removed from the UK since 1999 is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost by the examination of individual case records.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what post-return monitoring is in place to ensure that all returns to Iraq are safe and sustainable. [65622]

Mr. McNulty: Returnees under the voluntary assisted return and reintegration programme—VARRP—are only monitored in so far as they have approached the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to receive counselling and reintegration assistance. Initial counselling begins upon arrival at the port of entry and further counselling takes place post-arrival, which ranges from assistance with social reinsertion and administrative procedures. Of those who have been monitored through their use of reintegration assistance it has been reported that there is no evidence that returnees have found themselves in danger or under threat of persecution due to their being returnees.

There is no post-return monitoring or sustainability programme for those persons who choose not to return as part of an assisted voluntary return package and whose subsequent removal from the UK is enforced.

However, removal will only be carried out where it is considered both appropriate and safe to do so and only after a full assessment of each case has been thoroughly conducted.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what procedures and safeguards are in place to ensure that all returning Iraqi asylum seekers reach their home village or town safely. [65623]

Mr. McNulty: In respect of voluntary returns through Erbil and Sulaymaniyah, returnees assisted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are met upon arrival by the IOM. Arrangements are in place at both airports which allow the IOM and their representatives unrestricted access, enabling staff to provide assistance to returnees from the moment they land. They are assisted through immigration, baggage retrieval and customs formalities.

The IOM arranges with local transportation companies in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah for returnees to be transported via bus or car to their final destination within the three Northern Governorates and their immediate vicinity, this means Kirkuk and Mosul. Arrival is confirmed by the transportation company. For returns through Baghdad, passengers are met at the airport by IOM staff. Only one company is able to provide transportation from Baghdad International airport. The IOM arranges for the returnees to be taken to Baghdad's main land transportation hubs where onward travel is organised either by taxi or bus.

For enforced returns, there is clearly a difficult position in those parts of Iraq most affected by insurgent action, but it is not accepted that this applies to all areas.

Returns are taken forward on a case by case basis and are only enforced to areas assessed as sufficiently stable and where the Home Office is satisfied that the individual concerned will not be at risk of persecution or in need of humanitarian protection. The 15 individuals who were removed on an enforced return flight to Erbil on 20 November 2005 were offered onward transport to their home town or village.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps are being taken *(a)* to improve and *(b)* to extend the statistics published on those detained under immigration legislation powers; if he will take steps to provide annual data showing the total number of people who have sought asylum, at what stage of the asylum process the individual was detained, the duration and location of their detention and any transfer across the immigration detention estate; and if he will make a statement. [68400]

Mr. McNulty: Period statistics covering those leaving detention were published for the first time in February 2006 on the Home Office's Research Development and Statistics website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html. Statistics on persons leaving detention during July to September 2005, broken down by those who have sought asylum at some stage, place of last detention and the length of sole detention were published in the quarterly asylum bulletin.

There are currently no plans to publish statistics on transfers across the immigration detention estate. It is not possible to say which stage of the asylum process people are at when they are detained. The decision to detain is made on a case by case basis and may be appropriate in one or more of the following circumstances: to effect removal; while a person's identity and claim is being established; where a person is unlikely to comply with the conditions of temporary admission or release; or where the application is capable of being considered quickly.

Detailed official statistics on the asylum process are quality assured and published by the Immigration Research and Statistics Service (IRSS). Further information about National Statistics can be found at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/default.asp. The full range of immigration statistics published by the Home Office, including the frequency of publication, has recently been addressed in an independent review of the Control of Immigration Statistics publications.

An early findings paper was published in August 2005, which can be found on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/statsprog1.html. The Home Office is not bound to accept the recommendations, many of which would require additional resources, and is currently considering its response to the review.

Sandra Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what alternatives he has considered to the detention of children in immigration detention centres. [68080]

Mr. McNulty: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer to a similar question of 26 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 312.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether *(a)* Dungavel and *(b)* Oakington Detention Centre is being used to hold immigration detainees from Northern Ireland; and what consultation took place on the proposal to hold such detainees in those centres. [68255]

Mr. McNulty: There have been some recent developments in respect of immigration detention in Northern Ireland. Until early 2006 it had been the case that 'where it was necessary to detain individuals in Northern Ireland' men were accommodated in the Working Out Unit, Crumlin Road, Belfast and women were accommodated at HMYOC Hydebank Wood.

It is now the case that individuals in Northern Ireland who are detained under Immigration Act powers are no longer held in Northern Ireland. Such individuals are transferred to a detention facility in Great Britain either on the day of detention or within 24 hours. In the majority of cases individuals will, initially, be detained at Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre. Individuals whose asylum applications are straightforward and capable of being decided quickly may be held at Oakington Reception Centre.

While there are occasions when consultation with outside bodies is appropriate, there will be other occasions, of which this was one, where such consultation would delay changes to operational policy and practice that can and should be made quickly. In this case, consultation would simply have served to prolong the routine use of prison places in Northern Ireland for detainees beyond the point that it was operationally necessary to do so. This would not have been desirable.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 365W, on UK immigration procedures, how many of those listed in the table have been included in the number of those recorded as removals and voluntary departures of asylum seekers. [68596]

Mr. McNulty: None of the persons listed in the previous table provided, have been recorded as removals or voluntary departures of asylum seekers as they have not been granted leave to enter the United Kingdom, and are handed straight over to the French authorities.

Business Rates/Council Tax

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been imprisoned for non-payment of *(a)* business rates and *(b)* council tax in each year since 1997. [66293]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Information on numbers of prisoners held under non-criminal categories of imprisonment is to be found in table 7.10 at the website http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/omcs.html for the Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2004. Figures can be found for all years since 1993 for the categories community charge/council tax, and rates. The data are as obtained from the prison IT system.

Child Trafficking

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 2 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1406W, on child trafficking, whether the information requested is collected at a local level by *(a)* local authorities, *(b)* the police and *(c)* the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. [68551]

Mr. McNulty: Neither local authorities, police nor IND currently have specific requirements or associated standards and processes for such information to be collected at a local level. While some local recording may take place, it is not systematic. The Home Office is working in collaboration with DFES, local authorities, Local Safeguarding Children Boards and relevant voluntary organisations to address these issues. Among other steps we are establishing dedicated social work teams at ports and asylum screening units.

These teams will benefit from additional training and close working relationships with the Police and Immigration Service. The teams will ensure that children who need safeguarding will be properly referred to statutory agencies, and the information about them will be captured on the National Register of Unaccompanied Children and in due course the DFES Information Sharing Index.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 2 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1406W, on child trafficking, if he will take steps to establish a system which will collect information about children who have been trafficked or smuggled from *(a)* EU countries and *(b)* the rest of the world. [68552]

Mr. McNulty: Information on the steps being taken to establish a system to collect information about children who have been trafficked or smuggled to the UK has been provided in answer to the hon. Gentleman's related PQ 68551. The Home Office is working in collaboration with both the EU and G8 countries to combat trafficking and the following outlines current actions:

(a) EU countries

The EU action plan on combating and preventing trafficking in human beings, which was agreed during the UK presidency, contains a number of specific actions focusing on children, including:

"holding a seminar on sharing best practice regarding the identification of children at risk, in particular unaccompanied minors;

improving the strategic and tactical intelligence picture on trafficking in human beings and enabling an intelligence-led approach;

ensuring that Frontex (the EU's border agency) work on trafficking takes into account the particular circumstances of the most vulnerable victims, in particular children and women."

The plan also commits member states to sharing lists of priority origin and transit countries and the most frequently encountered routes, as well as improving knowledge on the scale and nature of trafficking in human beings.

(b) The rest of the world

The G8 are committed to tackling the threat of human trafficking and has recently accepted the UK's questionnaire and concept paper on human trafficking and smuggling which was proposed during our presidency. The concept paper and questionnaire will serve to add value to the G8's position on immigration crime and aims to highlight where a joined-up international approach on human trafficking will be most influential by looking at current trends, routings and areas of best practice.

Criminal Justice Act

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the custody plus and related provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 will be brought into force; what period of notice will be given before their introduction; and what transitional provisions his Department has planned. [67117]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Criminal justice agencies have already been advised that the Government are planning to introduce custody plus in the autumn of 2006. We are currently considering what transitional arrangements may be required.

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which provisions within the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 *(a)* have not yet come into force and *(b)* have been replaced (i) prior to and (ii) after coming into force. [67120]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000—commencement

The following tables detail the Sections and Schedules to the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 which are repealed, not currently in force, or partially in force:

Section	*Subsection*	*Status*
17		Repealed
29		Not in force
39		Repealed
47-50		Repealed

Section	Subsection	Status
51		Repealed?never in force
52		Partially in force
53		Repealed?never in force
54-55		Repealed
59		Not in force
61		Not in force
63		Repealed
66		Repealed
67-69		Repealed
71	(5)	Not in force
74		Partially in force
75		Not in force

Schedule	Paragraph	Status
5		Repealed
7	1-3	Repealed
	5	Not in force
	7-11	Not in force
	13	Not in force
	15 (l)(a)-(d)	Not in force
	15 (D(f)-(g)	Not in force
	16-17	Not in force
	18 (l)-(2)	Not in force
	18 (3)(a)-(b)	Not in force
	18 (3)(c)(ii)	Not in force
	20	Not in force
	22 (l)(a)-(d)	Not in force
	22 (l)(f)-(g)	Not in force
	23-24	Not in force
	25 (l)-(2)	Not in force
	25 (3)(a)-(b)	Not in force
	25 (3)(c)(ii)	Not in force
	27	Not in force
	29 (l)(a)-(d)	Not in force
	29 (l)(f)-(g)	Not in force
	30-31	Not in force
	32 (l)-(2)	Not in force
	32 (3)(a)-(b)	Not in force
	32 (3)(c)(ii)	Not in force
	33-36	Not in force
	39	Not in force
	47	Repealed
	51-53	Repealed
	54-56	Not in force
	59-60	Not in force
	62-70	Not in force
	76	Not in force
	77	Repealed?never in force
	83-86	Repealed
	98	Not in force
	101	Prospectively repealed?not in force
	102	Prospectively repealed

Schedule	Paragraph	Status
	104	Repealed?never in force
	105	Repealed
	106-107	Repealed?never in force
	108-109	Not in force
	111(b)	Repealed?never in force
	112-115	Not in force
	119	Not in force
	133	Repealed
	134	Not in force
	139-140	Repealed?never in force
	149	Not in force
	161-162	Repealed
	164	Partially in force
	165	Repealed?never in force
	166	Repealed
	167	Repealed?never in force
	168-169	Repealed
	170	Repealed?never in force
	171	Repealed
	172	Repealed?never in force
	173	Not in force
	176	Not in force
	177	Repealed?never in force
	178	Not in force
	179	Repealed?never in force
	180-188	Not in force
	189	Repealed?never in force
	190-194	Not in force
	196	Partially in force
	197 (a)	Not in force
	197 (c)	Repealed?never in force
	197(d)-(e)	Not in force
	197 (f)	Partially in force
	197 (g)(ii)	Repealed
	198-200	Repealed
	201 (2)(b)	Not in force
	201 (3)	Not in force
	202 (2)(b)	Not in force
	202 (3)	Not in force
	203 (2)	Partially in force
	203 (5)	Not in force
	204	Not in force
	211	Not in force
8		Partially in force

Criminal Records Bureau

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many people are the subject of multiple Criminal Records Bureau clearance applications; [69440]

(2) how many people have renewed their Criminal Records Bureau clearance following expiry. [69442]

Joan Ryan: The information sought by the hon. Member for East Worthing and Shoreham is not available. Criminal Records Bureau's standard and enhanced disclosures do not carry any specific period of validity. They are designed to be used by an employer or licensing authority at the point of recruitment for a specific position. With certain exceptions, CRB checks are not mandatory and the decision to undertake them for eligible positions rests with the employer or licensing authority, as does the decision to periodically renew checks on staff, bearing in mind any legal and contractual obligations.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to alter the Criminal Records Bureau registration system following the Bichard Inquiry recommendations. [69443]

Joan Ryan: In 2004 the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) undertook an exercise to evaluate the compliance of Registered Bodies with the Bureau's Code of Practice. This identified risks to the Disclosure service posed by an increasing and remote Registered Body network. Although the CRB and the Bichard Inquiry recognise the vital role of Registered Bodies in the Disclosure service, both share concern over the high numbers and proficiency of the existing Registered Body network.

The CRB will consequently reduce the number of Registered Bodies to work with those that remain to make the network more professional and more experienced in the Disclosure process. This will allow the CRB to ensure that the network of users is fully proficient in the security and policies of the CRB. A minimum threshold of 100 applications per year, per Registered Body has been set. The CRB will provide advice, guidance and support to organisations that do not meet the volume criteria about how they can access the Disclosure service in the future before their registration is cancelled.

The CRB has developed an alternative distribution network, through the Umbrella Body (UB) network to ensure cancelled organisations maintain full access to the Disclosure service. The CRB has been working closely with the existing UB network to ensure that they are able to provide an effective, robust and efficient service and have the capacity to absorb the increased volume of applications from new and cancelled organisations.

The CRB have developed a 'controlled roll out programme' to ensure that UB's can manage any increased volume with ease. The CRB have also been encouraging those organisations that remain part of the Registered Body network to become UBs. The UBs are able to offer a great deal of experience in handling and processing CRB checks that can also pay dividends in ensuring that the check is completed as quickly as possible. In addition, improved UB web pages have been developed and implemented on the CRB website, which provides an enhanced search facility to enable eligible organisations to find a suitable Umbrella Body.

Dental Care (Prisoners)

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was spent on dentistry treatment provided for inmates of prisons in the UK in the last period for which figures are available, broken down by prison establishment; and if he will make a statement. [67501]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* In England, resources previously held by the Home Office for the dental care of prisoners have been devolved to those primary care trusts (PCTs) that host a publicly managed prison. This forms part of their general allocation to commission appropriate healthcare services for prisoners. These resources are not ring fenced, and PCTs as part of their commissioning role are able to move resources from one healthcare service to another to meet their specific local needs. It is therefore not possible for us to identify centrally how much is spent on dentistry in prisons.

The dental services provided to prisoners are an integral part of primary dental services under the new contractual arrangements for national health service dentistry. PCTs are required to provide all dental services required to meet the reasonable needs of their resident population, including prisoners. In Wales, these resources have been devolved to local health boards. Arrangements in Scotland and Northern Ireland are a matter for the Scottish Executive and the Northern Ireland Office respectively.

Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when sections 17 to 21 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 will be brought into force. [67118]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is intended that these provisions should be implemented by the end of this year.

Drug Confiscations (Prisons)

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the quantities of each drug that have been confiscated in prisons in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [67758]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information my hon. Friend has requested is not held centrally and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost. The Prison Service is improving its data collection and is shortly to begin implementation of a new system called CNOMIS for recording gathering data.

Ex-prisoners

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the involvement of crime reduction partnerships in the resettlement of ex-prisoners. [65585]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The importance of involving crime reduction partnership agencies in the resettlement of offenders is recognised in the NOMS regional strategies to reduce re-offending as well as nationally in the

Government's Reducing Re-offending Delivery Plan. In November 2005 Baroness Scotland launched three alliances, including the Civic Alliance which set out how NOMS can work with local authorities and local communities to reduce re-offending.

These are now being rolled out across the nine regions and Wales by Regional Offender Managers (ROMs). The ROM in the East Midlands, along with the Local Government Association and Society of Local Government Chief Executives, is leading a demonstration project on how NOMS will work with local Strategic Partnerships and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) through local area agreements to reduce re-offending in local communities. To date no evaluation of the effectiveness of CDRPs' involvement specifically in the resettlement of ex-prisoners has been completed. However, work has recently begun in London to examine the operation of a scheme aimed at meeting the needs of prisoners resettling in eight London boroughs.

The scheme—the London Resettlement Pilot—forms part of the London Resettlement Strategy published in September 2005. The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in the eight boroughs (Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, Brent, Barnet, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Harrow and Ealing) are working with Wormwood Scrubs prison in west London. They have nominated local strategic leaders who are working to develop enhanced and co-ordinated responses to the needs of resettling prisoners. An action research project has been commissioned which will report in summer 2006 on the resettlement pilot and will include an assessment of progress being made through working with local partnerships in this way.

An evaluation is also currently underway of the impact of Prolific and other Priority Offenders Programme (PPO), which is being implemented by CDRPs and local Strategic Partnerships. One strand of the programme is aimed at rehabilitating and resettling PPOs who are in custody or serving sentences in the community, through closer working between all relevant agencies and continued post-sentence support. A final report on this work is due in autumn 2006.

Foreign Prisoners

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what prison programmes there are to assist the rehabilitation of foreign national prisoners. [69539]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Prison Service offers a range of opportunities to develop the skills and meet the needs of prisoners including foreign nationals. These include education and training, specialist programmes, work and resettlement courses. English for speakers of other languages is provided where that need is present, and may have to be undertaken prior to engagement in other interventions.

Identity Cards

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated into the effectiveness of identification cards and associated data in (i) thwarting acts of terror and (ii) helping identify perpetrators; and if he will make a statement. [47960]

Joan Ryan: We have carefully evaluated the effectiveness of identity cards in contributing to preventing and disrupting terrorism, and in identifying those engaged in terrorism. For reasons relating to national security, it is not possible to go into details. The Security Services have said that an ID card will help. Eliza Manningham-Buller, Director General of the Security Services, said:

"Widespread use of false documents is an essential aspect of terrorist activities. Al-Qaeda's own training manual requires its operatives to acquire false identities to hide their terrorist activities. ID Cards will make it more difficult for terrorists to operate".

In the translation of the Al-Qaeda training manual (found by the Manchester Police during a search of an Al-Qaeda member's home) it states in the Third Lesson relating to Counterfeit Currency and Forged Documents:

"The brother who has special work status (commander, communication link,...) should have more than one identity card and passport. He should learn the contents of each, the nature of the [indicated] profession, and the dialect of the residence area listed in the document."

Informants (HMP Wandsworth)

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many complaints have been made about the use of illegal informants at HM Prison Wandsworth; what action was taken in each case; what disciplinary sanctions resulted; and if he will make a statement. [69420]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not Prison Service policy to discuss the use of informants in individual establishments.

International Arrest Warrants

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1619W, on international arrest warrants, if he will place in the Library copies of the written representations from the Israeli Government. [69808]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not our practice to deposit in the Library representations received from foreign Governments in confidence.

Israel

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 2 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1416W, on which dates his officials met representatives of Israel; who those representatives were; and what written submissions those representatives presented on the issuing of arrest warrants in international cases. [68401]

Joan Ryan: Discussions took place with the Minister Plenipotentiary from the Israeli embassy on 10 April this year. The written representations concerned the potential for arrest warrants to be sought against Israeli citizens and members of the Israeli defence forces visiting the United Kingdom.

John Joseph Tourney

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps have been taken by the Criminal Cases Review Commission to comply with the Order of the Divisional Court in the High Court of Justice in Northern Ireland made on 22 June 2005 in connection with the application by John Joseph Tourney for judicial review of a decision by the Commission. [67690]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not the practice to comment on the outcome of individual cases. The hon. Member's letter of 19 April 2006. In their letter they set out their consideration of the case and how they have complied with the Order of the High Court of Justice in Northern Ireland.

Murderers

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of convicted murderers were on *(a)* probation, *(b)* early release and *(c)* parole when they committed their offence in each of the last five years. [65495]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information is not available in the precise form requested. Data on the number of murder convictions in England and Wales from 2000-04 can be found in the table. Individuals are subject to probation supervision when there is a statutory requirement following a community penalty or release from a custodial sentence (including parole and automatic conditional release). Data on the number of individuals who were convicted of murder while being supervised by the Probation Service can be found in the table.

The information is not available to show how many of those offenders who were convicted of murder when being supervised by the Probation Service, were serving community sentences or were on licence following release from custody. Until 2004, the data on the number of individuals convicted of a serious offence while subject to probation supervision was collected under the Serious Incident Reporting (SIR) process by calendar year. From 1 April 2004, when the SIR process was replaced by the Serious Further Offence process, data on the number of murders and other serious offences committed by offenders being supervised by the Probation Service began to be collected by business year. Between 1 April 2004 and 31 March 2005, 26 offenders being supervised by the Probation Service were convicted of murder.

Data on the number of murder convictions in England and Wales from 2000-04

	Total number of murder convictions[1]
2000	261
2001	285
2002	324
2003	277
2004	361

[1] *Source*
Office for Criminal Justice Reform

Data on the umber of individuals convicted of murder whilst under probation supervision

	Murder convictions by individuals under supervision by the Probation Service[1]
2000	24
2001	26
2002	37
2003	29

[1] *Source*
RDS NOMS Offender Caseload Statistics

National Offender Management Service

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what areas of the prison estate the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) has taken over direct responsibility. [67346]

Mr. Sutcliffe: NOMS is responsible for all areas of the prison estate.

Passports

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which retail outlets are allowed to hold passport application forms. [67763]

Joan Ryan: Passport application forms are available from those Post Office branches and Worldchoice travel agents that offer the passport "Check and Send" service. There are around 2,800 such outlets across the UK. Application packs are also available from the Passport Adviceline, the Application Form Request line, and the Identity and Passport Service website. Application packs are regularly reviewed and updated. These arrangements ensure that passport applicants are able to obtain up to date application packs, and also allow for the efficient control of stock.

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he has taken to reduce the number of passports lost by the UK Passport Service since the introduction of the use of the special mail service. [68702]

Joan Ryan *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The Identity and Passport Service is working closely with SMS to reduce losses in the delivery process. The following actions have been taken:

"To deal with the threat of courier attacks, delivery routes and delivery times are changed regularly, and double manning used.

Security at SMS branches has been strengthened, and vehicle tracking improved.

A higher standard of secure delivery for 80 per cent. of addresses.

New technology is being deployed to improve location of addresses, and evidence of delivery.

As there is a clear audit trail for the delivery of each passport, every loss is fully investigated including to check whether postcode details have been correctly captured, and performance and procedural improvements made."

Where losses are confirmed, the passport details are recorded on IPS's lost and stolen passport database to prevent misuse. Also, all passports contain security features to prevent counterfeiting and forgery, and to recognise it when it is attempted. Since the introduction of secure delivery in February 2004, secure mail services have successfully delivered nearly 13 million items 98 per cent. on the next day.

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many fraudulent passport applications were made in each of the last 10 years; and how many of those applications involved *(a)* identity theft and *(b)* false declarations where the individual was otherwise entitled to a passport. [68705]

Joan Ryan *[holding answer 4 May 2006]:* Figures for the number of fraudulent passport applications detected by the Identity and Passport Service since 1996 are set out in the table.

	Number
1996	1,164
1997	1,880
1998	1,368
1999	1,596
2000	1,484
2001	2,419
2002	1,973
2003	1,571
2004	1,880
2005	1,126

IPS introduced in March 2005 a new and comprehensive fraud casework and management information system. This is used for the progression of cases of suspected fraud and the collection, collation and analysis of information relating to passport fraud. Prior to the introduction of this system information relating to frauds detected was collated through manual processes and the analysis of breakdowns of types of fraudulent applications was not available. Figures relating to fraudulent applications involving identity theft and false declarations where the individual was otherwise entitled to a passport, for the period April 2005 to January 2006 are as follows:

	Number
Deceased ID	76
Fictitious ID	257
Genuine ID	286
False Statements	141
Countersignature Fraud	148
Other	400
Total	1,308

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many dispatched passports have been reported lost since February 2004; and what estimate he has made of the number of such lost passports that may have been stolen. [68706]

Joan Ryan *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The estimated number of passports lost whilst in the delivery process for the period February 2004 to January 2006 is 1,561. Of these, 308 are known to have been lost as a consequence of robbery or theft, or lost whilst being delivered by secure mail services. The remainder are passports that have been misposted by couriers, and not subsequently recovered.

Points System

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the weighting of earnings is for the purposes of the proposed points system for entry as a highly skilled migrant for applicants from *(a)* India, *(b)* Pakistan, *(c)* Nigeria and *(d)* Ghana. [68541]

Mr. McNulty: Highly skilled migrants will enter under tier 1 of the proposed points-based system and receive points for a number of attributes including their previous earnings. Under tier 1 of the proposed points-based system high-skilled migrants will receive points for a number of attributes they can demonstrate, including their previous earnings. As with the current High Skilled Migrant Programme (HSMP), salaries earned overseas will be converted at an appropriate rate so that we can equate the earnings of equivalent workers between countries which have different income levels. The precise details of the points-based system, including salary conversion rates, are being developed and will be announced in advance of our implementation of the points-based system.

Prisons

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what checks are in place in prisons to ensure that when halal meat is offered to prisoners as an alternative, non-halal meat is also made available. [67974]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Guidance has been issued to all prisons that when a halal meat or poultry menu choice is offered an alternative non-halal meat or poultry choice must be provided. The halal choice must be clearly identified on the published menu. Aside from local management requirements to follow this guidance regular checks are made by area catering managers.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how long each prison governor had served as governor as at 31 March 2006; who the governor of each prison is; what relevant specialist qualifications he or she holds; what the details are of his or her career to date; on what date each joined the Prison Service; at which prisons each has served as a governor; when each is expected to retire; who has been appointed to replace him or her; and if he will make a statement. [66883]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The table contains a list of current governors-in-charge of each public sector Prison Service establishment together with their length of tenure at their current establishment. The names of Directors of contracted establishments is also included. All other information requested, including that considered personal information for which individual consent to release is required, can only be obtained at disproportionate cost. Information on the career histories and personal details of Directors of contracted (privately) managed establishments is not routinely collected and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Table showing the tenures of governing governors/directors of prisons in England and Wales

Establishment	*Governing governor*	*Years in this post at 31 March 2006*
Acklington	Mick Lees	0.2
Albany	Mel Jones	2.2
Ashwell	Chris Di Paolo	2.0
Askham Grange	Alec McCrystal	0.7
Aylesbury	David Kennedy	3.2
Bedford	Paul Kempster	0.5
Belmarsh	Claudia Sturt	0.5
Birmingham	Mike Shann	5.5
Blackenhurst	Ferdi Parker	2.8
Blantyre House	Dave Atkinson	0.1
Blundeston	Teresa Clarke	2.9
Brinsford	Tom Watson	4.0
Bristol	Suzy Dymond-White	0.9
Brixton	John Podmore	3.2
Brockhill	Amalgamated with Hewell Grange—see below	
Buckley Hall	Susan Morrison	4.2
Bullingdon	Sue Saunders	3.9
Bullwood Hall	Mukhtar Poselay	1.6
Camp Hill	Bob Bennett	3.2
Canterbury	Chris Bartlett	0.1
Cardiff	Paul Tidball	2.8
Castington	Bill Shaw	0.1
Channings Wood	Jeannine Hendrick	1.0
Chelmsford	Nigel Smith	1.0
Coldingley	Paul McDowell	2.2
Cookham Wood	Ed Tullett	2.3
Dartmoor	Serena Watts	0.8
Deerbolt	Alan Tallentire	3.3
Dorchester	Steve Holland	4.0
Dover	Val Whitecross	3.4
Downview	Ian Murray	0.6
Drake Hall	John Huntington	2.6
Durham	Sandy McEwan	0.9
East Sutton Park	Amalgamated with Cookham Wood—see above	
Eastwood Park	Tim Beeston	4.2
Edmunds Hill	Norma King	1.6
Elmley	Helen Rinaldi	0.1
Erlestoke	Doug Moon	1.0
Everthorpe	Gary Monaghan	1.2
Exeter	Mark Flinton	0.8
Featherstone	Mike Bolton	2.0
Feltham	Andrew Cross	2.3
Ford	Fiona Radford	2.4
Foston Hall	Paddy Scriven	9.2

Table showing the tenures of governing governors/directors of prisons in England and Wales

Establishment	*Governing governor*	*Years in this post at 31 March 2006*
Frankland	Phil Copple	3.5
Full Sutto	Bob Mullen	2.8
Garth	Bob McColm	2.7
Gartree	Julia Morgan	0.8
Glen Parva	Brian Edwards	2.8
Gloucester	David Chalmers	5.0
Grendon	Peter Bennett	3.5
Guys Marsh	Barry Greenberry	2.2
Haslar	Julia Killick	0.1
Haverigg	Clive Chatterton	0.2
Hewell Grange	Alison Gomme	2.0
Highdown	Peter Dawson	0.8
Highpoint	Sue Doolan	1.6
Hindley	Ray Hill	0.5
Hollesley Bay	Ken Kan	1.2
Holloway	Tony Hassall	1.7
Holme House	Matt Spencer	0.2
Hull	Steve Tilley	1.4
Huntercombe	Kevin Leggett	0.3
Kingston	John Robinson	2.8
Kirkham	Steve Lawrence	2.2
Kirklevington	Alan Richer	3.8
Lancaster	Derek Harrison	2.4
Lancaster Farms	Paul Holland	0.6
Latchmere House	Ruth Kringle	0.9
Leeds	Ian Blakeman	2.1
Leicester	Danny Mulligan	0.2
Lewes	Eoin McLennan-Murray	2.5
Leyhill	Richard Booty	5.0
Lincoln	Lynne Saunders	2.0
Lindholme	Martin Ward	2.9
Littlehey	David Taylor	0.6
Liverpool	Alan Brown	0.5
Long Lartin	Nick Leader	2.0
Low Newton	Andrea Whitfield	1.1
Maidstone	Jane Galbally	4.0
Manchester	Chris Sheffield	3.1
Moorland	Jacqui Tilley	2.0
Morton Hall	Damian Evans	1.8
New Hall	Sara Snell	3.3
North Sea Camp	Norman Warwick	1.0
Northallerton	Bill Shaw	2.8
Norwich	James Shanley	1.3
Nottingham	Wendy Sinclair-Gieben	1.5
Onley	Alison Perry	2.0
Parkhurst	Carole Draper	0.1
Pentonville	Gary Deighton	1.1
Portland	Steve Twinn	3.1
Preston	Richard Vince	0.2
Ranby	Louise Taylor	0.2
Reading	Pauline Bryant	1.9
Risley	Paul Norbury	3.9
Rochester	John Wilson	0.1
Send	Brian Ritchie	3.2
Shepton Mallet	Nick Evans	0.9
Shrewsbury	Gerry Hendry	1.2
Stafford	Peter Small	0.1

Table showing the tenures of governing governors/directors of prisons in England and Wales

Establishment	*Governing governor*	*Years in this post at 31 March 2006*
Standford Hill	Kieron Taylor	0.1
Stocken	Steve Turner	0.4
Stoke Heath	Vacant from 1 March 2006	—
Styal	Steve Hall	2.2
Sudbury	Chris Davidson	5.1
Swaleside	Stephen O'Connell	0.1
Swansea	Phil Taylor	3.2
Swinfen Hall	Peter Knapton	3.7
The Mount	Steve Rodford	1.2
The Verne	Denise Hodder	0.6
Thorn Cross	Clive Chatterton	1.6
Usk/Prescoed	Phil Morgan	2.9
Wakefield	Dave Thompson	1.3
Wandsworth	Ian Mulholland	0.9
Warren Hill	Stuart Robinson	3.9
Wayland	Michael Wood	1.3
Wealstun	Amy Rice	1.2
Wellingborough	Jim Lewis	3.5
Werrington	Frank Flynn	3.2
Wetherby	Paul Foweather	2.1
Whatton	Viv Hart	2.8
Whitemoor	Martin Lomas	2.9
Winchester	Andy Lattimore	0.4
Woodhill	Luke Serjeant	0.2
Wormwood Scrubs	Steve Metcalf	0.1
Wymott	Jayne Blake	0.5

Contracted Establishment	*Director*
Altcourse	John McLaughlin
Ashfield	Vicky O'Dea
Bronzefield	Janine McDowell
Doncaster	Brian Anderson
Dovegate	Wyn Jones
Forest Bank	Ivor Woods
Lowdham Grange	Guy Baulf
Pare	Jerry Knight
Peterborough	Mike Conway
Rye Hill	Alan Bramley
Wolds	Dave McDonnell

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which prison governors were *(a)* dismissed and *(b)* disciplined in each year since 1997; what the reason was in each case; and if he will make a statement. [66884]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table shows the cases of disciplinary action, including dismissals, taken against operational managers (governor grades) in the Public Sector Prison Service in each year since 1997.

The table shows the number of cases of disciplinary action, including dismissals, taken against operational managers (governor grades) in the Public Sector Prison Service in each year since 1997.

Category of misconduct	*Penalty awarded*	*Grade of member of staff*
1997		
Failure to obey instructions	Final written warning for 12 months and removal from field of promotion for 12 months	Operational Manager F
1998		
No disciplinary action taken		
1999		
Criminal Conviction	Summary dismissal	Operational Manager F
Theft/Fraud	Final written warning for one year and recommendation that he be removed from the work specialism.	Operational Manager F
Sexual harassment/assault	Final written warning for 12 months	Operational Manager F
Sexual harassment/assault	Final written warning for three years and removal from field of promotion for three years	Operational Manager F
2000		
Abusive language/behaviour towards staff	Written warning for 12 months	Operational Manager E
Assault on prisoner	Final written warning for three years and regraded to Principal Officer	Operational Manager F
Failure to obey instructions	Written warning for six months	Operational Manager E
Improper relations with a prisoner	Downgraded to Operational Manager F, removal from the field of promotion for three years and final written warning for five years	Senior Operational Manager B
2001		
Breach of security	Written warning for 12 months	Operational Manager F
Failure to follow financial procedures	Advice in accordance with Finance Manual	Senior Operational Manager A
Assault on prisoner	Dismissal	Operational Manager E
Failure to follow financial procedures	Final written warning for three years and removal from the field of promotion for two years	Operational Manager E

Category of misconduct	*Penalty awarded*	*Grade of member of staff*
Sexual harassment/ assault	Final written warning for three years, removal from the field of promotion for two years and regrading to Senior Operational Manager B	Senior Operational Manager A
Breach of security	Written warning for two years	Senior Operational Manager B
Sexual harassment/assault	Final written warning for five years and transferred to another establishment	Senior Operational Manager C
Breach of security	Oral warning	Senior Operational Manager B
2002		
Unprofessional conduct	Written warning for six months	Operational Manager E
Unprofessional conduct	Final written warning for four years	Operational Manager F
Sexual harassment/assault	Dismissal	Operational Manager F
Breach of security	Oral warning for 12 months	Operational Manager F
Breach of security	Final written warning for two years	Operational Manager F
Unprofessional conduct	Dismissal	Operational Manager F
2003		
Assault on prisoner	Dismissal	Operational Manager E
Abusive language/behaviour towards staff	Written warning for 12 months	Operational Manager E
Assault on staff	Final written warning for three years	Operational Manager E
Unprofessional conduct	Oral warning for 12 months	Operational Manager E
Failure in performance of duties	Written warning for 12 months	Operational Manager F
Unprofessional conduct	Final written warning for five years	Operational Manager F
2004		
Theft/fraud	Dismissal	Operational Manager F
Sexual harassment/assault	Dismissal	Operational Manager E
Breach of security	Dismissal	Operational Manager E
2005		
Criminal Conviction	Final written warning for three years	Senior Operational Manager D
Sexual harassment/assault	Dismissal	Senior Operational Manager C
Unprofessional conduct	Final written warning for five years	Operational Manager F

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff at governor grades at each prison establishment in the Prison Service have been transferred compulsorily to another role in each of the last four years. [69324]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table relates to directed moves since April 2004 until the end of April 2006. There are no figures available before April 2004 and these figures relate only to senior operational managers (senior governor grades in pay bands A to D). Figures for operational managers (pay bands E and F) are not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The number of senior operational managers in the public sector prison service in England and Wales transferred compulsorily to another role between April 2004 and April 2006

Period	*Number of managed moves*
April 2004 to December 2004	13
January 2005 to December 2005	52
January 2006 to April 2006	25

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the performance testing exercises have resulted in prison governors being transferred compulsorily to another establishment; and if he will make a statement. [69325]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The performance testing process is fluid and will require different specialisms, skills and experiences to support it. On occasions this means there will need to be staffing changes. Some of these changes will be the result of directed moves. Details of the numbers or reasons for these movements are not held centrally and it could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of Prison Service staff who have secondary employment as security staff; what action he is taking to ensure compliance with Prison Service orders relating to such employment; what mechanisms exist to ensure the appropriate use of investigatory powers; and if he will make a statement. [69421]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information requested is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people sentenced to more than *(a)* five and *(b)* 10 years were received into prison in each year since 1990; and what estimate has been made of the likely numbers over the next 10 years. [67344]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Information on the numbers of prisoners received into prison under an immediate custodial sentence of more than *(a)* five and *(b)* 10 years is published in:

For receptions in 1994 to 2004—Table 7.8 of the internet tables for Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2004.

For receptions in 1990 to 1993—Table 1.13 of Prison Statistics England and Wales 1993.

The internet tables for Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2004 are available at the following internet address—http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/omcs.html. A copy of Prison Statistics England and Wales 2003 is available from the House of Commons Library. The latest prison population projections are published in the Home Office Statistical Bulletin 10/05 "Updated and Revised Prison Population Projections, 2005-2011, England and Wales". Figures for 10 scenarios can be found in this document. However, projections have not been made at the level of detail that would allow the numbers of receptions in particular sentence length bands to be estimated.

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the prison population was on 31 March; how many unoccupied prison places there were; and in which prisons they were located. [67349]

Mr. Sutcliffe: On 31 March 2006, the total prison population was 77,058 and there was available capacity for 2,203 prisoners. Capacity was available at all prison establishments, with the exception of HMP Haverigg.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the impact of the churn of prisoners on educational provision. [65605]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Home Secretary has regular meetings with the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. Recent meetings have not covered the effect of churn specifically, but have focused on the establishment of the Offenders Learning and Skills (OLASS) project, which will introduce a new service of education and skills for offenders in both custody and the community.

There have also been discussions about the Reducing Reoffending through Skills and Employment Green Paper launched in December 2005, which looks at strengthening the link between education and employability for prisoners. The Department for Education and Skills, the National Offender Management Service and the national probation directorate (NPD) are working closely to ensure that all prisoners have education opportunities in prison and in the community after release. The throughput of prisoners in establishments (i.e. numbers of prisoners received and discharged on a daily basis, also known as churn) has increased significantly.

It has had some impact on establishment performance, particularly in hard pressed local prisons. However, since April 2002, over 150,000 basic skills qualifications have been achieved by learners in prison. In the last year, the NPD in partnership with the Learning and Skills Council supported the achievement of just under 9,500 qualifications to offenders in the community.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will instruct the Prison Service to run a small number of pilot schemes to assess the impact of paying prisoners market rates for their work, with appropriate deductions to cover the cost of accommodation, food, child support and reparations for victims. [65609]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Prison Service already has a scheme at HMP Coldingley that pays prisoners market rates for their work. However any expansion of such a pilot is limited by finding sufficient work that generates income to support such schemes. Under present legislation prisoners cannot be required to contribute directly to the cost of their stay in prison. Section 51 of the Prison Act 1952 requires that all expenses incurred for the maintenance of prisons and prisoners are met from public funds. However some schemes do exist that enable prisoners to make voluntary contributions to a variety of charitable causes, including those for victims. The Prisoners' Earnings Act 1996, which would, if implemented, allow deductions to be made, is very complex and prescriptive and would cost substantially more to administer than it would raise in revenue.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many inmates are being held at HMP Leyhill; how many of these are *(a)* category D prisoners and *(b)* prisoners of other categories; what the corresponding figures were five years ago; and if he will make a statement. [68240]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* There were 341 prisoners detained at HMP Leyhill on 31 March 2006 and 321 detained on 31 March 2001. All were category D prisoners.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost to *(a)* HM Prison Service and *(b)* other prison operators was of litigation in each of the last five years; what proportion of actions were initiated by (i) staff, (ii) inmates and (iii) others; and what action he is taking to reduce levels of litigation arising from the operation of prisons. [66599]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table covers the last two financial years. Data prior to this are unreliable and are therefore not included. Information collated centrally relates to public sector prisons; litigation in private sector prisons is a matter for the individual contractor. The figures exclude employment tribunals. In liaison with the Treasury Solicitor, the Prison Service publishes a monthly newsletter, highlighting best practice and lessons learned, to prison governors and senior staff.

In addition, the Prison Service's Litigation Unit regularly reminds establishments of the steps to be taken following incidents, in order that resultant claims can, where possible, be defended. Trend data collated over the last two years are to be used to identify potential difficulties allowing governors and area managers to take remedial action for the future.

Cost of litigation in the public sector Prison Service in England and Wales in 2004-05 and 2005-06

	Number of compensated claims	*Compensation paid (£)*	*Adverse costs (£)*
2004-05			
Staff	156	2,373,873	867,057
Prisoner	156	2,183,680	674,061
Third party	6	11,869	8,292
Total	318	4,569,422	1,549,410
2005-06			
Staff	160	4,695,086	587,162
Prisoner	181	4,042,743	272,217

Cost of litigation in the public sector Prison Service in England and Wales in 2004-05 and 2005-06

	Number of compensated claims	Compensation paid (£)	Adverse costs (£)
Third party	13	55,143	20,205
Total	354	8,792,972	879,584

Probation Service

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what legislation governs the requirement on the Probation Service to provide a pre-sentence report when a *(a)* magistrates court and *(b)* Crown court requests one; and if he will make a statement. [66852]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 and the Criminal Justice Act 2003 contain provisions which relate to either the role of the national probation service in assisting the court through the production of pre-sentence reports or the consideration of such reports by the courts. In particular, the Criminal Justice Act 2003, part 12, from section 156 sets out the requirements on courts to obtain and consider pre-sentence reports.

Public Service Agreements

Nick Herbert: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress his Department is making towards the Spending Review 2002 Public Service Agreement Target *(a)* four, on public confidence in the criminal justice system and *(b)* five, on protecting the public and reducing re-offending; and if he will make a statement. [67854]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* The spending review 2002 set the following Public Service Agreement Targets (PSA) for the Home Department: *(a)* PSA four, Improve the level of public confidence in the Criminal Justice System, including increasing that of minority ethnic communities, and increasing year on year the satisfaction of witnesses, whilst respecting the rights of defendants. And; *(b)* PSA five, Protect the Public and reduce re-offending by 5 per cent. I have published progress made against these targets in the Autumn Performance Report of December 2005 (CM6707), and will be publishing my latest assessment of progress, in the Departmental Report for 2005-06 which will be published in May at:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/ho-targets-autumn-report-05

Residence Requirements

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of people who will be affected by the decision to extend the period of residence for settlement; and if he will make a statement. [68487]

Mr. McNulty: An assessment has been made based on the number of in-country work related applications for settlement received each year. This indicates that around 45,000 applicants may be affected by the change and will now have to wait a further year for settlement. This estimate has been made subject to certain assumptions; for instance, that applicants who are eligible will apply for settlement at the earliest opportunity, and that the broad pattern of applications will remain the same as before.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what consultations he held with minority ethnic communities about the likely impact of the extension of the residence period for settlement prior to its introduction; what such consultations he has had since its introduction; and if he will make a statement. [68488]

Mr. McNulty: The change in the minimum qualifying period for settlement affects work permit holders and those coming to the UK for employment. Our discussion of the change has, therefore, reflected this and has been principally with organisations that represent employees irrespective of their nationality or ethnic community. The Home Office has regular contact and discussions on migration and asylum issues with representatives of the minority ethnic communities.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what consultations he held with *(a)* employers, *(b)* employers' organisations and *(c)* employees' organisations representing minority ethnic communities on the effects of the extension of the residency period required for settlement rights; and if he will make a statement. [68489]

Mr. McNulty: The Home Office has had significant and regular contact with employers and employers' organisations to discuss the future changes to the immigration system since this increase in the minimum qualifying period for settlement was announced on 7 February 2005. Between that date and the introduction of the change we received no views from employers on the substance of the policy, and the views that we have received since have been about the effect of the timing on individuals, not on sectors of business or employment. Most of the views we receive from employers in the normal course of events are that skilled workers do not stay with them for long enough, which, of course, is not affected by this change. On consultation about the effect of this change on minority ethnic communities I refer the my hon. Friend to my previous answer [No 68488].

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the likely effects on *(a)* the employability of those on work permits, *(b)* employers of migrant workers and *(c)* inward investment of the extension of the residency period required for settlement rights in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [68490]

Mr. McNulty: The change does not affect anyone's right to remain and work in the UK; anyone with valid leave to remain and who is continuing in employment will qualify to remain as before and should have no

difficulty in completing the fifth year. It will, therefore, have no affect on the employability of those on work permits since their employability is linked first and foremost to the skills that they possess, whether there is an employer who continues to require those skills, and whether the skills are still not available in the resident labour market. In some cases an employer may have to obtain renewal of a work permit and to pay a fee. We wish to maintain the attractiveness of the UK as a destination for investors. But our assessment is that the length of the qualifying period for settlement is of marginal importance in inward investment decisions compared with economic factors and the specific investment opportunities available. The discussions that we have had with representatives include those who represent individual overseas investors and these discussions have reassured us that the impact of this change on its own is likely to be neutral.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the merits of transitional arrangements for those affected by the extension of the residency period required for settlement in the UK; what representations he has received on this matter; and if he will make a statement. [68491]

Mr. McNulty: The Government looked closely at the merits of introducing transitional arrangements for those affected by the increase in the minimum qualifying period for settlement. In deciding not to introduce transitional arrangements the Government took account, amongst other things, of the following: the change does not prevent anyone from doing anything that they are currently doing; it does not limit anyone's time with any employer or reduce their stay in the United Kingdom in any way; and that to introduce transitional arrangements for those who arrived when the qualifying period was four years would mean that a desirable policy would not take effect until 2011.

The Government have received representations from the Immigration Law Practitioners Association and from the Chinese Association about the change as a whole and from the Royal College of Nursing about some aspects of it. In addition a small number of individuals have been in contact with the Home Office about their individual cases. We acknowledge that this is will be a disappointing change for those individuals and will provide guidance and advice to those affected.

Security Industry Authority

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many licensing applications were received by the Security Industry Authority (SIA) in each month since January 2005; how many licences were issued; how many applications were returned to the individual for *(a)* correction, *(b)* further information and *(c)* other reasons; and if he will make a statement on the performance of the SIA in handling licensing applications. [56444]

Mr. Coaker: The Security Industry Authority (SIA) are currently issuing around 530 licences a day. By virtue of the backlog (caused by some parts of the industry failing to meet their part of the agreement to submit licences over a 14-month period) the average time taken to process a licence has risen from six weeks for over 80 per cent. of applications to approximately 10 weeks. The SIA are taking steps to increase capacity. This information is set out in the table.

	Accepted applications	*Incomplete (rejected) applications*	*Total applications*	*Number licensed*	*Number licensed, running total*
2005					
March	4,742	4,481	9,223	[1]13,562	13,562
April	3,938	3,983	7,921	4,493	18,055
May	3,801	3,717	7,518	6,644	24,699
June	4,045	3,701	7,746	4,821	29,520
July	5,083	2,849	7,932	2,198	31,718
August	6,270	4,323	10,593	4,859	36,577
September	5,610	3,207	8,817	7,685	44,262
October	7,386	3,645	11,031	4,683	48,945
November	7,975	5,017	12,992	6,324	55,269
December	8,785	4,174	12,959	5,204	60,473
2006					
January	11,402	3,481	14,883	7,857	68,330
February	15,687	2,579	18,266	8,531	76,861

[1] Up to March.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what factors affected the timing of the decision in February 2006 to include security personnel working in alarm control centres in the Security Industry Authority (SIA) licensing scheme; how many SIA licences have been issued to personnel working in alarm control centres; and how many SIA licence applications are yet to be processed. [65808]

Mr. Coaker: The Security Industry Authority (SIA) first provided guidance that individuals who use CCTV to 'solely identify intruders onto a site' would need a Security Guard licence, as opposed to a CCTV licence, in the "Licensing Security Get Licensed" booklet, published in January 2005, not February 2006. The SIA has consistently made this position clear since then. Incorrect advice was given to one company by the SIA's call

centre in October 2005, which was corrected in February 2006. It is not possible to identify how many licensed security guards undertake activities in alarm centres.

Sex Offenders

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions where electronic type tags were fitted to persons after their release from prison for sex offences in England and Wales between 2000 and 2005, the tags were found to have been illegally removed. [64909]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* A total of 64 prisoners are recorded as serving a sentence for a sexual offence at the time of their release on home detention curfew (HDC). The last such offender recorded as released on HDC was released in January 2004. It is not possible to provide accurate statistics of the number who removed their tag. This is because the data relate to the period before the start of the new electronic monitoring contracts on 1 April 2005 and are incomplete. Also, the data of one former supplier are unavailable.

US Extradition

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many alleged offenders have been extradited from the US to the UK in each of the last five years. [69359]

Joan Ryan: The figures for the last five complete calendar years are as follows:

	Number
2001	4
2002	3
2003	6
2004	7
2005	2

Work Permit Regulations

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what period of grace he proposes for doctors already in the UK under the new work permit regulations; [65015]

(2) what response he has made to the request of the British Medical Association for a period of grace for international medical graduates already in the UK in relation to the relevant changes in immigration rules. [65055]

Mr. McNulty: The changes to the rules were developed by the Home Office and the Department of Health together, following a request by the Department of Health. Those who had existing leave as a postgraduate doctor or dentist prior to the changes can continue to use this leave as before. We have also put in place transitional arrangements for all those either in a post or offered one before the Department of Health announced the changes on 7 March. Full details of the transitional arrangements are available in the Immigration Directorates' Instructions on the revised rules on the IND website at www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk The Home Office and the Department of Health met with the British Medical Association to discuss the changes, including the transitional arrangements.

Young Offenders

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many under 18 year olds were remanded to custody by each youth court in each year since 2000; and what percentage of sentences for under-18s this represented in each case. [67350]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Statistics collected from the magistrates courts and the police on persons remanded to custody by magistrates/youth courts are not sufficiently robust to be shown for under 18-year-olds and by individual court. The readily available information, which relates to persons aged 10 to 17 sentenced for indictable offences in each magistrates/youth court, is published in table S4.1(B) of 'Criminal statistics, England and Wales, supplementary tables, Volume 4'. These publications can be found on the Home Office website for 2000-04, as follows: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/crimstatvol4.pdfhttp://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/cs2001vol4.xlshttp://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/cs2002vol4pt1.xlshttp://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/cs2003vol4pt1.xls.http://www.home office.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/cs2004vol4pt1.xls.

WORK AND PENSIONS

100th Birthday (One-off Payment)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will introduce a one-off payment for UK residents who reach the age of 100 years. [69459]

Mr. Plaskitt: We have no plans to make such a payment.

Benefit Recipients (Doncaster, North)

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many residents of Doncaster, North constituency received pension credit in the most recent period for which figures were available, broken down by ward; and what the average payment was. [68304]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is provided in the following table.

Pension credit individual beneficiaries and average weekly amount of benefit for wards in Doncaster, North, November 2005

Ward name	*Individual beneficiaries*	*Average weekly benefit (£)*
Adwick	1,220	38.39
Askern	785	39.08
Bentley Central	1,015	39.98

Pension credit individual beneficiaries and average weekly amount of benefit for wards in Doncaster, North, November 2005

Ward name	Individual beneficiaries	Average weekly benefit (£)
Bentley North	755	34.63
Road		
Stainforth	960	38.04
Thorne	1,390	38.61

Notes:
1. Number of individual beneficiaries are rounded to a multiple of five, average amounts to the nearest penny.
2. Average weekly benefit has been calculated using the numbers of claimants.
3. Individual beneficiaries includes claimants and partners.
4. Pension credit (PC) replaced minimum income guarantee (MIG) on 6 October 2003. Existing MIG recipients were automatically converted onto pension credit on that date (assuming they still met the eligibility criteria).

Source:
Information Directorate Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data.

Claim Processing

Gordon Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many days it took to rate a claim for *(a)* income support, *(b)* jobseeker's allowance and *(c)* incapacity benefit in Alloa in the most recent period for which figures are available. [68805]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question about how many days it took to rate a claim for Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support and Incapacity Benefit in Alloa in the most recent period for which figures are available. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Our measure of the time taken to process a claim is the Actual Average Clearance Time. For 2005/06, the Jobcentre Plus Key Management Indicators for processing claims were 12 working days for Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance and 19 working days for Incapacity Benefit.

Jobcentre Plus does not record separate information for Alloa. However, it is included with the whole of the Stirling area. The average clearance times for the Stirling area in March 2006 are set out in the table.

	Income support clearance time	Jobseeker's allowance clearance time	Incapacity benefit clearance times
			Days
March 2006	18.3	10	14.3

Although the overall Actual Average Clearance Time for Income Support claims during 2005/06 is 11.3 days, the figure for March was 18.3 days. Action is being taken to reverse the recent increase in clearance times in Income Support.

A number of additional staff are currently undergoing intensive training and we anticipate an improvement in clearance times once they come into operation. Our management groups meet regularly to review local arrangements and performance issues, and this enables us to solve immediate problems.

Jobcentre Plus gives a high priority to customer service and we are doing everything we can to ensure that we continue to deliver the high level of service our customers have the right to expect.

I hope this is helpful.

Pension Credit

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of pensioners received pension credit in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* the South West and *(c)* Taunton constituency in each year since its introduction. [64312]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information that is available is in the following table.

Pension credit case loads (beneficiaries)

	November 2003	August 2004	August 2005
Total in Great Britain	2,495,300	3,147,100	3,281,200
Percentage of population over age 60 in Great Britain in receipt of pension credit	20.5	25.6	26.7
Total in South West Government office region	206,600	260,700	271,900
Percentage of population over age 60 in South West Government office region in receipt of pension credit	17.1	17.1	22.1
Total in Taunton parliamentary constituency	4,000	5,300	5,500

Notes:
1. Case load figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. Estimates of the number of people over age 60 in parliamentary constituencies are unavailable; a percentage figure for the Taunton constituency cannot be provided.
3. The answer is expressed as a percentage of the population over age 60 as pension credit (PC) is an entitlement for claimants in this age group.
4. The number of individual beneficiaries is the claimants plus their partners. Couples may include partners who are less than age 60.
5. Pension credit replaced minimum income guarantee (MIG) on 6 October 2003. Existing MIG recipients were automatically converted onto pension credit on that date (assuming they still met the eligibility criteria).

Sources:
1. DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study.
2. Population data: ONS (Office for National Statistics) and GROS (General Register Office, Scotland). Mid year 2003 and Mid year 2004 estimates.

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the average payment of pension credit was in Midlothian in the latest period for which figures are available; [68891]

(2) how many households in Midlothian are in receipt of pension credit. [69199]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is provided in the following table.

The number of pension credit beneficiaries in the parliamentary constituency of Midlothian: February 2006

Parliamentary constituency	*Household beneficiaries*	*Weekly average amount (£)*
Midlothian	3,590	37.39

Notes:
1. The preferred data source for figures supplied by the Department for Work and Pensions is the Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS), for which the latest published data is November 2005. However, as the latest available figures have been requested the figures provided have been taken from the pension credit early estimates.
2. Caseloads are rounded to the nearest 10.
3. These figures are early estimates. Caseload figures are taken from the GMS scan at 17 February 2006. These are adjusted using the historical relationship between WPLS and GMS data to give an estimate of the final WPLS figure. Average amounts are displayed as at the scan reference data of 17 February 2006.
4. Pension credit (PC) replaced minimum income guarantee (MIG) on 6 October 2003. Existing MIG recipients were automatically converted onto pension credit on that date (assuming they still met the eligibility criteria).
5. Household recipients are those people who claim PC either on behalf of themselves only or on behalf of a household. This number is equal to the number of households in receipt of PC.
6. Couples may include partners who are aged less than 60.
7. Parliamentary constituencies are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant postcode directory.
Source:
Information Directorate: 100 per cent. data from the Generalised Matching Service (CMS). Pension Credit scan taken as at 17 February 2006.

Ms Buck: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* single and *(b)* couple pensioner households are receiving pension credit in each local authority area in England; what this represents as a proportion of all pensioner households; and what the average pension credit payment is in each such area. [66538]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information that is available has been placed in the Library.

Post Office Card Accounts

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in which *(a)* postcode areas and *(b)* constituencies holders of Post Office card accounts are being contacted to close their Post Office card accounts under the pilot scheme announced by his Department. [65881]

Mr. Plaskitt: We ran a number of small-scale pilots between 13 February and 10 March 2006, with coverage across Great Britain. Now that the pilots have concluded we are evaluating the results.

SCOTLAND

Block Grant

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the First Minister on the underspend of the Scottish block grant. [69477]

David Cairns: My right hon. Friend intends to meet the First Minister frequently to discuss a range of issues. Government Departments and the devolved administrations are entitled to carry forward departmental expenditure limit (DEL) monies that have not been spent from one financial year to the next. This end year flexibility is a prudent and proper part of the Government accounting system.

Children's Services

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many nursery and creche places are provided for people working in his Department; what charges are made for the provision of such services; and what other facilities are provided for the children of employees of his Department. [67367]

David Cairns: The staff in the Scotland Office are on loan from the Scottish Executive or the Department for Constitutional Affairs and have access to the facilities provided by those Departments.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many people in his Department have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* dismissed for (i) inappropriate use of the internet while at work and (ii) using work telephones to access premium rate numbers in each of the last five years. [67987]

David Cairns: Regarding inappropriate use of the internet, I refer the hon. Member to my answer to the hon. Member for Castle Point (Bob Spink) on 15 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 2091W. The telephone system for the Scotland Office bars telephone calls to premium rate numbers.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what percentage of the staff in his Department are *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled, broken down by grade. [69108]

David Cairns: This information was published in the Office's annual report for 2005 and will be updated in the 2006 report which will be published shortly.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what opportunities exist for people to work beyond retirement age in his Department. [69106]

David Cairns: The staff in the Scotland Office are on loan from the Scottish Executive or the Department for Constitutional Affairs and are able to apply for the opportunities of those Departments.

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list *(a)* the websites operated by his Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65201]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office operates one website, www.scotlandoffice.gov.uk: no reports were placed on this site during March 2006.

ID Cards (Scotland)

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how the introduction of identity cards in Scotland will differ from the rest of the UK. [68446]

David Cairns: I refer the hon. Member to the answer which my right hon. Friend, the previous Secretary of State for Scotland, gave to him in response to his similar question during Scottish oral questions on 28 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 668-69.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Bolivia

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Bolivia about their campaign for the UN to legalise coca. [68170]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the reply the then Minister for Europe my right hon. Friend the Member for Paisley and Renfrewshire, South (Mr. Alexander) gave to him on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 185W. It is for the Bolivian Government to establish the overall direction of policy on coca cultivation, but the UK expects Bolivia will continue to respect international agreements already committed to. Where possible, we hope to continue to assist the Bolivian Government in their efforts to tackle drug trafficking. Our position on this issue has not changed.

Brazil

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions she has had with the Government of Brazil on the use of military-style armoured police vehicles in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and the protection of civilians from indiscriminate enforcement activity. [68409]

Mr. Hoon: The Government have raised human rights issues with the Brazilian Government, including those relating to policing methods. The authorities there recognise the scale of the problem and addressing it is a priority for Brazil's Government.

In April this year my noble Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, met with Paulo Vannuchi, Special Secretary for Human Rights. The two agreed that police reform was a key area in which Brazil and the UK could co-operate, complementing existing Government-supported projects with Brazilian partners aimed at combating torture and improving the police and penal systems. We will continue to work with the Brazilian authorities and with Brazilian civil society to help address the root causes of these problems.

Burma

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his EU counterparts about the case for a total investment ban in Burma. [68180]

Mr. McCartney: There is currently no consensus within the EU to introduce an investment ban in Burma. My right. hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not had any recent discussions with her EU counterparts on this issue.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his counterparts on the UN Security Council about Burma. [68181]

Mr. McCartney: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has regular discussions with UN Security Council partners about a number of countries, including Burma.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the reports recently issued by the Free Burma Rangers about Burma Army attacks on civilians. [68182]

Mr. McCartney: We are aware of the reports. We are particularly concerned that offensives continue in Karen State despite the cease-fire discussions between the Karen National Union and the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) which have been held in the past two years. We call for the SPDC to refrain from attacks on civilians, in line with international humanitarian law, and to pursue peaceful political solutions to the ethnic conflicts in Burma.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what recent *(a)* meetings he has had and *(b)* representations he has received about (i) human rights in Burma, (ii) the status of Shan refugees living in Thailand and (iii) the use of rape as a weapon of war in Burma; [68183]

(2) what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Burma about *(a)* human rights, *(b)* persecution of ethnic nationals, with particular reference to the Shan people, the Karen people and the Karenni, and *(c)* the use of rape as a weapon of war in Burma. [68185]

Mr. McCartney: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has had no recent discussions with the Burmese Government. The Head of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) South East Asia Group recently raised the human rights situation in Burma with the Burmese

Ambassador in London on 11 April and senior officials from the Burmese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rangoon on 20 April.

There is credible evidence that members of the Burmese armed forces are carrying out rape on a large scale, particularly against women belonging to ethnic groups. Both Professor Sergio Pinheiro, the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Burma, and Nang Charm Tong of the Shan Women's Action Network have produced reports demonstrating the extent of this. We have helped to ensure that resolutions at the UN General Assembly have called for an end to the use of rape and sexual violence by the armed forces in Burma.

My right hon. Friend the then Foreign Secretary discussed the human rights situation in Burma, including the use of rape as a weapon of war, and the status of Shan refugees living in Thailand with Nang Charm Tong on 26 April. FCO officials regularly discuss human rights issues with representatives from non-governmental organisations and Burmese ethnic groups.

Chad

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with members of the government of Chad on the planned presidential elections on 3 May; what security concerns have been raised by the government of Chad; what help has been *(a)* offered by the UK Government and *(b)* accepted by the government of Chad to ensure a safe environment for the election; and if he will make a statement. [66689]

Mr. McCartney: We have had no specific discussions with the Government of Chad about the elections which took place on 3 May 2006, but we have made consistently clear our wish to see credible and peaceful elections in Chad and throughout Africa.

As there is no resident UK mission in N'Djamena, our main engagement in-country is through resident EU Heads of Mission. An EU delegation visited Chad on 27 and 28 April and met with President Deby to discuss the security situation in Chad and the forthcoming elections. We call upon President Deby to open genuine political dialogue with the opposition and civil society to ensure a secure environment.

The EU did not provide any support or observers for the election following a UN Development Programme report which stated that the elections in Chad did not meet the minimum conditions required for them to be described as free and fair.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support the UK Government plan to commit to alleviate the security and political situation in Chad. [66714]

Mr. McCartney: As there is no resident UK mission in N'Djamena, our main engagement in-country is through resident EU Heads of Mission. An EU mission visited Chad on 27 and 28 April to discuss the security situation in Chad and the elections. The EU did not provide any support or observers for the election following a UN Development Programme report which stated that the elections in Chad did not meet the minimum conditions required for them to be described as free and fair.

The UK provided £5 million to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme, and to non-governmental organisations delivering life-saving medical assistance and water supplies in Chad in 2005. In 2006, we are providing £4 million to support the humanitarian response in Chad.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the situation in Chad; and what assessment he has made of whether the country will be able to proceed with its scheduled elections. [68569]

Mr. McCartney: The situation in Chad remains unstable following army desertions, attempted coups and general unrest throughout much of the country in recent months. A rebel assault on the capital, N'Djamena on 13 April was defeated, but unrest is likely to continue. We remain concerned, particularly, about cross-border attacks involving both Darfur and Chadian rebels.

Presidential elections took place as scheduled on 3 May. Reports so far indicate that they have been generally peaceful, but opposition parties boycotted the election and voter turnout was low.

Cote D'Ivoire

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of *(a)* the current security situation in Cote d'Ivôire, *(b)* the projected development of the security situation in the run-up to the presidential elections in Cote d'Ivôire, *(c)* the ability of the current UN peacekeeping deployment to meet the increased security demand and *(d)* the UN Secretary General's most recent call to the Security Council for additional troops and police; and if he will make a statement. [66641]

Mr. McCartney: The peace process in Cote d'Ivôire is at a critical stage. The security situation will remain fragile and difficult to predict in the lead up to elections. The UN peacekeeping deployment, working closely with French peacekeepers, has played an important role in maintaining peace on the ground under difficult circumstances. Discussions in New York are currently under way on the UN Secretary General's call for additional troops and civilian police. We believe that an increase in troops is justified, but decisions on the precise modalities must be made on a careful assessment of need.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment her Department has made of the potential impact of the proposal in Cote d'Ivoire to run disarmament and voter identification programmes concurrently on the *(a)* security situation and *(b)* enfranchisement levels in the run-up to presidential elections; and if she will make a statement. [66690]

Mr. McCartney: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him today (UIN 66641) and on 2 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1391W.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken by his Department to assist with reform of the security services in Democratic Republic of Congo, with particular reference to steps taken *(a)* to improve respect for human rights and *(b)* to reduce sexual violence against women. [68175]

Mr. McCartney: Poorly-disciplined and unpaid members of the Democratic Republic of Congo security services continue to commit frequent human rights abuses, including sexual violence against women. We have pushed the Congolese Government, including the President and senior army officials, for an end to such abuses and for those guilty to be brought to justice.

The UK has provided finance and experts to the EU's Security Sector Reform mission, which is helping create a unified army and reduce the massive corruption stopping ordinary soldiers from being paid. The UK is also contributing £3 million for accommodation and sanitation for soldiers in the integrated brigades. Better pay, conditions and training should mean a reduction in troops harassing civilians for food and money.

Equatorial Guinea

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions and requests for judicial co-operation there have been between the authorities in South Africa and the UK authorities regarding the alleged involvement of Greg Wales, David Tremain and Eli Calil in the attempted coup in Equatorial Guinea. [68318]

Mr. McCartney: It is the Government's practice to treat requests for judicial co-operation or discussions about criminal matters from foreign governments as confidential.

The UK remains committed to assisting its international partners in the fight against crime wherever possible.

Falun Gong

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of China about the Falun Gong. [68176]

Mr. McCartney: We regularly raise human rights abuses against individual Falun Gong practitioners with the Chinese Government, including at the biannual UK and EU-China Human Rights Dialogue. Officials from our Embassy in Beijing raised the recent media allegations of organ harvesting from Falun Gong practitioners with the Chinese Government in April. We will continue to raise concerns, where appropriate.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received about the treatment of the Falun Gong by China. [68177]

Mr. McCartney: The Government have received representations from hon. Members, non-governmental organisations and members of the public about the treatment of Falun Gong practitioners in China. Although the Government do not take a position on the nature of the Falun Gong organisation, we are concerned about human rights abuses against individual Falun Gong practitioners. We regularly raise individual cases with the Chinese Government, including at the UK and EU-China Human Rights Dialogue. We will continue to raise such cases where appropriate.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the UK Government are taking to protect the human rights of Falun Gong practitioners in China. [69180]

Mr. McCartney: The Government are concerned about human rights abuses in China, including against Falun Gong practitioners. We regularly raise these concerns with the Chinese Government, through ministerial contacts, our bilateral human rights dialogue and EU mechanisms. We raised concerns of abuse against individual Falun Gong practitioners at the last round of the EU-China human rights dialogue in October 2005.

Indonesia

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made concerning the situation of Christians in Indonesia. [67907]

Mr. McCartney: We regularly raise human rights issues with the Government of Indonesia, both bilaterally and through the EU. We have made clear our view that freedom of religion is an important component of the democratic life of the country.

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not made representations personally. However, through the EU, we have made representations to the Indonesian Government concerning the death penalty handed down to three Christians convicted of masterminding violence in central Sulawesi in 2000. On 14 November 2005, as EU Presidency, we expressed to the Government of Indonesia the EU's regret at the decision to carry out the executions, and urged the Indonesian Government not to do so and to consider the abolition of the death penalty altogether. The current EU Presidency, Austria, followed this up with the Government of Indonesia in January 2006 in separate meetings with the Minister of Law and Human Rights and the Attorney-General, and in a note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The EU Presidency raised this again during the EU-Indonesia Ministerial Troika meeting in Vienna on 27 March 2006.

We understand that the Indonesian Supreme Court had recently reopened the case and that there may be further police enquiries.

Iran (Nuclear Programme)

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make a statement on the status of the Russian proposal for an offshore nuclear fuel supply arrangement with Iran. [69197]

Dr. Howells: The Government understand that the Russian proposal for a fuel supply arrangement with Iran remains on offer. President Putin announced on 25 January a similar scheme for a multilateral fuel cycle centre in Russia, open to all countries. We continue to believe that such a proposal could contribute to resolving international concerns regarding Iran's nuclear programme.

Iraq

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made in the investigation into illegal exports to Iraq referred to on page 125 of the Court of Auditors report for 2003. [68756]

Dr. Howells: I understand this concerns illegal exports of meat to Iraq in the 1990s. Several EU member states have been requested to recover funds that should not have been paid. Investigations into this case are continuing.

Kosovo

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent steps have been taken to assess the *(a)* security needs and *(b)* continuing role of NATO forces in Kosovo; and what the British involvement will be in the EU planning team in Kosovo. [69472]

Mr. Hoon: Kosovo's security needs are kept under constant review by NATO as part of its mandate to provide a safe and secure environment in Kosovo. The London Ministerial Contact Group statement of 31 January 2006 recalled the commitment of NATO to continue to maintain a safe and secure environment through the presence of the Kosovo Force in Kosovo. A copy of the statement has been placed in the Library of the House. NATO participates in Contact Group discussions relating to Kosovo were necessary to ensure that its posture is calibrated both to international political discussions and Kosovo internal developments.

The General Affairs and External Relations Council agreed at their meeting on 10 April 2006 to a Joint Action launching the EU Planning Team for a possible future civilian European Security and Defence Policy Mission in Kosovo. The UK has offered one policing adviser to the EU Planning Team. The Council Secretariat are expected to confirm appointments over the coming weeks.

Lord's Resistance Army

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what her estimate is of the number of armed Uganda Lord's Resistance Army rebels operating in *(a)* northern Uganda and *(b)* the Democratic Republic of Congo; and if she will make a statement. [69299]

Mr. McCartney: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Taunton (Mr. Browne) on 20 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 783W.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what her assessment is of the reports that the *(a)* Uganda People's Defence Forces and *(b)* Sudanese People's Liberation Army have entered the Democratic Republic of Congo on search-and-destroy missions against the Lord's Resistance Army; and if she will make a statement. [69300]

Mr. McCartney: On 27 April there were media reports of clashes between the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) troops and Uganda's armed forces (UPDF) in north-eastern DRC. On 30 April MONUC, the UN peacekeeping mission to the DRC, stated that reports concerning a Ugandan incursion into the DRC were credible. The Congolese Government have since claimed that their troops had clashed with men in UPDF uniforms, on Congolese soil, on 26 April. There have subsequently been media reports that the Sudanese People's Liberation Army may have entered DRC territory in pursuit of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

We take any such allegations very seriously and our high commissioner in Kampala discussed the reports with the Uganda Foreign Minister on 27 April. Minister Kutesa and other contacts within the UPDF have strongly denied the reports.

It is very difficult to obtain authoritative information on the precise situation in north-eastern DRC. The LRA is a highly mobile and brutal organisation. Its members are known to wear stolen uniforms from other armed forces, which may have led to confusion as to the identity of those involved. We are following the situation very closely and continue to emphasise to all sides the need to deal robustly with the LRA while respecting the territorial integrity of the DRC.

Nigeria

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Nigerian Government on *(a)* the destruction of churches in Jigawa state, Kaduma, Banchi and Kano and *(b)* difficulties church leaders encounter in the north of the country in getting permission and obtaining licences to re-build churches destroyed in inter-religious violence. [67636]

Mr. McCartney: I refer my hon. Friend to my right hon. Friend the then Foreign Secretary's reply to him of 25 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 487-88. We take every opportunity to raise concerns about

religious conflicts and human rights generally with the Government of Nigeria and senior leaders from all faiths in that country. Nigeria is a diverse, federal state and conflicts unfortunately occur over many issues. We will continue to make representations to the relevant authorities on the importance of religious tolerance and co-existence and raise specific incidents of religious conflict where they are credible and verified.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of the implications of the constitutional amendment proposed by President Obasanjo to remove the limit of two presidential terms; and if she will make a statement. [69679]

Mr. McCartney: As my right hon. Friend the then Foreign Secretary said publicly during his visit to Nigeria in February this year, constitutional change, done fairly and transparently, is a matter for Nigeria. The UK will continue to support the Nigerian Government's reform agenda whoever the Nigerian people choose as their next President.

Shan Refugees (Thailand)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what discussions she has had with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees about the status of Shan refugees living in Thailand; [68184]

(2) what recent discussions she has had with the government of Thailand about regularising the status of Shan refugees living in Thailand; [68186]

(3) what recent discussions she has had with *(a)* the Government of Thailand and *(b)* members of the Association of South East Asian Nations about the treatment of Shan refugees living in Thailand. [68187]

Mr. McCartney: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not discussed the status of the Shan refugees living in Thailand with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). However, our embassy in Bangkok regularly discusses the situation of Burmese refugees from all ethnic groups with the office of the UNHCR. The Royal Thai Government are not a signatory to the United Nations Convention on Refugees and do not give refugee status to refugees from any of the Burmese ethnic groups, including the Shan. There are, however, more than 150,000 Burmese refugees in the area. We have not had any recent discussions with the Royal Thai Government or other Association of South East Asian Nations countries about the status or treatment of Shan refugees.

Sierra Leone

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government have made in pursuit of ensuring that tribal chiefs in Sierra Leone remain neutral in forthcoming elections. [68147]

Mr. McCartney: Our high commission in Freetown has repeatedly reinforced the importance of political neutrality to the paramount and district chiefs.

We have also made clear to the Sierra Leonean Government that we expect to see open access for all parties to the electorate across the whole country. We are closely monitoring the situation in the run-up to the elections next year and will make strong representations to the Government if we feel that democratic principles are being endangered.

Ensuring credible elections in Sierra Leone is the task of the Sierra Leone National Electoral Commission (NEC). The UK has contributed to a UN Development Programme "basket fund" designed to provide co-ordinated donor support to the NEC. With this support, the NEC has undertaken a campaign to sensitise chiefs to their politically neutral electoral role. We understand the NEC will follow up this exercise with a further education campaign soon.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government have made representations to the United Nations on ensuring that border disputes between Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea are subject to mediation or action by the International Court. [68148]

Mr. McCartney: We have co-operated with the UN military and civilian missions in Sierra Leone and urge the peaceful resolution of the border dispute between Sierra Leone and Guinea. We funded a UK expert to assist the Economic Community of West African States-initiated boundary delimitation exercise on the disputed border village of Yenga.

We are not aware of any active border disputes between Liberia and Sierra Leone or Guinea. We support the work of the Mano River Union to address any differences arising between the three countries.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government are taking towards ensuring that elections to be held in Sierra Leone are *(a)* conducted on a free and fair basis and *(b)* scrutinised by international observers. [68149]

Mr. McCartney: The UK has made representations to the Government of Sierra Leone and the opposition parties to stress the importance of free and fair elections.

The Department for International Development are providing financial assistance to strengthen the National Electoral Commission (NEC) in two parts, the first £1.5 million of which has been disbursed. The funds provided will support training of the NEC staff and will help to conduct the boundary delimitation, voter registration and voter education activities. The UK sits on a steering committee for the electoral process and is working closely with the UN in-country and in New York to ensure wide and fair participation by the electorate, and competent management of the process by the NEC.

We are also supporting civil society preparations for elections including a proposal to use the Radio UN facilities as an independent broadcaster for voter education and public service purposes.

We anticipate that there will be a need for international observers for the elections. We will consider the precise details once the dates are known.

Sudan

Anne Moffat: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how his Department is attempting to secure peace in Darfur. [68669]

Mr. McCartney: The UK is at the forefront of international efforts to bring peace to Darfur. In the absence of a peace agreement we have been a leading supporter of the African Union mission (AMIS) there, contributing over £50 million. The African Union (AU) has done a good job in improving security in the region. But the situation is evolving and a more multi-disciplinary approach is now needed. We therefore support handover to a UN mission when AMIS's current mandate expires on 30 September. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is in constant contact at Ministerial level with the AU, UN and on a bilateral basis with those nations taking key roles in the peace process.

Only a political solution will bring lasting peace and security to Darfur. We fully support the AU-led peace talks in Abuja and are pressing the parties to reach a deal as soon as possible. We have had a permanent presence throughout the talks since March in the form of a high-level Special Representative. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development arrived in Abuja on 2 May to support the negotiations and help achieve a deal. We are urging the parties to reach an agreement without further delay, on the basis of the AU's draft peace agreement text.

Uganda

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of reports that a legal adviser to President Museveni of Uganda used a rifle to intimidate civilians and attack voters in the run up to the election in March. [68410]

Mr. McCartney: A Ugandan newspaper published a photograph on 24 February which appeared to show President Museveni's legal adviser, Fox Odoi, brandishing a firearm over a number of people who were lying on the ground, surrounded by armed police officers.

Fox Odoi was questioned by the police on 25 February and arrested on 26 February. He was granted bail on 28 February. We understand that the Director of Public Prosecutions is now considering the case.

In the run-up to the elections on 23 February the UK made clear the importance we attached to peaceful and lawful campaigning. We look forward to a thorough investigation of this incident. My hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland, South (Mr. Mullin) was present as special envoy of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for the duration of the election.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of reports that the Ugandan army used armoured vehicles to intimidate opposition supporters and injure civilians in the run up to the election in March. [68411]

Mr. McCartney: I refer the hon. Member to the reply that the then Minister of State for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs my hon. Friend the Member for Dudley, South (Ian Pearson) gave to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock) on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, Column 92-3W.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 92W, on Uganda, what assessment she has made of President Museveni's comments regarding the effect of aid donors' decisions on the building of two dams on the power shortage in Uganda; and if she will make a statement. [69293]

Mr. McCartney: Speaking on 1 May, President Museveni suggested that the 6th Ugandan Parliament and donors were responsible for preventing the construction of two dams, which was the cause of the current electricity power crisis in Uganda.

The World Bank and other donors did not block the construction of the Bujagali dam and have confirmed their commitment to support the Government of Uganda's plan to develop the country's energy sector. The Ugandan Government have announced their intention to construct a dam at Karuma but detailed feasibility and financing studies have yet to commence.

As my hon. Friend the then Minister of State for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs set out in his reply to the hon. Member on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 92W, our view is that the current drought coupled with reports of over-abstraction of water from Lake Victoria to generate power are causing the current problems.

West Papua

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of the reports of mistreatment of native Papuans and Christians in West Papua; and if she will make a statement. [69298]

Mr. McCartney: The isolated nature of some areas of the province of Papua makes it difficult to establish a clear picture, but we investigate any credible reports of human rights abuses in the province of Papua. We have no firm evidence of widespread mistreatment of native Papuans and/or Christians. Officials from our Embassy in Jakarta visit Papua regularly and meet local officials, academics, journalists and non-governmental organisations. We are also in regular contact with Papuan groups in the UK. We raise cases of concern with the Government of Indonesia and ask them to follow up substantiated allegations.

We regularly encourage the Indonesian Government to allow access to Papua for media organisations. We understand that the BBC correspondent in Jakarta has been given permission to visit Papua this month. We welcome this.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Attendance Allowance

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what the change has been in the numbers of people claiming *(a)* higher rate and *(b)* lower rate attendance allowance in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years; [69190]

(2) how many people in Northern Ireland are in receipt of *(a)* higher rate and *(b)* lower rate attendance allowance. [69195]

Mr. Hanson: The information requested is shown in the following tables. Data are taken from February in each year.

Change in number of people claiming Attendance Allowance

	Higher rate	Change +/-	Lower rate	Change +/-
2001	52,180	—	20,398	—
2002	53,017	+ 837	19,791	- 607
2003	53,310	+ 293	19,447	- 344
2004	53,040	- 270	18,848	- 559
2005	53,645	+ 605	18,095	- 53
2006	52,246	- 1,399	17,717	- 378

Number currently in receipt of Attendance Allowance[1]

	Higher rate	Lower rate
2006	53,017	19,791

[1] This excludes people with entitlement where payment has been suspended for example, because they are in hospital

Child Support agency

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 315W, on the Child Support Agency, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the new system. [69235]

Mr. Hanson: Further work to improve the IT system is scheduled to take place over 2006 and 2007. The current position with the IT system is one of improvement; as a result of work over the past 18 months, the stability, availability and performance levels of the new computer system are much improved. Monitoring will continue as the improvements are implemented.

Civil Servants (Women)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the percentage of women in *(a)* senior civil service positions and *(b)* general service grades in Northern Ireland was in each of the last five years. [69182]

Mr. Hanson: The information requested is set out in the table and shows the position as at 1 January in each year. It includes Northern Ireland civil servants working in the 11 Northern Ireland departments and agencies and the Northern Ireland Office.

	Percentage of women in the senior civil service	Percentage of women in the general service grades[1]
2002	16.3	64.1
2003	17.1	64.3
2004	20.1	64.3
2005	22.0	64.0
2006	25.1	63.8

[1] Excluding senior civil service grades.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what opportunities exist for people to work beyond retirement age in each department in Northern Ireland, including the Northern Ireland Office. [69233]

Mr. Hanson: For the majority of staff in the 11 Northern Ireland civil service departments and the NIO, including agencies, the normal retiring age is 60 (for some prison officers it is 55). Staff, both industrial or non-industrial, may choose to continue to work up to the compulsory retirement age of 65, subject to satisfactory performance and attendance.

Domestic Violence

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many incidents of domestic violence have been recorded by the Police Service of Northern Ireland in each of the last five years, *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by District Command Unit; and how many victims of such incidents were (i) women in a heterosexual relationship, (ii) men in a heterosexual relationship, (iii) women in a same sex relationship, (iv) men in a same sex relationship and (v) children; [66458]

(2) how many domestic violence crimes were investigated by the Police Service of Northern Ireland in each of the last five years, *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by District Command Unit; and how many victims of such incidents were (i) women in a heterosexual relationship, (ii) men in a heterosexual relationship, (iii) women in a same sex relationship, (iv) men in a same sex relationship and (v) children. [66459]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland defines a domestic incident as

"any incident of threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) by one family member against another or adults who are or have been intimate partners, regardless of gender".

The following table provides details of the total number of domestic incidents and crimes reported to police in each of the last five years. A breakdown of these incidents by District Command Unit is only available from 2003-04 and can found on the Police Service of Northern Ireland website at www.psni.police.uk under the hyperlink 'statistics'. It is not possible to provide information on whether the victims of such incidents are women/men in a heterosexual relationship or otherwise,

or if they are children. Statistics relating to the number of domestic violence crimes investigated by the PSNI is not available.

Number of domestic incidents and crimes

	Incidents reported	*Offences committed*
2000-01	14,325	7,254
2001-02	14,937	7,814
2002-03	15,512	7,961
2003-04	16,926	8,565
2004-05	20,959	8,508

Eating Disorders

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many deaths in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years have had eating disorders recorded as a contributory factor. [69242]

Mr. Hanson: The following table gives the number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland in each year between 2001 and 2005, where an eating disorder[1] was recorded on the death certificate as a primary or secondary cause of death.

[1] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision code F50 for years 2001-05

	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*[1]
Eating disorder recorded as the primary cause of death	3	0	0	1	0
Eating disorder recorded as a secondary cause of death	1	2	1	0	1
Certificates mentioning eating disorders	4	2	1	1	1

[1] Provisional Data

Equality Impact Assessment

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how an equality impact assessment will be carried out in respect of *(a)* the programme for government and *(b)* the Northern Ireland budget. [66392]

Mr. Hanson: Since 2003 the Government have adopted an integrated approach to the publication of both priorities and associated final allocations. The most recent publication, Priorities and Budget 2006-08, was published on 14 December 2005 and Chapter 6 of this document sets out details of how high level equality, good relations and social need impacts are assessed and factored into decision making.

Looking to the future, in preparation for Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 officials are working closely with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland to further develop the methodology to ensure that the assessment of the Government's spending proposals in respect of equality, good relations and social need impacts, continue to comply, to the fullest extent possible, with the equality impact assessment process laid out in the Commission's guidance.

Firearm Certificates

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average waiting time is for the processing of firearm certificates by the Police Service of Northern Ireland; and what resources are available to the Chief Constable to reduce waiting times. [66685]

Mr. Woodward: The Chief Constable informs me that the average time taken to deal with most firearms applications is currently 22 weeks. There are 39 civilian staff and three police officers involved in the various aspects of the day-to-day processing of firearm certificate applications. These figures include six additional members of staff recruited in mid-January 2006 to help reduce the current backlog of work.

Fixed Speeding Cameras

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many fixed speeding cameras in Northern Ireland have been found to be faulty or not working in the last 12 months. [67544]

Mr. Woodward: The PSNI currently operates four fixed safety cameras, all in the greater Belfast area. Over the past 12 months, all four cameras have experienced technical difficulties of some form or another. On each occasion that a fault has been identified, it has been referred to the manufacturer and the appropriate remedial action taken to remedy the problem.

Home Working

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in *(a)* each Northern Ireland Department and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Office have been enabled to work from home for part of the week in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [68010]

Mr. Hanson: The number of staff working at home for part of the week in each of the last three years is:

Department	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
DARD	0	0	0
DCAL	0	0	0
DE[1]	60	61	63
DEL	0	1	1
DETI	0	0	0
DFP	0	1	2
DHSSPS	0	0	0
DOE	0	0	0
DRD	0	0	1
DSD	0	0	0
NIO	0	0	0
OFMDFM	0	1	1
Total	60	64	68

[1] Includes a group of 60 inspectors who are recruited on the basis that they will work from home.

These figures only include staff who have a formal working at home arrangement agreed with their Department. These arrangements may be agreed for example as a reasonable adjustment under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, under the flexible working provisions of the Employment (NI) Order 2002, or to aid a return from sickness absence.

All Departments have previously indicated that local managers may allow staff to work at home on an ad hoc basis. These arrangements are informal and no monitoring of this pattern of working is currently carried out. Information on this type of home working could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The NICS is currently developing a Working at Home policy that will formalise arrangements for working away from the office and will allow all staff to apply to work at home provided the job, the individual and their home are suitable and the business can sustain the proposed arrangement.

Military Personnel

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many military personnel from Northern Ireland have died in each of the last five years. [67078]

Mr. Ingram: I have been asked to reply.

Residential data are not held centrally and cannot be collated without incurring disproportionate cost.

Money Laundering

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will introduce legislation to make money laundering a terrorist-related offence. [67202]

Mr. Woodward: Money laundering of terrorist property (Section 18 of the Terrorism Act 2000) is already a scheduled offence.

Scheduling all money laundering activities would only affect those offences that were committed after the offence became scheduled. As the Diplock court system is due to be repealed in July 2007, this would be a short term measure affecting only a tiny number of cases.

I am therefore focusing on a longer term solution. Consideration is currently being given to how trials in which there may be paramilitary or community based pressures on a jury can be addressed in the longer term. Measures will be brought forward in due course.

Omagh Bomb (Compensation Claims)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many compensation claims have been lodged following the Omagh bomb. [19547]

Mr. Hain: The Compensation Agency received 852 claims for criminal injury compensation and 220 claims for criminal damage compensation following the Omagh Bomb.

Police Officers (Injuries)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many police officers have been injured in the course of their duties in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years. [68101]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is contained in the following table.

	Cause			
Year	*Gunshot wound*	*Explosion*	*Other*	*Total*
2003	2	16	114	132
2004	0	0	136	136
2005[1]	0	111	292	403

[1] 2005 statistics are provisional and may be subject to minor amendment.

Note:
The increase in the figures for 2005 is largely due to the Whiterock riots.

Police Services

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how often he has met the *(a)* Police ombudsman, (b) Police Service of Northern Ireland Chief Constable, (c) Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice, (d) Justice Oversight Commissioner and (e) Policing Oversight Commissioner in each month since he became Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. [68555]

Mr. Hain: I have very regular meetings with the Chief Constable, including a regular session along with the General Officer Commanding and others concerned with security policy at approximately monthly intervals. I have met the Police Ombudsman on a number of occasions and we have agreed to hold formal meetings approximately every six months. I met the Policing Oversight Commissioner in June 2005. I have not yet had a formal meeting with the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice or the Justice Oversight Commissioner.

Rates

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the effect on public funds in Northern Ireland for 2006-07 of the *(a)* increase in Regional Rate of 19 per cent., *(b)* introduction of 25 per cent. of the full business rates for manufacturing companies and *(c)* removal of non-rated basis for vacant premises. [69181]

Mr. Hanson: The increase in the Regional Rate of 19 per cent. will raise an estimated additional £42.1 million in 2006-07 from domestic properties in Northern Ireland.

The introduction of 25 per cent. of the full business rate for industrial companies is estimated to raise total revenue of £18.2 million in 2006-07, an increase of £7.5 million on last year when the rate liability for industry was 15 per cent. of the full bill.

Non-domestic vacant rating is estimated to raise a total of £5.5 million in 2006-07, an increase of £0.3 million on last year.

These estimates may change as a consequence of updates to collection and valuation information.

Senior Citizens (Crime Statistics)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many senior citizens have been *(a)* burgled and *(b)* assaulted in their home in each (i) police district and (ii) council area in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [65505]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is only available by District Command Unit and is contained in the following tables.

Domestic burglary offences recorded where the victim is aged 65 plus

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Northern Ireland	1278	1727	1962	1573	1109
Antrim	19	20	34	20	13
Ards	48	51	76	76	34
East Belfast	99	161	173	110	82
North Belfast	84	89	96	79	135
South Belfast	82	104	101	103	82
West Belfast	24	24	25	17	25
Carrickfergus	10	20	19	11	13
Castlereagh	30	110	101	69	33
Larne	19	25	27	11	10
Lisburn	76	111	108	119	72
Newtownabbey	55	88	76	57	65
North Down	72	94	168	129	56
Armagh	60	70	89	51	47
Banbridge	34	60	54	43	34
Ballymena	87	49	60	61	38
Ballymoney	8	13	26	10	7
Coleraine	33	57	47	34	21
Cookstown	20	31	21	20	10
Craigavon	84	110	133	99	59
Dungannon and South Tyrone	51	50	59	47	44
Down	47	90	93	59	25
Fermanagh	40	43	37	46	34
Foyle	21	48	73	75	43
Limavady	10	12	21	19	6
Magherafelt	14	17	15	7	3
Moyle	8	11	10	9	5
Newry and Mourne	89	107	147	94	93
Omagh	30	36	44	67	17
Strabane	24	26	29	31	3
Percentage of crimes where age of victim is unknown	25.5	11.3	8.4	5.7	2.4

Assault[1] offences recorded where the victim is aged 65 plus

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Northern Ireland	155	155	203	251	253
Antrim	1	4	1	5	4
Ards	8	7	12	16	13
East Belfast	10	10	11	17	8
North Belfast	14	14	18	21	19
South Belfast	9	14	15	7	17
West Belfast	14	12	9	7	13
Carrickfergus	1	0	4	2	2
Castlereagh	2	4	8	7	8
Larne	3	2	3	2	1
Lisburn	12	8	15	13	25
Newtownabbey	7	9	9	14	12
North Down	3	4	10	10	5
Armagh	3	6	7	4	4
Banbridge	3	5	8	11	9
Ballymena	4	3	10	14	18
Ballymoney	1	3	4	1	2
Coleraine	5	6	5	4	12
Cookstown	2	1	1	11	6
Craigavon	6	6	13	17	10
Dungannon and South Tyrone	1	3	4	4	3
Down	4	5	3	3	9
Fermanagh	1	6	4	4	8
Foyle	12	9	6	16	9
Limavady	0	1	0	1	5
Magherafelt	6	0	2	9	4
Moyle	1	1	5	2	4
Newry and Mourne	11	6	7	14	9
Omagh	3	4	6	6	9
Strabane	8	2	3	9	5
Percentage of crimes where age of victim is unknown	16.2	4.9	0.7	0.2	0.7

[1] Assault includes wounding with intent, GBH with intent, wounding, GBH, AOABH, aggravated and common assault. Assaults cannot be specifically broken down by location.

Social Security Agency (Staff Transfer)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on how many occasions Northern Ireland Social Security Agency staff have been transferred to posts against the written advice of their general practitioner that such a move would have an adverse effect upon their health. [68985]

Mr. Hanson: The information requested is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. However, it should be noted that there have been occasions when such transfers have taken place.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Bernadette Graham

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the inquest into the death of Bernadette Graham of Cushendall will be completed. [69460]

Bridget Prentice: Following the conclusion of the police investigation and having sought the views of the family on the holding of an inquest, the coroner has decided not to hold an inquest into the death of Bernadette Graham. A certificate was sent to the registrar of deaths on 23 February 2006 stating the cause of death as disclosed by the report of the post-mortem examination.

Community Legal Service

Julie Morgan: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what estimate she has made of the percentage of callers to Community Legal Service (CLS) Direct that *(a)* have already sought advice on the same matter from face-to-face service providers and *(b)* seek similar advice subsequent to their contact with CLS Direct. [68377]

Vera Baird: This information is not held centrally. However, in the period July 2004 to December 2005, 33 per cent. of Community Legal Service Direct specialist advice clients found out about the service from a solicitor or other advice agency. In the same period, 16 per cent. of Community Legal Service Direct specialist advice clients were either referred to another organisation or their cases continued under different CLS funding.

Julie Morgan: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what percentage of callers to the Community Legal Service Direct specialist helpline have been subsequently subject to a full means assessment since its inception. [68378]

Vera Baird: Community Legal Service Direct specialist advice clients are subject to a two-stage means assessment process. All callers are entitled to 30 minutes of free advice. After 30 minutes all clients are subject to a simplified 'proxy' means assessment, which they must pass if they are to receive further advice. After two hours total advice all clients are subject to the full 'Legal Help' means assessment process, which they must pass if they are to receive further advice.

In the period July 2004 to December 2005, 33 per cent. of Community Legal Service Direct specialist advice clients were subject to means assessment.

Of these, 28 per cent. of clients were subject to the simplified means assessment, having received 30 minutes of free advice. A further 5 per cent. of clients were subject to both the simplified means assessment after 30 minutes advice and subsequently the full signed and verified 'Legal Help' means assessment process after two hours of advice.

Julie Morgan: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what percentage of Welsh resident callers to Community Legal Service Direct have been referred to local specialist advisers since its inception, broken down by unitary authority of residence. [68379]

Vera Baird: The percentage of Community Legal Service (CLS) Direct specialist advice cases that were referred to another organisation or that continued under different CLS funding, broken down by Welsh unitary authority, is shown in the following table.

Unitary authority	*July 2004 to December 2005 (percentage)*
Abertawe/Swansea	38.8
Blaenau Gwent/Blaenau Gwent	16.2
Bro Morgannwg/The Vale of Glamorgan	17.1
Caerdydd/Cardiff	22.7
Caerffili/Caerphilly	15.5
Casnewydd/Newport	19.4
Castell-Nedd Port Talbot/Neath Port Talbot	37.2
Conwy/Conwy	19.1
Gwynedd/Gwynedd	21.7
Merthyr Tudful/Merthyr Tydfil	18.2
Pen-Y-Bont Ar Ogwr/Bridgend	26.9
Powys/Powys	34.1
Rhondda Cynon Taf/Rhondda Cynon Taff	29.1
Sir Benfro/Pembrokeshire	35.7
Sir Ceredigion/Ceredigion	36.8
Sir Ddinbych/Denbighshire	12.3
Sir Fynwy/Monmouthshire	15.2
Sir Gaerfyrddin/Carmarthenshire	37.4
Sir Y Fflint/Flintshire	20.0
Sir Ynys Mon/Isle of Anglesey	22.0
Tor-Faen/Torfaen	16.4
Wrecsam/Wrexham	14.8
Wales total	31.5

Departmental Energy Costs

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much was spent by her Department on *(a)* gas and *(b)* electricity in 2004-05. [51782]

Bridget Prentice: The amount spent in 2004-05 by my Department was £2,027,000.00 for natural gas and £3,978,485.00 for electricity.

Electoral Register (Christchurch/East Dorset)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) for what reasons the *(a)* Christchurch and *(b)* East Dorset constituency was omitted from the answer given on 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 642W; [64464]

(2) whether part of the marked electoral register for *(a)* Christchurch and *(b)* East Dorset constituency is missing. [64458]

Bridget Prentice: The contractors for the 2005 General Election electoral documents storage, and administration of the marked registers viewing and copying service, have informed officials from my Department that they have no record of receiving any reports suggesting that Christchurch constituency had pages missing from its marked register.

There is no constituency of East Dorset. The Dorset constituencies are as follows:

Mid Dorset and Poole North

North Dorset

South Dorset

West Dorset

Of these constituencies, North Dorset has been identified as having pages missing from its 2005 marked electoral register, and this was included in the answer given on 30 November.

Legal Advice

Mr. Love: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what work is being undertaken within Government to co-ordinate the provision of legal advice services; and if she will make a statement. [68413]

Vera Baird: On 23 March 2006 the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) published "Getting earlier, better advice to vulnerable people" (www.dca.gov.uk/laid/betteradvice.pdf). This report notes that different areas of Government must work together more effectively to commission advice that fits people's needs and recommends that the DCA and Legal Services Commission (LSC) work with other Government Departments to ensure that people can easily access appropriate advice across the full range of problems that they face. In particular, the report recommends improving co-ordination between the LSC's CLS Direct service and other Government funded helplines. The report also links to the LSC's Community Legal Service Strategy which sets out how the LSC will work in partnership with local authorities to deliver legal advice services.

Legal Aid

Julie Morgan: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of whether people who are financially eligible for legal aid prefer receiving specialist advice via *(a)* a telephone helpline and *(b)* a local provider. [68376]

Vera Baird: Information is not held centrally on the preferred method of access to specialist advice for members of the public who are financially eligible for Legal Aid.

Responses made in March 2006 to a Community Legal Service Direct client satisfaction questionnaire indicated that 93 per cent. of telephone advice clients were either very satisfied or quite satisfied with the service they received.

Parliamentary Boundaries

Mr. Laws: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the proposals of the latest review of parliamentary boundaries will be implemented; when the next review will *(a)* commence and *(b)* conclude; and if she will make a statement. [68494]

Bridget Prentice: The Parliamentary Boundary Commission for England is an independent body which is required, by the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986, to keep English parliamentary boundaries under constant review and conduct a general review every 8-12 years. It is expected that its present report will be submitted to the government by the end of this year. It will then be laid before Parliament by the Government "as soon as may be".

The next report will then be submitted, under the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986, no less than eight years and no more than 12 years from the date the current report is received by the Government.

Specialist Support Service

Julie Morgan: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many calls to the Specialist Support Service telephone advice line have been made by Welsh residents since its inception, broken down by unitary authority. [68380]

Vera Baird: The Specialist Support Service is a telephone advice line available to lawyers and advice providers working on complex legal cases. It is not available to the public in England or Wales.

Wales

Julie Morgan: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what discussions she had with the Welsh Assembly Government before the announcement of *(a)* the withdrawal of funding for the Wales Specialist Support Service and *(b)* the announcement that the Legal Services Commission's Wales office would be reduced over the next five years. [68374]

Vera Baird: The provision of funding for legal advice services in Wales is the responsibility of the Legal Services Commission (LSC). Senior officials in the LSC regularly meet with representatives from the Welsh Assembly Government to discuss key issues, including the future of the Specialist Support Service and the organisational review of the Commission.

Julie Morgan: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what discussions she has had with the Welsh Assembly Government on the transfer of responsibility for planning future legal advice services in Wales. [68375]

Vera Baird: The Legal Services Commission (LSC) is responsible for provision of publicly funded legal advice services in England and Wales. The LSC is working closely with the Welsh Assembly Government to develop the future accountability and structure of legal services within Wales.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Brownfield Development

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he plans to restate the guidance regarding brownfield land contained in the current planning policy guidance note 3 when it is re-issued as planning policy statement 3; and if he will make a statement. [68146]

Yvette Cooper: We will be considering responses received on brownfield land arising from the consultation exercise which closed in February, in finalising planning policy statement 3—Housing—later this year.

Building Regulations

Colin Challen: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authorities employ inspectors who are qualified to certify installations under Part P of the building regulations. [68589]

Angela E. Smith: The Department does not keep statistics on local authority building control staff who work on Part P or more generally.

Business Rates

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many non-domestic properties classed as *(a)* hotels, *(b)* hostels and *(c)* bed and breakfast were on the Ratings List and liable for business rates in England in the most recent period for which figures are available. [66490]

Mr. Woolas: The number of properties classed as *(a)* hotels, *(b)* hostels and *(c)* bed and breakfast in the 2005 Rating List for England, at 31 January 2006, is shown in the following table. The number for properties in *(c)* are those described in the Rating List as guest and boarding houses. Liability is a matter for the billing authorities.

	Number
(a) Hotels	7,088
(b) Hostels	1,180
(c) Bed and breakfast	7,558

Community Infrastructure

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much of the community infrastructure fund has been allocated; and how much remains to be allocated. [68775]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* In total £193 million of the £200 million community infrastructure fund has been allocated by Government to support transport infrastructure schemes in the four growth areas. The remaining £7 million is to be used as a contingency reserve to address any emerging issues that may arise over this two-year programme.

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will announce further allocations from the community infrastructure fund. [68776]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* An announcement was made on 11 April 2006 of the final tranche of schemes approved under the community infrastructure fund. A copy of the press notice that accompanied this final announcement can be found on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister website at http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1002882&PressNoticeID=2142

In addition the Government provide infrastructure funding in growth areas through the growth area fund.

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 6 February 2006 to the hon. Member for Angus, *Official Report*, column 914W, on departmental expenditure, if he will list each external consultancy employed by his Department in each year from 2002-03 to 2005-06; and what the purpose of the consultancy contract was in each case. [60184]

Angela E. Smith: A list of the top external consultancies by value employed the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in each year since 2002-03 is provided in the following table.

ODPM consultants

Name	*Project*
2005-06	
PA Consulting Group	Firecontrol, Home Information Packs
Serco Government Consulting	New Dimension
Mott MacDonald Ltd.	Firelink
Fabermaunsell Ltd.	Building Regulations Research
IBM UK Ltd.	Planning Portal
Xansa UK Ltd.	Home Information Packs
Top 6 consultants account for 57 per cent. of annual invoiced expenditure	
2004-05	
PA Consulting Group	Firecontrol, Home Information Packs, Best Value Intervention Costs, Skills and Knowledge
Marshall Specialist Vehicles Ltd.	Urban Search and Rescue
Scout Solutions Projects Ltd.	Housing Mobility Programme
Mott MacDonald Ltd.	Firelink, Planners and Trainers
Serco Government Consulting	Frontline Equipment, Civilian Resilience Directorate Research, Mass Decontamination, Urban Search and Rescue
Grayling UK Ltd.	Sustainable Communities Summit

ODPM consultants

Name	*Project*
Fabermaunsell	Building Regulations Research
SOW Ltd.	Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders, New Ventures research
Turner and Townsend	Fire Control Rooms
Hedra Plc.	eBusiness Transformation, Government Office Regional Portal, Small Area Data
Pricewaterhousecoopers	Gypsy Site Grants, Housing and Homelessness Research, Best Value Intervention Costs
Top 11 consultants account for 65 per cent. of annual invoiced expenditure	
2003-04	
Marshall Specialist Vehicles Ltd.	New Dimension, Training, Urban Search and Rescue
Capgemini UK Plc.	Housing Care and Support
XANSA	Grant and Subsidy Payments (3)
Mott MacDonald	Urban Search and Rescue, FireLink, Corporate Governance Planners and Trainers
PA Consulting Group	New Ventures research, Best Value Intervention Costs, Central Skills and Knowledge
Pricewaterhousecoopers	Planning Consultancy, Gypsy Site Grants, 360 degree Coaching, Housing Care and Support, Best Value Intervention Costs, Local Government Research
Top 6 consultants account for 69 per cent. of annual invoiced expenditure	

In addition the Office has engaged a further 100 consultancy firms to provide support to the working of the office. The full list could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The Office in response to the need to develop sustainable homes and communities consultants has been engaged to support the development of system processes. The skills required for these programmes were not available from civil servants. In addition consultants have been engaged by ODPM to support the delivery of projects to enhance the ability of the Fire and Rescue Service to respond to major incidents. The work undertaken by consultants includes radio engineering expertise for the new radio systems for the Fire and Rescue Service; also, logistical support and design for responding to a chemical, biological, radioactive or nuclear incident and search and rescue incidents. Some 60 per cent. of expenditure has been in support of these projects.

Energy Efficiency

Joan Walley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of the report on the thermal performance of multi-foil insulation prepared under his Department's domestic buildings energy performance project. [67158]

Angela E. Smith: I have placed a copy of the BRE (Building Research Establishment) report "The thermal performance of multi-foil insulation" in the Library of the House.

Fire Services

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many fire brigade strikes there have been in each of the past five years; how many brigades were affected in each case; and on how many of those occasions a back-up service was not provided by the Army. [69479]

Angela E. Smith: In the past five years strikes in the Fire and Rescue Service have occurred as follows:

2001—Merseyside fire and rescue service.

2002 to 2003—National fire strike in all fire and rescue services in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

2004—No strikes.

2005—Suffolk fire and rescue service and West Midlands fire and rescue service.

On all of these occasions, the armed forces provided basic emergency fire cover. In the case of the Suffolk fire strike in 2004 armed forces support was deployed to the county but never actually used, as other arrangements proved sufficient.

Government Offices

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost has been of information campaigns undertaken by Government Offices for the Regions since 1997. [68638]

Yvette Cooper: This information is not held centrally by the Regional Co-ordination Unit, corporate centre of the Government Offices for the English Regions, and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Housing

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to increase the number of units of *(a)* social and *(b)* affordable housing in West Lancashire constituency. [64324]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold this information at a constituency level, and outputs in individual local authorities vary over time, as Housing Corporation allocations are made on a regional and sub-regional basis.

In 2004-06, 27 units of social rented housing were provided in West Lancashire local authority. For 2006-08, the Affordable Housing Programme includes the allocation of resources for the provision of a further six units of social housing and 35 new shared equity housing units in West Lancashire under the new HomeBuy scheme. Not all of these will be completed in the two year timeframe.

Further units may be provided under the Private Finance Initiative and through planning obligations.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many and what proportion of homes were estimated to be non-decent homes according to the English Housing Conditions Survey, in each year since 1990, broken down by *(a)* owner occupier, *(b)* private sector rented, *(c)* local authority, *(d)* housing association and *(e)* other housing. [68562]

Yvette Cooper: The "English House Condition Survey 2004: Headline report" (ODPM, 2006) includes details of households living in homes that did not meet the decent homes standard by tenure in 1996, 2001, 2003 and 2004 (the years the survey was carried out). Data for surveys before 1996 are not sufficient to provide robust estimates. The report is available on the ODPM website at www.odpm.gov.uk/ehcs.

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what guidance has been given to Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders about access to meetings, papers and records by *(a)* the general public, *(b)* representatives of local voluntary organisations, *(c)* elected councillors and *(d)* hon. Members. [69217]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 9 May 2006]:* The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not issued any guidance but papers and records are available on request.

All nine housing market renewal pathfinders are expected to pursue a policy of openness and this is encouraged by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the pathfinder local authorities.

Local Government Restructuring (Ministerial Meetings)

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answers of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1217-18W, to my hon. Friend the Member for Surrey Heath (Michael Gove) on local government restructuring and on ministerial meetings, if he will place in the Library a copy of *(a)* the minutes and *(b)* presentation notes and handouts from each of those meetings. [66242]

Mr. Woolas: Notes of each county dialogue event will be published on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister website in due course. At the same time, copies will be placed in the Library of the House. Formal presentations were not made by Ministers or ODPM officials nor were handouts supplied at the dialogue events.

Local Government Strikes

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent guidance the Government have issued to local authorities in relation to contingency planning for local government strikes. [66435]

Mr. Woolas: The impact of strikes by local authority employees is different in different areas. It is generally a matter for local government to prepare contingency plans. ODPM has issued no guidance in relation to the recent strike action. The Local Government Employers has prepared extensive guidance on planning for industrial action, some of which was issued as bulletin to local authorities.

Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Fire Authority

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* retained firefighters have (i) been employed and (ii) taken early retirement in the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Fire Authority in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [69046]

Angela E. Smith: The number of firefighters in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire and Rescue Authority that have (i) been employed in each year since 1997 and (ii) taken ill-health retirement since 1998-99 is presented in the table. Information on ill-health retirement prior to 1998-99 is not held centrally.

Number of firefighters in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and Fire and Rescue Authority

	Wholetime	*Retained Duty System*
1997	265	340
1998	262	362
1999	263	365
2000	263	364
2001	276	371
2002	274	344
2003	273	327
2004	285	350
2005[1]	273	369

[1] Provisional data.

Note:
The figures provided are a snapshot at 31 March each year.
Source:
ODPM annual returns

Number of firefighter ill-health retirements in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire and Rescue Authority

	Wholetime	*Retained duty system*
1998-99	7	2
1999-2000	6	0
2000-01	6	3
2001-02	9	2
2002-03	4	0
2003-04	2	1
2004005[1]	6	1

[1] Provisional data.
Source: ODPM annual returns

Recruitment

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on recruitment, search and selection agencies in each of the last five years. [68344]

Angela E. Smith: The Office was formed on 29 May 2002. The information requested from that date is as follows:

	Amount (£)
2002-03	
ODPM	604,383.00
Agencies	49,462.86
2003-04	
ODPM	684,127.50
Agencies	46,340.83
2004-05	
ODPM	446,548.83
Agencies	16,415.17
2005-06	
ODPM	370,232.23
Agencies	0

Regional Administration

Mr. Syms: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the annual expenditure has been of each of the Government Offices of the Regions in each year since their creation. [64954]

Yvette Cooper: The information is as follows:

(a) The administrative running costs for each Government Office for the period since their creation are detailed in the following table. The table includes the current expenditure recorded for the financial year just completed, 2005-06.

(b) Programme budgets administered by the Government Offices are the responsibility of the Secretaries of State for the relevant sponsor Departments. Information is however contained in GO Annual Reports, as was referred to in the answer to PQ 3342 tabled by the hon. Member for Brentwood and Ongar in October 2004.

Government Office Administrative Running Costs

Amount £000

GO	*1995-96*	*1996-97*	*1997-98*	*1998-99*	*1999-2000*	*2000-01*
North East	8,842.76	8,687.15	8,616.75	8,618.84	8,312.05	8,197.33
North West	9,983.71	9,839.09	9,442.59	13,690.13	13,048.58	13,651.03
Merseyside	4,753.84	4,349.95	4,199.53	12.24	—	—
Total MW-M	14,737.55	14,189.04	13,642.12	13,702.37	13,048.58	13,651.03
Yorks & Humber	9,060.51	8,765.04	8,475.01	8,683.92	8,888.68	9,357.48
West Midlands	10,435.73	10,040.37	9,757.79	9,474.35	9,330.15	9,960.76
East Midlands	7,116.85	6,616.67	6,436.24	6,754.39	6,951.28	7,335.77
East	6,122.84	6,168.97	6,270.62	6,269.43	7,005.47	7,542.48
South West	7,574.14	7,140.74	6,825.73	6,985.03	7,796.87	8,711.38
South East	8,331.06	8,406.18	8,544.99	8,561.40	8,658.61	9,477.26
London	11,106.26	14,106.47	13,458.82	13,238.12	13,715.79	13,860.98
Total	83,327.70	84,120.63	82,028.07	82,287.85	83,707.48	88,094.47

Amount £000

GO	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06**
North East	9,002.29	9,954.46	12,167.24	13,887.09	13,138.16
North West	15,344.87	15,523.52	16,808.94	17,777.86	17,745.45
Merseyside	—	—	—	—	—
Total MW-M	15,344.87	15,523.52	16,808.94	17,777.86	17,745.45
Yorks & Humber	10,036.85	10,943.77	12,480.23	13,453.18	13,494.30
West Midlands	10,295.51	10,662.85	13,381.47	15,286.08	14,497.15
East Midlands	8,244.80	8,713.24	11,153.67	11,937.13	12,530.66
East	8,631.95	9,355.85	12,841.51	15,075.61	13,296.12
South West	10,666.90	11,860.77	13,960.23	14,724.92	14,823.08
South East	10,326.44	10,874.74	14,099.03	14,372.51	14,624.51

GO	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	Amount £000 2005-06*
London	13,161.20	14,038.84	16,654.91	18,870.09	18,483.70
Total	95,710.81	101,928.04	123,547.22	135,384.47	132,633.13

Notes:
1. GO-North West and GO-Merseyside merged during 1998-99.
2. Expenditure for 2005-06—as at April 2006 (before production of final accounts).

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* total budget and *(b)* administrative costs were of each of the Government offices for the regions in each year since their creation; and what the estimated figure is for 2006-07. [66226]

Yvette Cooper: The information is as follows.

(a) Programme budgets administered by the Government offices are the responsibility of the Secretaries of State for the relevant sponsor Departments. Information is however contained in GO Annual Reports, as was referred to in an answer to PQ 3342 tabled by the hon. Member for Brentwood and Ongar in October 2004.

(b) The administrative running costs for each Government office for the period since their creation are detailed in the following table. The table includes the current expenditure recorded for the financial year just completed, 2005-06 and the initial budget allocation for 2006-07.

Government Office Administrative Running Costs

GO	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Amount in £000 2000-01
North East	8,842.76	8,687.15	8,616.75	8,618.84	8,312.05	8,197.33
North West	9,983.71	9,839.09	9,442.59	13,690.13	13,048.58	13,651.03
Merseyside	4,753.84	4,349.95	4,199.53	12.24	—	—
Total MW/M	14,737.55	14,189.04	13,642.12	13,702.37	13,048.58	13,651.03
Yorks & Humber	9,060.51	8,765.04	8,475.01	8,683.92	8,888.68	9,357.48
West Midlands	10,435.73	10,040.37	9,757.79	9,474.35	9,330.15	9,960.76
East Midlands	7,116.85	6,616.67	6,436.24	6,754.39	6,951.28	7,335.77
East	6,122.84	6,168.97	6,270.62	6,269.43	7,005.47	7,542.48
South West	7,574.14	7,140.74	6,825.73	6,985.03	7,796.87	8,711.38
South East	8,331.06	8,406.18	8,544.99	8,561.40	8,658.61	9,477.26
London	11,106.26	14,106.47	13,458.82	13,238.12	13,715.79	13,860.98
Total	83,327.70	84,120.63	82,028.07	82,287.85	83,707.48	88,094.47

GO	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	£000 2006-07
North East	9,002.29	9,954.46	12,167.24	13,887.09	13,138.16	13,055.28
North West	15,344.87	15,523.52	16,808.94	17,777.86	17,745.45	17,400.06
Merseyside	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total MW/M	15,344.87	15,523.52	16,808.94	17,777.86	17,745.45	17,400.06
Yorks & Humber	10,036.85	10,943.77	12,480.23	13,453.18	13,494.30	13,286.28
West Midlands	10,295.51	10,662.85	13,381.47	15,286.08	14,497.15	14,972.21
East Midlands	8,244.80	8,713.24	11,153.67	11,937.13	12,530.66	11,495.78
East	8,631.95	9,355.85	12,841.51	15,075.61	13,296.12	12,672.06
South West	10,666.90	11,860.77	13,960.23	14,724.92	14,823.08	14,766.46
South East	10,326.44	10,874.74	14,099.03	14,372.51	14,624.51	14,094.74
London	13,161.20	14,038.84	16,654.91	18,870.09	18,483.70	17,881.17
Total	95,710.81	101,928.04	123,547.22	135,384.47	132,633.13	129,624.04

Notes:
1. GO-North West and GO-Merseyside merged during 1998-99.
2. Expenditure for 2005-06—as at April 2006 (before production of final accounts)
3. Figures for 2006/07 relate to initial GO budgets as at end-March 2006.

Rise Associates

Mr. Heald: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many tenders Rise Associates have submitted to his Department in each of the last five years; and how many were successful. [69157]

Angela E. Smith: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was formed in May 2002 and information prior to this date is not readily available. Since that date there have been no successful tenders for Rise Associates. The number of tenders submitted during this period is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many contracts his Department holds with Rise Associates which have a potential duration of five years or more. [69158]

Angela E. Smith: ODPM has no existing contracts with Rise Associates.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many applications for regeneration monies have been submitted by Rise Associates to his Department and its agencies in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and what the value is of those which were successful. [69159]

Angela E. Smith: No regeneration monies have been paid directly by the Department to Rise Associates. The Department maintains a record of funding to its agencies, but this does not include details of any payments made by agencies to third party organisations for services.

Rushenden Link Road

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will announce the funding for the Rushenden link road. [68906]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* Officials within Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are in dialogue with the South East of England Development Agency to consider how regeneration in the area of Queenborough and Rushenden can be progressed, and the issue of the Rushenden relief road.

Stock Transfers

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which local authorities have *(a)* transferred their housing stock and *(b)* set up an arm's length management organisation; how many properties were involved in each case; and how much debt was written off as a result in each case. [58937]

Yvette Cooper: A list of all local authority housing stock transfers and arms length management organisations and the number of properties involved in each case has been place in the Library of the House. For transfers we have provided the amount of local authority debt repaid by central Government. The list shows the one off payment that was made to discharge the Office's continued liability, through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), to pay subsidy on an authority's housing attributable debt that remains after transfer. This option of paying off debt, as opposed to continuing to pay subsidy, was introduced in 1999 following consultation and is not an extra cost, it is largely a question of when the liability to meet the cost of HRA debt is discharged. There is no debt repayment for ALMOs as the local authority continues to be support through the HRA subsidy system.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of the communications strategy prepared by the Valuation Office Agency for the council tax revaluation in England. [66315]

Mr. Woolas: The communications strategy drafted by the Valuation Office Agency for the currently postponed council tax revaluation in England was prepared as an input to the formulation and development of Government policy and it is not therefore appropriate to place this in the public domain.

Wiring Regulations

Robert Key: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which professional body oversees compliance with the Wiring Regulations and British Standard 7671. [68525]

Angela E. Smith: British Standard 7671 is also known as the Wiring Regulations. It is a code of practice and is the UK national standard for electrical installation work. The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) is the professional body responsible for maintaining the standard, but it does not oversee compliance with the standard. Complying with BS 7671 is a way of meeting the requirements of the Electricity at Work Regulations and the Building Regulations Part P (Electrical safety in dwellings). These regulations are enforced by the Health and Safety Executive and Local Authority Building Control respectively.

HEALTH

Alcohol Misuse Programmes

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding she has made available for alcohol misuse programmes through the pooled treatment budget for substance misuse. [67423]

Caroline Flint: The Department has made no funding available specifically for alcohol misuse treatment through the pooled drug treatment budget, as this budget is intended for the funding of drug treatment. National health service primary care trusts are responsible for commissioning alcohol misuse treatment according to local need.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to create a separate agency to take forward the alcohol strategy. [67629]

Caroline Flint: The Government have no plans to create a separate agency to take forward the alcohol strategy.

Anatomy Act

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will seek to amend the Anatomy Act 1984 to prevent the public exhibition for profit of plasticised cadavers; and if she will make a statement. [67284]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The public exhibition of human bodies is not covered by the Anatomy Act 1984, which regulates the donation and use of bodies for anatomical examination.

From 1 September 2006, it will be unlawful under the Human Tissue Act 2004 to store or use human bodies, organs and tissues for public display, without a licence from the Human Tissue Authority.

Audiology Services

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the timescale for the replacement of all NHS analogue hearing aids with digital ones. [69356]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: It is for primary care trusts to plan and commission appropriate services for their local population including those who require digital hearing aids.

We have no estimate of the timescale for replacing analogue hearing aids with digital ones. This should be done as part of the routine maintenance programme for individuals based on their clinical need.

Bone Density Scanning

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what routine bone density scanning programmes are being operated by each of the primary care trusts covering Portsmouth and who is routinely screened by each trust. [68434]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not held centrally.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many bone density scanning machines are available in each of the primary care trusts covering Portsmouth. [68435]

Caroline Flint: There is one bone densitometry scanner available to serve the Portsmouth and South East Hampshire healthcare community.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time is for a bone density scan in each of the primary care trusts covering Portsmouth. [68436]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Bowel Cancer

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what funding is being allocated to the roll-out of the bowel cancer screening programme for the financial year *(a)* 2006-07 and *(b)* 2008-09; [63233]

(2) how many testing kits for the bowel cancer screening programme have been ordered for the first year of the screening programme; [63234]

(3) for what reasons Rugby was chosen as the first location for the bowel cancer screening programme; and what resources will be provided to the Hospital of St. Cross to facilitate the continuation of the programme after April. [63235]

(4) which locations are being considered as suitable for hubs for the bowel cancer screening programme; what criteria are used to determine the location of hubs; and when decisions will be made; [63236]

(5) how many people were tested for bowel cancer as part of the screening pilot in Rugby between April 2005 and March 2006; and how many people will be tested in the following 12 months; [63237]

(6) what estimate she has made of the number of lives saved as a result of the bowel cancer screening pilot in Rugby since 2000; and what the estimated gains are for cancer survival rates as a result of the bowel cancer screening programme in *(a)* 2006-07 and *(b)* 2008-09; [63238]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national bowel cancer screening programme will be rolled out nationally over the next three years. Funding for the first year of the screening programme is being transferred to the national cancer screening team in Sheffield, and Wolverhampton will be the first local screening centre. We estimate that around £10 million will be spent on the first stages of the national bowel cancer screening programme. Funding decisions have not yet been made for future years but we are committed to ensuring that the necessary funding is available to ensure the full implementation of the programme.

NHS cancer screening programmes are taking all the necessary action to ensure the successful roll-out of the programme, including the procurement of testing kits. The kit supplier has been notified that the first order is for 100,000 kits.

Five programme hubs across England will invite men and women to participate in the screening programme, send out the faecal occult blood (FOB) testing kits, interpret kits and send results out. 90 to 100 local screening centres will provide endoscopy services for the 2 per cent. of men and women who have a positive FOB test result.

The pilot in Rugby will continue to run as planned to the end of March 2007. In addition, the first of the five programme hubs will also be established by March 2007, with announcements to be made in due course.

NHS cancer screening programmes are currently considering where the five programme hubs will be located. We intend to establish the other four programme hubs by March 2007, with announcements to be made in due course.

24,345 people were tested in Rugby between April 2005 and March 2006. In the next 12 months they will be inviting a further 28,360 people.

We estimate that the number of lives saved as a result of the bowel cancer screening pilot is between 100 to 150. Our expectation is to reduce deaths in the population invited for screening by 15 per cent.

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the representations made by Cancer Research UK concerning the implementation of the bowel cancer screening programme; what steps are being taken by the Government to establish the programme on a national basis from 1 April onwards and what the timing is of such steps; and if she will make a statement; [63643]

(2) pursuant to the Answer of 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2552-53W, on colon cancer, how many of the 217 people diagnosed with bowel cancer as a result of the bowel cancer screening pilot are still alive; how many of the 959 people diagnosed with bowel polyps subsequently underwent treatment for the removal of those polyps; and what estimate she has made of the number of people likely to be diagnosed with *(a)* bowel cancer and *(b)* bowel polyps when bowel cancer screening is fully operational as proposed in the White Paper. [63795]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national bowel cancer screening programme will be rolled out nationally over the next three years. Funding for the first year of the screening programme is being transferred to the national cancer screening team in Sheffield, and Wolverhampton will be the first local screening centre. We intend that all five programme hubs will be established and around 14 local screening centres will be operating, out of a total of 90 to 100 for full national coverage, by March 2007.

We do not hold data on how many of the 217 people diagnosed with bowel cancer as a result of the bowel cancer screening pilot are still alive.

The clinicians in Rugby have advised that all persons diagnosed with bowel polyps have been treated.

Once the bowel cancer screening programme is fully operational we would estimate that around 2 per cent, of all those screened will have a positive FOB test result. Of these around 10 per cent. will have bowel cancer and approximately 45 per cent. will have polyps.

Breast Screening

Ms Barlow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health to what extent her Department took demographic changes into account when developing the NHS Breast Screening Programme. [63999]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is aware of the growing number of women becoming eligible for breast screening, as women born in the post-war baby boom reach their fiftieth birthdays. This increase is expected to peak in 2015, resulting in a 20 per cent. increase in women aged 50 to 70, in England, between 2005 and 2025.

Commissioners are aware of this issue and the need to plan for this in order to prevent a negative impact on the breast screening service.

Additionally, the Department and the NHS breast screening programme are closely monitoring screening activity to ensure the quality of the service is not compromised.

Car Provision

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what cars have been provided for the senior management in each of the last five years of the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire strategic health authority; and what the *(a)* year, *(b)* make, *(c)* model and *(d)* cost per annum was in each case. [64717]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected by the Department but can be obtained direct from the strategic health authority concerned.

Cardiac Care (Children)

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to screen all children for cardiac problems; and if she will make a statement. [65912]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 192W.

Care Homes

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many lay assessors for care home inspection were employed in each year from 1992 to 2006; and at what cost; [63932]

(2) what research the National Care Standards Commission undertook on lay assessors; what its conclusions were; and if she will make this report available. [63934]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I understand from the Chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), which took over the regulation and inspection of care homes in England from the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) on 1 April 2004, that it does not employ lay assessors for care home inspections.

The NCSC commissioned a report on lay assessors, published in January 2003, entitled, "Inspecting with Lay Assessors: What Value? What Impact?". Copies have been placed in the Library.

The report concluded that lay assessors' contribution to regulatory work was valuable, when it was well supported by a comprehensive and appropriately resourced scheme.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the number of places currently available at care homes in the *(a)* public sector, *(b)* private sector and *(c)* not-for-profit sector. [66683]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I understand from the Chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that the number of care homes and places in the public sector, private sector and non-for-profit sector is as shown in the tables.

Number of care homes for England

	Independent	Local authority	Voluntary	NHS	Other	Total
Nursing	3,612	15	364	6	52	4,049
Personal Care	9,821	1,259	3,237	177	207	14,701
Non Medical	13	—	1	1	1	16
Total	13,446	1,274	3,602	184	260	18,766

Maximum number of registered places for England

	Independent	Local authority	Voluntary	NHS	Other	Total
Nursing	160,937	690	12,092	59	1,986	175,764
Personal Care	177,176	32,151	49,879	1,381	3,387	263,974
Non Medical	261	—	16	6	17	300
Total	338,374	32,841	61,987	1,446	5,390	440,038

Note:
The figures provided are the latest extract—21 March 2006—from the CSCI registration and inspection database.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* residential, *(b)* nursing and *(c)* elderly mentally infirm (i) homes and (ii) places were available in Tamworth constituency in each of the last 10 years, broken down by *(A)* local authority, *(B)* private sector and *(C)* charity and voluntary providers; and what percentage of capacity in each sector was used in each year. [43461]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of care and nursing care homes and places was collected by the Department from 1997-2001. The data were collected by health authority and council with social services responsibility areas. This information is shown in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 shows the number of care homes and places in Staffordshire for adults age 18 and over, by type of accommodation at 31 March 1997-2001. Table 2 shows the number of care homes and places for older people with mental health problems in Staffordshire, by type of accommodation at 31 March 1997-2001. Data are not available for the percentage of capacity used each year.

Table 1: Number of care homes and places in Staffordshire[1] by type of accommodation at 31 March 1997-2001

Rounded

	Residential homes			Nursing homes[1, 4]	
	LA	Voluntary	Private[2]	Small[3]	Independent
Homes					
1997	20	30	190	90	n/a
1998	40	20	140	70	120
1999	40	20	140	70	130
2000	40	20	140	70	130
2001	30	20	140	60	120
Places					
1997	840	270	6,960	230	n/a
1998	1,280	230	4,050	190	5,330
1999	1,250	270	3,190	190	5,370
2000	1,060	270	3,360	180	5,390
2001	1,010	250	3,420	140	5,100

n/a = Data not available
[1] Residential data relates to Staffordshire Council with Social Services Responsibilities; nursing data relates to North Staffordshire and South Staffordshire Health Authorities .
[2] Includes residential places that are in dual registered homes
[3] Independent registered care homes with less than 4 places
[4] Data for nursing homes includes nursing places in dual registered homes
Source:
DH forms RA Part A, RAC5, K036 and RH(N) Part A

Table 2: Number of homes and places for older people with mental health problems[1] in Staffordshire by type of accommodation at 31 March 1997-2001

	LA	Voluntary	Private[2]	Small[3]	Nursing[4]
Homes					
1997	0	0	2	2	n/a
1998	0	0	3	2	24
1999	0	1	2	3	22
2000	0	0	2	1	22
2001	0	0	2	1	24
Places					
1997	0	0	32	6	n/a
1998	0	0	72	6	921
1999	0	4	41	9	887
2000	0	0	41	3	974
2001	0	0	32	1	948

n/a Data not available
[1] Data in this table are for primary client group 'older people with mental health problems'
[2] Includes residential places that are in dual registered homes
[3] Independent registered care homes with less than 4 places
[4] Data are for North Staffordshire and South Staffordshire Health Authorities
Source:
DH forms RA Part A and RAC5

No data are available for 2002.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection produces data on the number of care homes and places registered as at 31 March each year, beginning with 2003. There are some minor definitional differences between these data and those for years up to 2001.

Table 3 shows the number of care homes and places that were registered in Staffordshire LA, of which Tamworth is part, at 31 March for the years 2003 to 2005, for adults aged 18 and over. Table 4 shows the number of care homes and places for older people with mental health problems in Staffordshire LA for the same period. Data are not available for the percentage of capacity used each year.

Data for Tamworth are not available separately.

Table 3: Number of care homes and places that were registered in Staffordshire at 31 March 2003-05 for adults 18 and over

Establishment category/Type	As at 31 March 2005		As at 31 March 2004		As at 31 March 2003	
	Number of homes	Maximum number of places	Number of homes	Maximum number of places	Number of homes	Maximum number of places
Nursing						
Independent	70	3562	70	3447	75	3583
Other	4	152	4	152	4	152
Voluntary	1	35	1	35	1	35
Personal Care						
Independent	137	2495	142	2549	152	2729
Local Authority	34	930	35	958	0	0
Voluntary	13	117	35	958	13	117
Total	259	7291	287	8099	245	6616

Table 4: Number of care homes and places for older people with mental health problems in Staffordshire at 31 March 2003-05

Establishment category DE(E) elderly mentally infirm	As at 31 March 2005		As at 31 March 2004		As at 31 March 2003	
	Number of homes	Maximum number of places	Number of homes	Maximum number of places	Number of homes	Maximum number of places
Nursing						
Independent	41	2346	39	2192	39	2165
Other	1	48	1	48	1	48
Personal Care						
Independent	63	1611	66	1699	71	1813
Local Authority	31	898	32	926	0	0
Voluntary	2	45	2	45	2	45
Total	138	4948	140	4910	113	4071

Source:
CSCI registration and inspection database

Children's Health Services

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children aged between four and five are registered with an NHS dentist. [67650]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of children aged between four and five registered with a national health services dentist is not held centrally.

The number of children aged between three and five registered with a NHS dentist in England at 30 September 2005, the latest data available, was 1,014,351.

Note:

Figures have been provided by the information centre for health and social care. The data source is the business services authority and the figures are based on the numbers of children aged between three and five registered with dentists with open general dental service or personal dental service contracts as at 30 September 2005.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what funding the Department has made available for 2006-07 to support health promotion for parents and young children; and whether this funding is ring-fenced; [67651]

(2) what steps are being taken in each primary care trust to provide parents of children aged between three and five with information about *(a)* parenting and *(b)* promoting health; [67652]

(3) how many birth to five guides were distributed to parents during the most recent period for which figures are available. [67654]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: It is for primary care trusts to make decisions locally about how much of their resources to make available to support health promotion for parents and young children. There is no ring-fenced funding to support health promotion for children and parents but the child health promotion programme provides a framework to promote the health and well-being of children. We issue "Birth to Five", which gives first time parents advice both on parenting and on the health of young children, to health promotion units so that they can make sure first time parents get a copy. We issued 421,430 copies between May 2005 and April 2006.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many blood spot tests for hypothyroidism and phenylketonuria were carried out on babies less than a week old during the most recent period for which figures are available; [67656]

(2) how many *(a)* antenatal screening and *(b)* preliminary assessments of child and family needs were carried out during the most recent period for which figures are available. [67657]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what procedures are used to decide which central or local government body has responsibility under the Every Child Matters policy for financing medical and therapeutic support for children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs; and if she will make a statement. [67804]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: It is for primary care trusts in partnership with strategic health authorities, local authorities and other local stakeholders to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services. This process provides the means for addressing local needs within the health community including the provision of health care to children with a statement of special educational needs.

Corporate Hospitality

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on how many occasions she has accepted corporate hospitality in the last 12 months. [67526]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Paragraph 5.28 of the Ministerial Code sets out the rules on the registration of hospitality.

The Secretary of State for Health has not accepted any hospitality since being appointed to her current post.

Correspondence

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Brent, East, dated 23 March, regarding Ms Renae Tilley. [37744]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I regret we did not receive the hon. Member's original letter of 23 March 2005. The hon. Member wrote again on 23 December and I replied on 11 January.

Coventry Primary Care Trust

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the financial position of Coventry primary care trust. [64709]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Coventry teaching primary care trust is forecasting a break-even position for 2005-06 at month six.

Deep Vein Thrombosis

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of deep vein thrombosis have been recorded in *(a)* each region in England and *(b)* the Tees Valley in each year since 1997. [67190]

Caroline Flint: Table 1 shows the counts of primary diagnosis finished consultant episodes for deep vein thrombosis by strategic health authority SHA of residence for the years 1997-98 to 2004-05, the latest year for which data are available.

Table 1

SHA of Residence	*1997-98*	*1998-99*	*1999-00*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA	1,351	1,422	1,410	1,241	1,297	1,262	1,326	1,161
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA	812	911	905	943	920	965	1,195	737
Essex SHA	801	668	714	625	577	612	497	478
North West London SHA	576	528	581	628	612	527	524	452
North Central London SHA	365	353	274	324	343	287	318	279
North East London SHA	570	603	633	579	582	754	717	783
South East London SHA	1,091	2,142	2,234	2,460	1,316	2,114	2,271	2,092
South West London SHA	376	330	257	299	317	335	530	559
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear SHA	661	728	822	721	785	686	795	739
County Durham and Tees Valley SHA	528	622	738	822	865	959	926	809
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire SHA	432	803	797	914	1,049	1,138	1,122	912
West Yorkshire SHA	756	838	741	662	773	719	1,607	1,588
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	1,213	1,321	1,361	1,428	1,568	1,437	1,487	1,316
Greater Manchester SHA	1,365	1,646	1,739	2,118	2,009	2,073	2,173	2,266
Cheshire and Merseyside SHA	1,937	2,140	2,064	2,249	2,115	1,839	1,851	1,727
Thames Valley SHA	901	786	759	746	683	699	748	698
Hampshire and Isle of Wight SHA	1,029	1,137	784	918	1,015	979	1,009	978
Kent and Medway SHA	905	1,190	1,097	845	870	1,016	1,098	880
Surrey and Sussex SHA	1,126	967	818	790	812	832	1,010	1,023
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA	1,238	1,313	2,003	1,899	2,046	1,921	2,184	1,875
South West Peninsula SHA	1,104	1,216	1,264	1,066	1,035	803	828	637
Dorset and Somerset SHA	647	733	737	833	805	1,003	617	715

Table 1

SHA of Residence	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
South Yorkshire SHA	904	854	865	939	1,027	1,079	1,008	842
Trent SHA	1,521	1,703	1,667	1,818	1,856	1,709	1,551	1,531
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA	1,134	1,026	1,151	1,112	833	757	754	547
Shropshire and Staffordshire SHA	908	881	952	934	886	954	965	890
Birmingham and the Black Country SHA	1,367	1,267	1,306	1,257	1,466	1,693	1,750	1,427
West Midlands South SHA	976	1007	711	741	555	650	711	649
Other Non-English or England not specified	793	302	393	396	424	471	400	428

Table 2 shows the counts of primary diagnosis finished consultant episodes for deep vein thrombosis by primary care trust of residence in the Tees Valley area for the years 1997-98 to 2004-5, the latest year for which data are available.

Table 2

PCT of Residence	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Derwentside PCT	33	51	49	52	66	163	167	77
Durham and Chester	58	91	172	158	177	160	140	161
Durham Dales PCT	52	63	80	46	62	70	100	66
Easington PCT	25	35	30	53	46	43	40	40
Hartlepool PCT	39	56	39	78	65	70	54	46
Langbaurgh PCT	61	42	52	57	69	108	93	85
Middlesbrough PCT	95	43	68	49	55	70	62	62
North Tees PCT	78	133	138	158	180	151	131	143
Sedgefield PCT	45	70	64	93	78	73	67	71

Dementia

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her Department's strategies are for supporting older people with dementia to live independently at home. [64707]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The service development guide 'Everybody's Business' was launched in November 2005 as the next step in the Department's strategy for improving mental health and care services for older people, including those with dementia. It builds on the existing service models outlined in the "National Service Framework for Older People" (2001) and the principles promoted in "Securing Better Mental Health for Older Adults" (July 2005). One of the main aims of the guide is that older adults with mental health problems and their carers have their needs met wherever they are in the system, including where possible being supported and enabled to live independently at home.

Dentistry

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what dental services provision is available to patients to obtain NHS treatment once a dental practice has used its unit quota; and if she will make a statement. [65909]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is for primary care trusts (PCTs) to commission primary dental care services to reflect the needs of their local populations. The units of dental activity agreed between a PCT and a practice or dentist will generally reflect the courses of treatment that it is reasonable to expect the practice or dentist to provide over the course of a year taking into account the aim of allowing more time for preventative care. It is for practices and dentists to plan how to spread their activity, including any necessary emergency treatment, over the course of the year.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dental units are given to practices for emergency appointments. [65911]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Primary care trusts contract with dentists or dental practices for total units of dental activity. The number of these units then used for urgent treatment is a matter for the dentist or dental practice.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what will happen to unmet units of dental activity at the end of the contract year. [65960]

Ms Rosie Winterton: General dental services (GDS) contracts and personal dental services (PDS) agreements specify the number of units of dental activity (UDAs) to be delivered each year. The GDS or PDS contractor may carry forward up to 4 per cent. of these UDAs into the following year.

GDS contracts and PDS agreements provide for a mid-year contract review to enable the primary care trust and contractor to deal with instances where activity is below the expected level and agree appropriate action.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of people in each region with no teeth in each year since 1997. [65962]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of eligible dentists in the area covered by *(a)* Yorkshire Wolds and Coast primary care trust and *(b)* East Yorkshire primary care trust had accepted the new NHS dental contract as at 31 March 2006; how many had declined to accept the new contract; and if she will make a statement. [63513]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In the North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolshire strategic health authority (SHA) area, 211 national health service dental contracts have been signed and 63 contracts have been rejected. The signed contracts account for 93.7 per cent. of NHS dental service in the SHA.

Data on the number of dentists signing the contract at primary care trust level are not yet available.

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the percentage of children who were *(a)* registered with an NHS dentist, *(b)* registered with a private dentist and *(c)* not registered with any dentist in each year since 1997. [64032]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data on the number and percentage of children registered with a national health service dentist in general dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS) are shown in the table.

Data on the number of children treated or registered with a private dentist are not held centrally.

Data on the number of children not registered with a dentist are not held centrally.

Number of child patients registered with a NHS dentist as a percentage of the estimated child population as at 31 December in each specified year in England

	Percentage
1997	69
1998	62
1999	62
2000	63
2001	63
2002	63
2003	62
2004	63
2005	64

Notes:
1. PDS schemes have varying registration periods. To ensure comparability with corresponding GDS data, PDS registrations for established PDS practices are estimated using proxy registrations, namely the number of patients seen by PDS practices in the past 15 months.
2. Data for 2003 and earlier do not include those PDS schemes that do not have any registrations, for example dental access centres, and is therefore not directly comparable with 2004 and 2005 data.
3. 2005 data have been calculated using Office of National Statistics mid-year population estimates based on the 2001 census, as these are the latest available.

Source:
Dental Practice Board

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of dentists in England were *(a)* NHS and *(b)* private in each year since 1997. [64033]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A dentist with a general dental services (GDS) or personal dental services (PDS) contract may provide as much or as little national health service treatment as he or she chooses or has agreed with the primary care trust (PCT). Information concerning the amount of time dedicated to NHS work by individual GDS or PDS dentists is not centrally available.

Data on the number of dentists working only in private practice are not held centrally.

The following table, however, contains the numbers of NHS dentists with a GDS or PDS contract in England as at 31 March each year.

General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS): Number of NHS dentists in England as at 31 March each year

	Number of dentists
1997	16,462
1998	16,925
1999	17,471
2000	18,003
2001	18,373
2002	18,724
2003	18,962
2004	19,294
2005	20,088
2006	21,025

Notes:
1. 2006 data includes all notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS, received by the Business Services Authority, up to 3 April 2006. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period, for example, data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS.
2. Dentists consist of principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts have been excluded.

Source:
The Information Centre for health and social care
Business Services Authority

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* adults and *(b)* children in Taunton constituency were registered with NHS dentists in each year since 1997. [64260]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of adults and children registered with a national health service dentist in Taunton parliamentary constituency since 1997 is shown in the table.

	Adults	Children
1997	55,037	19,291
1998	49,067	17,931
1999	46,427	17,619
2000	48,113	18,262
2001	51,370	18,512
2002	53,891	19,022
2003	55,414	19,301
2004	58,263	19,815
2005	57,271	19,124

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists are accepting new NHS patients in each London borough in the latest period for which figures are available. [66851]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists were registered in North West Cambridgeshire in each year since 1997. [66926]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the numbers of dentists in the North-West Cambridgeshire parliamentary constituency each year since 1997 to 31 December 2005.

General dental services (CDS) and personal dental services (PDS)

	North West Cambridgeshire
1997	23
1998	23
1999	23
2000	29
2001	27
2002	27
2003	26
2004	30
2005	34

Notes:
1. Data includes all notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS, received by the Business Services Authority, up to 23 March 2006. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period, for example data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS.
2. Dentists consist of principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts have been excluded from the data.
3. The postcode of the dental practice was used to allocate dentists to specific geographic areas. Constituency areas have been defined using the Office for National Statistics all fields postcode directory.
4. A dentist with a GDS or PDS contract may provide as little or as much NHS treatment as he or she chooses or has agreed with the PCT. Information concerning the amount of time dedicated to NHS work by individual dentists is not centrally available.
5. Data on dentists that work only in private practice are not held centrally.

Source:
The Information Centre for health and social care
Business Services Authority

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists were registered in Milton Keynes in each year since 1997. [68135]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

General Dental Services (GDS) and Personal Dental Services (PDS): Number of dentists in Milton Keynes Primary Care Trust (PCT) as at 31 December each year.

	Milton Keynes PCT
1997	76
1998	75
1999	79
2000	96
2001	100
2002	105
2003	102
2004	105
2005	119

Notes:
1. Data includes all notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS, received by the Business Services Authority up to 23 March 2006. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period, for example data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS.
2. Dentists consist of principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts have been excluded from the data.
3. The postcode of the dental practice was used to allocate dentists to specific geographic areas. PCT areas have been defined using the Office for National Statistics all fields postcode directory.
4. A dentist with a GDS or PDS contract may provide as little or as much national health service treatment as he or she chooses or has agreed with the PCT. Information concerning the amount of time dedicated to NHS work by individual dentists is not centrally available.
5. Data on dentists that work only in private practice are not held centrally.

Sources:
Business Services Authority
The Information Centre for health and social care

E111 Forms

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures have been taken to publicise the discontinuation of E111 forms; and if she will make a statement. [63065]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A major publicity campaign ran from October 2004 to March 2006 to publicise both the withdrawal of E111s and the introduction of the european health insurance card. Activities included the Department's press releases, information leaflets distributed through the travel trade pharmacies and general practitioner surgeries and to 17.5 million households through inserts in local free newspapers, national and local press advertising, a public information film, radio interviews and advertising on photo booths and at Heathrow airport.

Electroconvulsive Therapy

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health in what circumstances electroconvulsive therapy is administered; and if she will make a statement. [57582]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Mental Health Act 1983 sets out the circumstances in which people with a mental disorder who are being treated compulsorily under that act may receive electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). The Act allows ECT to be given to patients who are under compulsory powers when a patient with capacity consents or if the patient's doctor prescribes it and a second opinion appointed doctor agrees to it. People can also receive ECT voluntarily. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) issued guidance on the use of ECT in 2003. The guidance is available on NICE's website at www.nice.org.uk.

European Health Insurance Card

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 389W, on the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), what percentage of EHIC forms have been processed within 21 days. [65768]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Over 99 per cent. of applications have been dispatched within 21 days of receipt. Further information from the customer was needed in the small percentage of cases where the target was not met.

Fibromyalgia

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the incidence of fibromyalgia in England has been in each of the last five years; what treatments are available on the NHS; and what research she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on fibromyalgia. [67168]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Data on the incidence of fibromyalgia are not collected. However, estimates suggest there are around 14,700 new cases in the United Kingdom each year.

People living with fibromyalgia have access to the full range of NHS treatments for this condition. A variety of painkillers are available to provide relief from pain; drugs can also be prescribed to help relieve the associated symptoms of tiredness, anxiety and muscle spasms.

The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body, which receives its grant in aid from the Office of Science and Innovation, part of the Department of Trade and Industry. The MRC is not currently funding research specifically into fibromyalgia although some basic research being undertaken would have relevance to developing a greater understanding of this condition.

Hearing Aids

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Government are taking to reduce waiting times for hearing aids; and if she will make a statement. [69793]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Several initiatives were introduced through the modernising hearing aid services programme to increase capacity to deliver audiology services in England. These include the national framework contract (public private partnership) to bring in additional independent sector capacity, the development of a new degree to help to address the shortage of audiologists and the introduction of hearing direct which provides follow-up care and advice for some hearing aid users.

Influenza Vaccinations

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of those aged over 65 years in the Peterborough constituency are expected to receive influenza vaccinations by the end of winter 2005-06. [52449]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Greater Peterborough Primary Care Partnership reports that 77.5 per cent. of people aged over 65 in the North Peterborough Primary Care Trust (PCT) area and 77.4 per cent. in the South Peterborough PCT area have received an influenza vaccination this winter.

Lupus

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of lupus there have been in Norfolk in the last five years. [64655]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected by the Department.

Mental Health

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the expenditure of primary care trusts and strategic health authorities was on mental health in each of the last five years; what percentage of their total expenditure in each year each figure represents; and what assessment she has made of the trends in the proportion of the NHS budget spent on mental health services since 1992. [65983]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on expenditure by the national health service on mental health services in each year since 1992-93 is shown in the table. The table also shows the proportion of mental health expenditure as part of the hospital and community mental health services (HCHS) budget. The proportion of mental health spend has increased from 11.47 per cent. of the total HCHS budget in 1992-93 to 13.34 per cent. in 2003-04.

The data exclude social care spend on people with mental health problems, and expenditure concerning people treated in primary care for whom a specific diagnosis has not been reached. The figures therefore underestimate the total mental health expenditure.

In order to gain a more comprehensive picture of mental health spend, the Department commissioned national surveys of investment in mental health services in each year since 2001. The reports of four surveys covering the period from 2000-01 to 2004-05 are available from the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk. The survey covering the financial year 2005-06 will be placed on the Department's website shortly.

Gross Expenditure: mental health elements (volume terms)

	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Mental illness day patient	284	298	307	334	380	393
Mental health in-patient	2,626	2,456	2,315	2,264	2,270	2,274
Mental health out-patient	224	247	277	300	395	405
Community mental illness nursing	378	461	449	503	605	676
Total mental health	3,512	3,462	3,348	3,401	3,651	3,747
Total hospital and community health services	30,630	32,461	31,629	32,239	30,196	30,869
Mental health proportion (Percentage)	11.47	10.67	10.59	10.55	12.09	12.14

	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Mental illness day patient	396	391	387	346	361	316
Mental health in-patient	2,267	2,437	2,635	2,661	2,829	2,857
Mental health out-patient	416	441	470	533	689	882
Community mental illness nursing	722	799	886	882	958	1,033
Total mental health	3,801	4,067	4,379	4,423	4,837	5,088
Total hospital and community health services	31,767	32,950	34,444	34,817	36,911	38,151
Mental health proportion (Percentage)	11.97	12.34	12.71	12.70	13.11	13.34

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she plans to publish her revised proposals for a Mental Health Bill. [69397]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1066W.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many clinical psychologists are employed by hospital trusts in West Sussex, expressed as *(a)* headcount and *(b)* full-time equivalent posts. [69345]

Caroline Flint: The number of clinical psychologists employed by hospital trusts in West Sussex expressed as headcount and full-time equivalent posts is shown in the table, which also provides data on the number clinical psychologists across the Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified clinical psychologists in the Surrey and Sussex Health Authority area by organisation as at 30 September 2005

		Headcount	Full-time equivalent
Surrey and Sussex SHA	Q19	356	254
Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Trust	RTK	4	3
East Sussex County NHS Trust	RXD	62	48
Eastbourne Downs PCT	5LR	4	3
Guildford And Waverley PCT	5L5	1	1
Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	RPC	1	1
South Downs Health NHS Trust	RDR	41	28
Surrey And Borders Partnership NHS Trust	RXX	105	63
Surrey Heath And Woking PCT	5L7	5	2
West Sussex Health And Social Care NHS Trust	RW8	130	103
Western Sussex PCT	5L9	3	3

Note:
Full-time equivalent figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.
Source:
The Information Centre for health and social care Non-Medical Workforce Census 2005

Mixed-sex Wards

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many mixed-sex wards there are in each hospital in England. [62501]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not available in the format requested.

Between 1998 and 2005, the provision of single-sex accommodation was measured as compliance at national health service trust-level with three objectives set by the Department. These objectives have been superseded by the core national standards presented in "Standards for Better Health".

The core standards require that:

"Staff treat patients, their relatives and carers with dignity and respect" (C13) and "Health care services are provided in environments which promote effective care and optimize health outcomes by being ... Supportive of patient privacy and confidentiality" (C20b).

The Healthcare Commission will measure compliance with these standards. Previously compliance was measured annually at trust level. The results of the most recent compliance survey (December 2004) show that:

99 per cent. of NHS trusts provided single-sex sleeping accommodation for planned admissions and had robust operational policies in place to protect patients' privacy and dignity;

99 per cent. of NHS trusts met the additional criteria set to ensure the safety of patients who are mentally ill; and

97 per cent. of NHS trusts provided properly segregated bathroom and toilet facilities for men and women.

The small number of hospitals who did not achieve these objectives are building new hospitals.

The 2004 position of each NHS trust was published on 26 May 2005 and is available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk and is available in the Library.

National Service Framework for Children and Young People and Maternity Services Framework

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on Standard One of the National Service Framework for Children and Young People and Maternity Services in England. [68840]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The national service framework for children, young people and maternity services sets out a 10-year strategy to stimulate long-term and sustained improvement in children's health and well-being by setting standards for the care of children, young people and maternity services.

Standard one of the framework is concerned with the promotion of health and well-being, identifying needs and intervening early. It recognises the vital role that parents and professionals play in creating the circumstances in which children and young people can grow up to be healthy.

Neonatal Care

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) on how many occasions babies needing admission to a neonatal intensive care unit were unable to be placed in the nearest neonatal intensive care unit because the unit was full in the last month for which figures are available; what assessment she has made of the implications of the level of provision of beds in special care baby units on the ability of trusts to move babies out of neonatal intensive care units; and if she will make a statement; [67864]

(2) how many *(a)* neo-natal intensive care beds and *(b)* special care baby unit beds there were in the NHS in (i) 1995 and (ii) 2005; and in which hospitals those beds were provided in each year. [67865]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested on the number of occasions babies needing admission to a neonatal intensive care unit were unable to be placed in the nearest unit because it was full is not collected centrally. It is for local neonatal networks and hospital trusts to determine the appropriate number of special care baby cots to ensure there is provision to enable those babies no longer requiring neonatal intensive care to be moved down. Strategic health authority areas will increase or decrease cots to reflect demand. Information on the number of neonatal intensive care cots in 2004-05 by national health service trust has been placed in the Library. Information on the number of neonatal intensive care cots in 1995 and the number of special care baby cots is not collected centrally.

Obesity

Dr. Desmond Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what recent research her Department has examined on the management of obesity in adolescents through the use of beverages containing calorie-free sweeteners; and if she will make a statement; [67827]

(2) if she will make it her policy to encourage drink manufacturers further to promote the use of calorie-free sweeteners in soft drinks marketed to children. [67831]

Caroline Flint: The Department has not examined any specific research on the impact on obesity of using beverages containing calorie-free sweeteners. Research has been carried out in the United States of America, and published in the *Official Journal of American Academy of Paediatrics*, on the effects of decreasing consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks on body weight in adolescents. The available evidence on the relationship between sugar and body weight is not clear and more evidence of an association is required before definitive conclusions can be drawn.

Calorie-free soft drinks contribute to consumer choice and current consumption levels of artificial sweeteners are within safe limits. The Government's healthy eating advice remains that consumers should drink plenty of water, or other fluids, daily, and to drink fewer sugary soft and fizzy drinks.

The Food Standards Agency and Department have published guidance for schools on practical ways of developing approaches that provide healthy drinks and snacks. This encourages schools to provide, in addition to drinking and bottled water, other drinks which provide a nutritional benefit to pupils, such as fruit juices and milk-based drinks.

Osteoporosis

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to extend the availability of osteoporosis bone density scanning; and if she will make a statement. [67426]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In 2005-06, £3 million was allocated to the national health service for increasing capacity for bone density scanning. A further £17 million will be made available over two years to build on this capacity.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has for the management of osteoporosis services after the amalgamation of primary care trusts and strategic health authorities in the Portsmouth area. [68432]

Caroline Flint: It is for primary care trusts in partnership with strategic health authorities, local authorities and other local stakeholders to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has for a fully integrated falls and osteoporosis service in the Portsmouth area. [68433]

Caroline Flint: It is for primary care trusts (PCT) in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services

I understand that Portsmouth City PCT, in partnership with social services, the ambulance service and other key stakeholders has been developing an integrated falls prevention and bone health (osteoporosis) service since the publication of the national service framework for older people in 2001 and it has achieved all of the milestones.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women in the primary care trust areas covering Portsmouth are estimated to have osteoporosis. [68437]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not held centrally.

Ovarian Cancer

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will ask the National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence to issue guidance on the use of intraperitoneal chemotherapy for patients with stage three ovarian cancer; and what assessment she has made of the potential impact on survival rates in England of such treatment. [64842]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has no plans to ask the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to issue guidance on the use of intraperitoneal chemotherapy for patients with stage three ovarian cancer or assess the potential impact on survival rates in England of such treatment. However, in March 2005, NICE issued interventional procedures guidance on complete cytoreduction and heated intraperitoneal intraoperative chemotherapy (Sugarbaker technique) for peritoneal carcinomatosis.

Peritoneal metastases commonly result from the regional spread of gastrointestinal, gynaecological and other cancers. NICE recommended that current evidence on the safety and efficacy of this technique for peritoneal carcinomatosis

"does not appear adequate for it to be used without special arrangements for consent and for audit or research".

More details on this guidance can be found on NICE's website at: www.nice.org.uk

Members of the public and professionals are free to make suggestions on possible topics for interventional procedure guidance via NICE's website.

Personal Health Guides

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many personal health guides have been produced in each primary care trust area in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available; and at what cost. [67419]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not held centrally.

Psychiatric Secure Accommodation

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many women found guilty under the Mental Health and Criminal Justice Acts have been assessed to need psychiatric secure accommodation but have been placed in prison instead because of lack of such accommodation in each of the last 10 years. [54837]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Sentencing is a matter for the courts and account should be taken of a woman's mental health needs at the time sentencing occurs.

Information is not collected on how many women have been convicted of a criminal offence, assessed to need psychiatric secure accommodation, but sent to prison instead because there was no secure hospital bed available for them.

It would not be possible to identify whether the reason was absence of a suitable bed or the judge rejected the recommendation and chose imprisonment instead, if information was collected on these cases.

Under the Criminal Procedure (Insanity) Act 1964, people who are not fit to plead for reasons of severe mental ill health are never sent to prison.

Pulmonary Hypertension

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to ensure that all those diagnosed with pulmonary hypertension receive adequate treatment without waiting for the treatment to be approved by the local primary care trust. [65531]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is currently appraising treatments for pulmonary arterial hypertension and is expecting to issue guidance to the national health service in May 2008. The Department has made it clear that funding for licensed treatments should not be withheld because guidance from NICE is unavailable. In these circumstances, we expect primary care trusts to take full account of available evidence when reaching funding decisions.

Lead clinicians from pulmonary hypertension centres will be meeting to develop a national protocol on pulmonary hypertension therapy.

Queen Mary's Hospital Trust, Sidcup

Derek Conway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the operational impact of the budget adjustments levied by her Department on Queen Mary's Hospital Trust, Sidcup, in respect of budgetary overspend. [67380]

Caroline Flint: The Department has not made any budget adjustments to Queen Mary's Hospital National Health Service Trust in respect of any overspend the trust is experiencing.

Derek Conway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been paid by her Department to Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup *(a)* in each of the last

three financial years and *(b)* for 2006-07; and what that sum would be if the hospital had foundation hospital status. [67384]

Caroline Flint: National health service trusts do not normally receive funding from the Department, but receive income for the provision of services from commissioners, principally from primary care trusts (PCTs).

Figures shown in the table are for the Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust and are total income including all income from activities and all other operating income for each year 2002-03 to 2004-05. 2004-05 is the latest year for which data is available. The Department has no figures relating to estimates for 2005-06 or 2006-07.

Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust - total income

	£000
2002-03	77,459
2003-04	86,540
2004-05	93,762

Source:
Audited summarisation schedules of the Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust.

NHS foundation trust status does not in itself change how much PCTs wish to allocate trusts for specific services.

Residential Care Funding (Stoke-on-Trent)

Mr. Flello: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much Stoke-on-Trent Social Services department received from Government for the provision of residential care for *(a)* 2005-06 and *(b)* 2006-07. [66872]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department does not hold this information nationally or for individual local authorities. Council funding for adult social services is derived from a number of sources: a share of overall formula grant allocated by the Department for Communities and Local Government, specific grants distributed by the Department, revenue from council tax, income from fees and charges and local decision making.

As most of the Government funding for adult social care is allocated without conditions, it is not possible to identify the proportion of that funding that may be attributable to residential care. Local authorities have a significant degree of flexibility to manage and direct their resources in accordance with local priorities and the needs of the communities to which they are accountable.

Sandwell and West Birmingham Acute Trust

Mr. Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the job titles and the salaries of employees of Sandwell and West Birmingham Acute Trust earning more than £90,000 per annum. [66501]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Title	*Salary (£)*
Chief executive	136,740
Director of finance	117,322
Health care purchasing consortium: chief executive	122,537
Health care purchasing consortium: director	93,526
23 consultants (surgeons, physicians and others)	94,000

Notes:
The figures shown are based on basic salary and do not include allowances. Data includes all employees of the trust paid more than £90,000 per annum including consultant staff and senior managers of other organisations hosted by the trust on behalf of the wider health economy and therefore not part of the trust's management structure.

Mr. Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the estimated costs are of the Sandwell and West Birmingham Acute NHS Trust's 2010 Project for financial years *(a)* 2006-07, *(b)* 2007-08 and *(c)* 2008-09, broken down by staffing and other costs; [66502]

(2) what the estimated level of public expenditure is for *(a)* Sandwell and West Birmingham Acute and *(b)* Sandwell Primary Care NHS Trusts' 2010 project over the next three financial years; [66503]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The NHS Bank has allocated a total of £10 million to support the costs of taking the Towards 2010 programme up to the preparation of a full business case in 2008-09. Of this sum, £2 million was drawn down during 2005-06. The estimated draw down of the remaining funding is shown in the table.

	Pay	*Non-pay*	*£000 Total*
2006-07	440	1,060	1,500
2007-08	600	2,400	3,000
2008-09	700	2,800	3,500

The bulk of the non-pay expenditure will be required to meet the cost of securing specialist advice and expertise in areas such as town planning, building design, private finance initiative procurement and financial modelling.

Self-harm

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what role her Department has played in the six month trial at St. George's psychiatric hospital in Stafford into ways of treating people who self-harm; and if she will make a statement. [62270]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The pilot being undertaken by South Staffordshire Healthcare National Health Service Trust is part of a joint Department and National Institute for Mental Health in England (NIMHE) exercise, which started in January 2006 and is expected to run until autumn.

The Department and NIMHE are jointly exploring the management of self-injury, focusing on adult service users, predominantly female, who self-injure as a coping mechanism, or survival strategy. The Department/NIMHE exercise will ascertain the level of local and regional

support and the evidence base for adopting a harm-reduction approach. In addition, the exercise will judge the appropriateness, with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, of developing guidelines and training to facilitate a harm minimisation approach amongst service providers.

Sexual Health

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funds were allocated to the *(a)* Greater Derbyshire and *(b)* Central Derby Primary Care Trust for the treatment of sexually transmitted infections in each financial year between 2000-01 and 2005-06. [67631]

Caroline Flint: Primary care trusts (PCTs) commission services with the funds allocated to them to meet the needs of their populations. This includes the commissioning of sexual health services. Funding for PCTs to meet these commitments such as those in the White Paper "Choosing Health" formed part of their overall allocations.

University Hospital of North Staffordshire

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated loss of income to the University Hospital of North Staffordshire is from work contracted out to independent sector treatment and diagnostic centres in the year ending 31 March 2006. [62912]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This is a matter for the local health community.

Venous Thromboembolism

John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects the expert panel on venous thromboembolism to report its findings on implementing the Health Select Committee's recommendations on the prevention of venous thromboembolism in hospitalised patients. [69282]

Caroline Flint: In their terms of reference the independent expert working group on the prevention of venous thromboembolism in hospitalised patients were asked to submit their report and recommendations to the Chief Medical Officer by July 2006 and earlier if possible.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time was between referral and treatment for NHS cancer patients in *(a)* England, *(b)* Somerset and *(c)* Taunton constituency in the latest period for which figures are available. [64310]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Average waiting times for the treatment of cancer patients are not collected centrally. A cancer waiting times standard of a maximum wait of 31 days from diagnosis to first cancer treatment was introduced for all cancer patients from December 2005. Data showing progress towards this standard for the period October to December 2005 show that in England 96.8 per cent. of all cancer patients were treated within this standard and 98.9 per cent. in the Taunton and Somerset National Health Service Trust.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 11 May 2006

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Avian Quarantine

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which recommendations from the report of the Independent Review of Avian Quarantine have been implemented. [69413]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government and the Devolved Administrations published their response to the Independent Review of UK Avian Quarantine on 19 April. This is available on the Defra website: http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/control/avianquarantine/pov-strategy/index.htm

The Government and the Devolved Administrations either accept, or accept in principle, 29 of the 32 recommendations. However, some of the responses are preliminary, pending further consultation with stakeholders or the completion of further studies. For many of the recommendations, the European Commission would be responsible for taking forward any necessary action. Two of the recommendations require further consideration, and one recommendation regarding pet birds has been rejected. These are detailed in the Government response.

There is currently an EU ban on imports of captive wild birds, which is due to expire on 31 July. A decision on whether to extend the ban will be taken at the EU Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health in June.

The key elements of the Government response are currently being implemented and will be in place before imports resume. In addition, all approved quarantine premises will need to be reassessed against revised standards before they can accept any birds into quarantine.

In April 2005 the European Commission requested the European Food Safety Authority to carry out a review of the animal health and welfare aspects of imports of captive wild birds, which is due to report in October 2006. This will inform EU policy and we await their opinion with interest.

Bovine Tuberculosis

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what response he has made to the advice from the Science Advisory Council on bovine tuberculosis; [54634]

(2) when he will answer question 54634 tabled by the hon. Member for Portsmouth South on 24 February 2006. [69666]

Mr. Bradshaw: Science Advisory Council (SAC) advice on bovine TB was taken into consideration by the Chief Scientific Advisor when formulating his guidance to Ministers on new measures to tackle the disease, announced on 15 December 2005.

Further advice was provided on 20 December 2005, following the publication of interim results of the Randomised Badger Culling Trial (RBCT).

Defra provided the SAC with an update on bovine TB activity at a meeting on 12 January 2006. Draft minutes of the meeting are available on the Defra website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/science/how/advisory06a.htm.

Case Control Study

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will expand the farm management questionnaire in the Case Control Study 2005 (CCS 2005) to include more farmers and landowners in the survey and to add additional animal health officers as participating bodies. [68654]

Mr. Bradshaw: Data collection for the Case Control Study 2005 (CCS 2005) has been completed. The study was put in place at the request of the Independent Scientific Group on Cattle TB (ISG) to gather data on TB risk factors.

CCS 2005 was designed to be a one-year study only, in order to collect data in time for analysis and reporting by the ISG. The ISG's work is due to conclude in March 2007.

Dairy Industry

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment he has made of the *(a)* operation and *(b)* profitability of the dairy market; and if he will make a statement. [66106]

Barry Gardiner: The Department has not made an assessment of the operation or profitability of the dairy market. However, the Milk Development Council publishes a report on an annual basis which examines dairy supply chain margins. The last report covering 2004-05 showed that dairy supply chain margins did not change significantly from the year before. Dairy farm income rose slightly as a result of marginally higher farmgate prices and the payment of the dairy premium. Processor margins varied during the period. Retail margins generally continued to increase (a Europe-wide phenomenon).

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment he has made of *(a)* the pattern of volume output in the milk year and *(b)* levels of profit derived at each stage of the dairy food chain. [66110]

Barry Gardiner: Final calculations about milk production are still being made, but although it appears that wholesale milk production was lower in 2005-06 than 2004-05, it is too early to tell whether this

is a long term trend or has been caused by weather, restructuring etc. The UK is more often under quota than over it and it must be remembered that quota is a limit on production and not a target.

The Department has not made an assessment of the operation or profitability of the dairy market. However, the Milk Development Council publishes a report on an annual basis which examines dairy supply chain margins. The last report covering 2004-05 showed that dairy supply chain margins did not change significantly from the year before. Dairy farm income rose slightly as a result of marginally higher farmgate prices and the payment of the dairy premium. Processor margins varied during the period. Retail margins generally continued to increase (a Europe-wide phenomenon).

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what his policy is on milk price *(a)* regulation and *(b)* indexing. [66111]

Barry Gardiner: We believe the market must determine prices. Provided competition law is respected, the Government cannot and do not get involved in price negotiations.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will make it his policy to establish a regulator of the dairy market. [66112]

Barry Gardiner: The Government supported the conclusion of the Environment, Rood and Rural Affairs Committee in 2004 that there was no compelling evidence in favour of setting up a regulatory body to oversee the dairy industry. It is difficult to see how a regulator could determine a fair price other than by reference to a market price. A price regulator would almost certainly be incompatible with EU competition law and with the common organisation of the market in milk and milk products.

Departmental Policies

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will set out with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to West Lancashire constituency the effects in West Lancashire of changes to his Department's policies since 1997. [64236]

Barry Gardiner: Since the Department was established in 2001, we have put in place a considerable programme of reforms and improvements. For example, action on sustainable development, climate change and energy, sustainable consumption and production, natural resource protection, sustainable rural communities, and a sustainable farming and food sector. A summary of achievements relating to these policy areas can be found at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/achievements.htm. I am confident that the West Lancashire constituency will have benefited from these.

In particular, the West Lancashire constituency has benefited from funding through the National Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund as well as the Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant to deliver household waste recycling levels that are currently well above the national average. Singly, or in partnership with other Lancashire authorities, West Lancashire has received more than £7 million to support progress in this area in the last three years.

Under the Nitrates Directive, around 80 per cent. of the West Lancashire constituency was designated as an Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) in 2002; currently about 55 per cent. of England is designated. Farmers in NVZs are required to follow an action programme aimed at reducing the risk of nitrates loss; for example by limiting the amount of nitrogen applied on the farm during the year and by not applying manure or fertilisers during certain times of the year.

Since 2003, local authority performance on street cleanliness has been measured through best value performance indicator BV199. This assesses the percentage of survey sites in each local authority area with unacceptable levels of litter and detritus. In 2003-04 West Lancashire scored 18.2 per cent. against a national average of 21.2 per cent., and in 2004-05 19 per cent. against a national average of 18.1 per cent. These results are for West Lancashire district, comprising the constituencies of West Lancashire and South Ribble. Data are not available at the constituency level.

In March 2005 we announced that Lancashire would be one of eight rural pathfinders in England. The pathfinder initiative is a key part of the Government's Rural Strategy and reflects the Government's commitment to devolve decision making and resources to the local level. The Lancashire rural pathfinder is helping to ensure greater co-ordination of rural delivery programmes, including testing new and innovative methods to bring about improvements in the delivery of services to rural communities and businesses.

Lancashire has also proved to be a fertile ground for our Defra's Project Based Schemes which are generally available to farmers to help them develop new business opportunities and widen the skills they already possess. For example, Farmer Ted's Farm Park, located at Worral House Farm just outside Southport, was opened in 2003 with the help of funding from the Rural Enterprise Scheme. In the first 18 months it received over 38,000 visitors including 480 school trips. The attraction also contributes to the local economy by employing 10 full-time and 30 part-time employees.

The RPA will be releasing details of payments made under the new Single Payment Scheme (SPS) in due course. It will publish an annual figure for payments to each recipient under the SPS drawn from its financial records. The information will be extracted and published on the RPA website later this year.

Indicators of environmental quality for West Lancashire district are given as follows, they are for water quality and waste and recycling. Data for other indicators are available only either at regional and/or national level and not local level, or for individual monitoring sites not within the area local to West Lancashire. For some indicators data for 1997 are not available and the nearest year for which data are available has been given.

Results from General Quality Assessment monitoring of water quality for river stretches within West Lancashire DC

	Percentage of total assessed river length which is of:				
Water quality	*Good quality*	*Fair quality*	*Poor quality*	*Bad quality*	*Total km*
Biological quality					
2000	3	72	22	2	111
2004	4	87	8	0	111
Chemical quality					
1997	0	30	67	3	145
2000	20	68	12	0	145
2004	19	69	13	0	145

Nitrate and phosphate concentrations

Water quality	*Concentration more than 30 mg NO_3/l*	*Total km*
1995	62	145
2000	60	145
2004	59	145

Water quality	*Percentage of river length with concentration more than 0.1 mg P/l phosphate*	*Total km*
1995	73	145
2000	76	145
2004	76	145

Recycling rate for West Lancashire DC—Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs)

Waste and recycling	*Percentage of household waste recycled and composted*
1997-98	9:1
2004-95	26.2

Note:
There have been some change in definitions between in the BVPIs between 1997-98 and 2004-05 but figures should be broadly comparable.

Water quality data are from the "e-Digest of environmental statistics" on Defra's website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/statistics/index.htm. The BVPI data are from the Audit Commission's website at: http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/performance/dataprovision-previous.asp.

Defra provides a range of comprehensive statistical information. This is available on the Department's website at: http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/default.asp

Farm Land Prices

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average price of farm land in England was in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2005. [67330]

Barry Gardiner: In 1997 the average price for agricultural land was £6,448 per hectare. Data for 2005 are not yet available, the most recent figures available are for 2004. In 2004 the average price per hectare for agricultural land was £7,786. Please note that figures for 2004 are provisional estimates and could be subject to change.

Fur Trade

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps he has taken to prevent the import of fur from domestic animals from China. [67828]

Mr. McCartney: I have been asked to reply.

The Government have sought to establish the facts about the extent of the alleged trade in domestic cat and dog fur in the UK. We have found no evidence that such fur is being imported into this country in significant volumes. The Government have also been working to establish a scientific test to make it possible to ascertain reliably from what species of animal any given fur sample has come.

We firmly believe that action on this issue should and would best be taken at EU level as a harmonised approach would have greater impact, enhance animal-welfare standards within the EU itself and avoid obstacles to the operation of the single market. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs supported calls for the European Commission to investigate these allegations when the Agriculture and Fisheries Council met in May 2005.

In January 2006, the Commission published its Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals, which proposes action in the course of 2006 to address public concerns on the trading of cat and dog fur and derived products. On 20 February, Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner Kyprianou stated at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council that the Commission was planning to publish a proposal on the import of cat and dog fur within the next few months.

Milk Industry

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment he has made of the relationship between the levels of imports of milk and the purchase of milk from domestic producers. [66928]

Barry Gardiner: The Government have made no such assessment. The UK does not import significant quantities of liquid milk.

Reservoirs

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if he will list the reservoirs which have been closed and built over since 1997; [66449]

(2) what statutory requirements must be complied with in order to close and re-develop reservoirs. [66489]

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many reservoirs have been closed in the last 15 years. [66967]

Ian Pearson: The Department does not hold information on the number of reservoirs closed or built over, either in respect of water company reservoirs or those in other ownership.

The closure and discontinuance of reservoirs subject to the Reservoirs Act 1975 has to be carried out under the supervision of specialist engineers appointed to operate under the Act. Redevelopment of the site would require planning permission.

Rural Payments Agency

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total running costs of the Rural Payments Agency and its predecessor were in each of the last three years. [63772]

Barry Gardiner: The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) is an Executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and was formed on 16 October 2001. The previous three years' costs therefore only relate to RPA.

RPA's gross running costs for these years were as follows:

	Amount (£ million)
2002-03	[1]186.4
2003-04	198.3
2004-05	249.2

[1] Restated figure under merger accounting

Further details are given in the accounts for these years (HC 940, HC 1009 and HC 82 respectively).

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the job description is of each member of the senior management team of the Rural Payments Agency; and if he will make a statement. [66700]

Barry Gardiner: The Chief Executive and other Directors make up the senior management team of the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). In addition to the functions of the Chief Executive as Chief Accounting Officer, there are currently five Directors who work to individual performance-related objectives supporting the Agency's key performance targets. These cover RPA's Operations, Information Systems, Business Development, Finance and Resources and the provision of Legal Services. Their aims and objectives are outlined in the RPA's Annual Report and Accounts, last year's copy of which is in the Library of the House.

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many outside contracts worth over £100,000 the Rural Payments Agency has awarded since 2001, broken down by *(a)* value, *(b)* recipient and *(c)* tender process. [66701]

Barry Gardiner: RPA acquires high value goods and services—where the value exceeds the EU directive threshold—either by tendering via OJEU and letting its own contracts, or by using contracts previously advertised by the OGC or other Government Departments.

The details of contracts worth over £100,000 the Rural Payments Agency has directly awarded since 2001 have been placed in the Library of the House.

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what staff turnover within the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) was in each year since 2001; and if he will make a statement. [66702]

Barry Gardiner: The following table shows all starters and leavers by year commencing 1 April since 2001. "Leavers" includes those individuals who left on redundancy terms as part of the downsizing of RPA.

	Staff	*Leavers*	*Starters*	*Percentage of increase/ decrease*
2001-02	1,548.75	786	808	1.42
2002-03	3,245.55	763	643	-3 .70
2003-04	3,631.17	780	237	-14.95
2004-05	3,712.17	754	587	-4.50
2005-06	3,235.75	1,081	726	-10.97

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many staff there were within the Rural Payments Agency in each year since 2001, broken down by grade. [66703]

Barry Gardiner: The following table shows the average number of staff by grade employed by the Rural Payments Agency in each year commencing 1 April.

Average number of staff in RPA since 2001

Grade	*2001-02*[1]	*2001-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
SCB	8	10	10	12	11
Grade 6	10	13	12	10	9
Grade 7	45	52	50	47	46
SFO	2	2	2	1	1
SEO	91	109	103	113	102
HEO	178	270	260	250	218
EO	463	796	780	768	658
PS	12	15	14	11	5
AO	622	1,477	1,765	1,854	1,824
TYP	9	37	17	12	5
SGB 1	7	13	18	22	18
AA	86	392	577	589	323
SGB 2	15	62	25	24	16
Total	1,548	3,248	3,633	3,713	3,231

[1] During this year the Intervention Board (IB) and key Regional Development Service (RDS) functions merged to form the Rural Payments Agency.

Note:
Information has been supplied in Financial Years.

Single Farm Payments

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will make a statement on the delivery of the single payment scheme and progress towards meeting the Government's target of 96 per cent. of payments to be made by the end of March. [58352]

Barry Gardiner: 120,367 applications were received for the Single Payment Scheme (SPS). By the end of 26 April 52,922 claims (44.10 per cent.) had been paid.

The remaining claims will be paid as soon as legally possible following the positive action set out in my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's written statement on 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 104WS, and the written statement on 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 13WS.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the Rural Payments Agency on the efficiency and accuracy of its computer systems; and whether the Agency has allocated the correct payments for each farm. [60484]

Barry Gardiner: My right hon. Friend the former Secretary of State and my noble Friend Lord Bach, had regular meetings with the acting chief executive of the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) at which a range of issues surrounding the performance of the Agency were discussed. By the end of Wednesday 26 April, 52,922 claims (44.10 per cent.) had been paid under the single payment scheme. The RPA will consider any representations made by farmers about the accuracy of those or other payments made by the Agency and take corrective action where appropriate.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many eligible farmers in Beverley and Holderness are awaiting payment of outstanding single farm moneys due to them; what percentage of eligible farmers had received their full entitlement to the single farm payment as at 31 March 2006, and if he will make a statement. [63506]

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farmers in Devon received payments under the Single Payment Scheme by 28 March; and how many are still to receive it. [63632]

David Tredinnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress has been made with payments to farmers in the East Midlands under the Single Payment Scheme. [66635]

Barry Gardiner: 120,367 applications were received for the Single Payment Scheme (SPS). By the end of 26 April, 52,922 claims (44.10 per cent.) had been paid.

The Rural Payments Agency does not have data available on a regional basis, as the scheme is not administered in this way.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the 2006 single farm payment application form was passed to the Plain English Campaign for editing before its despatch to farmers. [66174]

Barry Gardiner: The 2006 version of the single payment scheme handbook and guidance for England was not submitted to the Plain English Campaign for editing; however it was edited by the Central Office of Information. The application form was not.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in what circumstances he will *(a)* make advance single farm scheme payments (SFSP) to farmers whose 2005 claims have been delayed for payment beyond 31 March 2006 and *(b)* pay interest on those SFSP claims which have been unreasonably delayed. [66175]

Barry Gardiner: The vast majority of farmers will have received either a full or partial single payment scheme (SPS) payment by 30 June 2006. As with predecessor schemes there will be some complex claims that will not be paid before 30 June.

The issue of interest payments or compensation does not arise as the EU regulations governing the scheme provide for a payment window that runs until 30 June.

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of single farm payments have been paid with respect to the financial year 2005-06. [66334]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* 120,367 applications were received for the Single Payment Scheme. By close of business on 26 April 2006 some 52,922 claims to the 2005 Single Payment Scheme, representing 44.10 per cent. of total claimants had been paid.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many single farm payments awards in *(a)* Beverley and Holderness and *(b)* England have been terminated following the return of (i) an incomplete and (ii) a late application; and if he will make a statement. [66527]

Barry Gardiner: 1,171 applications to the Single Payment Scheme 2005 were rejected due to *(a)* an incomplete application or *(b)* being received after the final deadline of 10 June 2005.

The Single Payment Scheme is not administered on a regional basis; therefore the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) does not hold information specific to the Beverley and Holdnerness constituency.

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many small businesses his Department estimates will be declared bankrupt as a result of the late payment of claims under the 2005 Single Payment Scheme. [66710]

Barry Gardiner: My noble Friend Lord Bach, met the British Bankers' Association and other representatives of the major lending banks on 30 March 2006 to discuss the situation of farmers awaiting payment under the Single Payment Scheme. The banks re-emphasised on that occasion that

"no viable business is being refused additional financial support and, as a result, no viable businesses are failing because of uncertainty about the payments timetable".

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the impact that delays within the 2005 Single Payment Scheme will have on the ability of the Rural Payments Agency to deliver the 2006 Single Payment Scheme. [66744]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 27 April 2006]*: The full impact of the timing of 2005 Single Payment Scheme on the timetable for the 2006 scheme will not become clear until the vast majority of payments have been made and any corrective action identified. However, preparation for the 2006 scheme is well under way, with the vast majority of 2005 scheme claimants having received a claim form for this year's scheme. Business processes and IT systems required to process 2006 scheme claims are being developed and deployed on an iterative basis, and data capture of 2006 scheme claims will commence shortly.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farmers in *(a)* Lancaster and Wyre constituency and *(b)* Lancashire have received a single farm payment. [68096]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 3 May 2006]*: 120,367 applications were received for the single payment scheme. By the end of Wednesday 26 April 52,922 claims (44.10 per cent.) had been paid.

The Rural Payments Agency does not have data available on a regional basis, as the scheme is not administered in this way.

Telephone Advice Lines

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many telephone advice lines his Department and its non-departmental public bodies support; how many telephone advisers each employs; and how much funding is provided to each by *(a)* his Department and its non-departmental public bodies, *(b)* other Government Departments, *(c)* the private sector and *(d)* the voluntary sector. [66588]

Barry Gardiner: Defra and its non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) currently provide 33 telephone advice lines. No funding is provided by other Government Departments, the private sector or the voluntary sector. The number of telephone advisers employed varies according to the level of business demand. It is not possible to ascertain the amount of funding Defra and its NDPBs provide without disproportionate cost.

Water Metering

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research the Department has undertaken on intelligent water metering. [67895]

Ian Pearson: The Department has not undertaken research into intelligent water metering, but research has been carried out by the industry and the Department has taken a keen interest in this. The Water Saving Group is considering a broad range of topics relating to metering.

WALES

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many *(a)* EU foreign nationals and *(b)* non-EU foreign nationals have been employed in his Department in each of the last five years; what vetting procedures are in place for each category of staff; and whether these include liaison with foreign law enforcement agencies. [68015]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office draws its staff from other bodies, namely the National Assembly for Wales and Department of Constitutional Affairs. Staff have already been vetted by their employing bodies before moving to the Wales Office. The Wales Office does not hold information about the nationality of its employees centrally, and obtaining this information could only be achieved at disproportionate cost.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what opportunities exist for people to work beyond retirement age in his Department. [68979]

Mr. Hain: Staff serving in the Wales Office are either on loan from the National Assembly for Wales or employed by the Department for Constitutional Affairs. Their retirement age is agreed with their home departments rather than by the Wales Office. The Wales Office has a number of staff who have opted to work beyond normal retirement age.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what percentage of the staff in his Department is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled, broken down by grade. [68981]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office publishes information about the gender and grading of staff in its annual departmental report, which is available in the House Library.

The Wales Office has a small number of staff with disabilities. For privacy reasons the numbers are confidential, in line with guidance issued by the Cabinet Office, which states that Departments are not required to provide figures on the number of disabled staff where it is less than five in the department.

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what percentage of his private office staff is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled. [68980]

Mr. Hain: The gender split of my private office staff is as follows:

(a) 42.9 per cent. of the staff are male

(b) 57.1 per cent. of the staff are female

The Wales Office has a small number of staff with disabilities. For privacy reason the numbers are confidential, in line with guidance issued by the Cabinet Office, which states that Departments are not required to provide figures on the number of disabled staff where it is less than five in the department.

TRANSPORT

Aircraft Noise

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the commitment in the White Paper on the future of aviation to bear down on aircraft noise, what target decibel level his Department has set for aircraft noise. [69852]

Gillian Merron: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my hon. Friend the Member for Halton (Derek Twigg) on 8 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 15W about the steps we are taking to bear down on aircraft noise.

Bus Journeys (Doncaster, North)

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passenger bus journeys were taken by residents of Doncaster, North in *(a)* 1984, *(b)* 1994 and *(c)* 2004. [68406]

Gillian Merron: The information requested is not available for Doncaster, North. The number of passenger bus journeys per person per year in Yorkshire and Humberside are listed in the following table for *(a)*1985-06, *(b)*1994 and *(c)* 2004.

Average number of passenger bus journeys per person per year for Yorkshire and Humberside

1985-06	139
1994	88
2004	67

Buses

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total public spending *(a)* per head of the population and *(b)* per passenger was on bus services (i) including and (ii) excluding funding for concessionary travel in (A) London, (B) each of the English Passenger Transport Executive areas and (C) the rest of England in each of the last 10 years. [68660]

Gillian Merron *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The information requested is shown in the following tables (figures are not available for 1995-96).

Total spending on bus services including concessionary fare funding

£ per head of population

Area	*1996-97*	*1997-98*	*1998-99*	*1999-2000*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Greater Manchester	23	22	23	24	25	24	24	31	28
Merseyside	38	41	43	32	33	34	36	38	42
South Yorkshire	21	20	14	13	14	15	15	16	18
Tyne and Wear	26	25	25	28	28	28	30	25	25
West Midlands	30	30	31	34	34	36	32	29	28
West Yorkshire	19	19	20	19	21	22	20	21	19
London	17	16	18	18	28	43	74	94	93
Rest of England	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	10	11

Total spending on bus services excluding concessionary fare funding

£ per head of population

Area	*1996-97*	*1997-98*	*1998-99*	*1999-2000*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Greater Manchester	8	8	8	8	9	8	8	14	11
Merseyside	15	18	18	8	9	10	10	12	15
South Yorkshire	9	10	5	6	6	7	8	8	9
Tyne and Wear	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	8	6
West Midlands	9	8	10	11	10	12	10	6	6
West Yorkshire	10	10	10	11	12	12	12	13	10
London	2	0	2	1	12	25	57	76	73
Rest of England	3	3	4	4	4	5	5	6	7

Total spending on bus services including concessionary fare funding

Pence per passenger journey

Area	*1996-97*	*1997-98*	*1998-99*	*1999-2000*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Greater Manchester	27	27	27	30	31	29	30	38	35
Merseyside	33	38	40	29	32	33	34	37	40
South Yorkshire	18	18	13	13	13	15	15	17	20
Tyne and Wear	18	17	18	20	21	21	23	20	21
West Midlands	22	21	23	25	25	26	24	23	23

Total spending on bus services including concessionary fare funding

Pence per passenger journey

Area	*1996-97*	*1997-98*	*1998-99*	*1999-2000*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
West Yorkshire	19	20	22	20	23	25	23	25	23
London	10	9	10	10	15	22	36	41	39
Rest of England	15	15	17	18	20	22	24	27	30

Total spending on bus services excluding concessionary fare funding

Pence per passenger journey

Area	*1996-97*	*1997-98*	*1998-99*	*1999-2000*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Greater Manchester	10	9	9	10	12	10	10	17	14
Merseyside	13	17	17	8	8	9	10	12	14
South Yorkshire	8	9	5	6	6	7	8	9	11
Tyne and Wear	5	6	6	7	7	8	9	7	5
West Midlands	7	5	8	8	7	9	7	5	4
West Yorkshire	10	10	11	12	13	14	14	15	12
London	1	0	1	1	6	13	28	33	31
Rest of England	7	7	9	10	11	12	14	16	18

In addition, operators of local bus services receive Bus Service Operators Grant from this Department. This is paid direct to operators and is not attributed to a specific area.

Departmental Policies

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will set out with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to West Lancashire constituency the effects in West Lancashire of changes to his Department's policies since 1997. [64239]

Derek Twigg: Capital funding for local transport in the West Lancashire constituency is allocated to the Lancashire county council. The funding provided to Lancashire county council since 1997 is shown in the following table. It is for Lancashire county council to determine how that allocation is spent, in line with the priorities detailed in their local transport plan.

Lancashire county council level of funding

£000

	Maintenance	*Integrated block*	*Major funding*	*Targeted bus grants*[1]	*Total funding*
1997-98	—	—	—	—	11,006
1998-99	—	—	—	751	7,906
1999-2000	—	—	—	751	10,432
2000-01	6,096	4,800	600	751	12,283
2001-02	16,630	11,200	—	960	28,790
2002-03	17,782	11,922	1,026	1,098	31,828
2003-04	13,337	12,051	—	1,121	26,509
2004-05	16,176	13,033	—	1,238	30,447
2005-06	14,865	11,000	—	1,287	27,152

[1]Includes Rural Bus Subsidy Grant and Rural Bus challenge funding

The Government are also investing £87 billion per week nationally to improve the railways, which will benefit those in West Lancashire. TransPennine Express, who operate services in West Lancashire, have invested £250 million in a fleet of 51 new trains. Passengers are already travelling on these trains and the full fleet is expected to be operating by the end of January 2007.

More locally, the West of Lancashire community rail partnership, which was established in 2000, has already been involved with the recent refurbishment of Parbold railway station, the development of a new interchange at Burscough Bridge and the introduction of a new Sunday service at Gathurst station and later evening service from Manchester to Southport.

The public performance measure for Northern Rail (2004-05), which covers punctuality and reliability, shows that 85 per cent. of trains arrived within five minutes of their designated time, against a national average of 84 per cent. These figures show an improvement in Northern Rail's performance since 2003-04.

Departmental Staff

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many departmental staff work on *(a)* rail, *(b)* road, *(c)* aviation, *(d)* [illegible], *(e)* walking, *(f)* cycling and *(g)* light rail related matters. [56607]

Derek Twigg: Actual and planned numbers of staff working in the central Department and its Agencies are set out in the Department's Annual Report 2005 (c. 6527). It is not possible to disaggregate staff numbers in the central Department by mode other than

at disproportionate cost, since significant numbers work cross-modally or in units which are themselves cross-modal.

Driving Licences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his policy is on the revised European directive on driving licences; and if he will make a statement. [69641]

Dr. Ladyman: Driver licensing arrangements in the UK and in all other member states are currently governed by the second EU driver licensing directive (Directive 91/439/EEC). New proposals have been under negotiation since December 2003.

On 27 March, the Council of Transport Ministers announced that it had reached political agreement on a text for a proposed third Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on driving licences. That text has now to be considered by the European Parliament before it can be adopted.

The Government abstained from the vote in Council on 27 March, because we are disappointed that it has been impossible to secure amendments to achieve better and more flexible arrangements for staged access by young motorcycle riders to the larger machines.

We believe that our present practice on licensing motorcycle riders, which insists on compulsory basic training and testing for all, is effective. We shall seek to work with motorcycle and road safety interests to devise as good as possible a way of retaining its benefits within the new EU framework.

Although the Government abstained because of its disappointment over staged access to motorcycles for young riders, it did not oppose, because it welcomes most of the remainder of the agreed text.

GNER

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the impact of the award of an open GNER contract to Grand Central, with particular reference to the ability of GNER *(a)* to achieve the objective of more trains between London and Leeds and *(b)* to pay the Government the amount required under its franchise agreement. [68414]

Derek Twigg: Network Rail has been required by the Office of Rail Regulation to undertake further timetabling work to establish how many additional GNER Leeds-London trains can be accommodated in addition to the additional Grand Central and Hull Trains services for which ORR recently granted access rights. The GNER franchise agreement contains a commitment to pursue a half-hourly service to Leeds. The financial provisions of the GNER franchise agreement does not include the additional Leeds services in the agreed premium payments.

Heathrow

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what meetings *(a)* he has and *(b)* his Ministers have had with (i) airport operators, (ii) aircraft operators and associated companies and (iii) the travel industry to discuss (A) night flights and (B) the expansion of Heathrow in the past two years; and if he will place in the Library the minutes of those meetings. [69834]

Gillian Merron: Ministers have met with a wide range of such bodies over the past two years. Issues relating to night flights and the expansion of Heathrow will have been discussed in the course of many of these meetings, along with other aviation issues. The matters discussed at such meetings are often confidential for commercial or other reasons, and it would not be appropriate to place the minutes in the House Library.

Level Crossings

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many level crossings there are in each parliamentary constituency in England and Wales. [69619]

Derek Twigg: Information on the number of level crossings is recorded by Network Rail zone not by parliamentary constituency. Data on the number of crossings in each zone are contained in the Health and Safety Executive's Railway Safety annual report for 2004, copies of which are in the Library of the House.

MOT Computer System

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many days the MOT computer system has worked without a technical problem occurring since its formal live date. [69552]

Dr. Ladyman: The MOT computerisation system was rolled out between 18 April 2005 and 29 March 2006. The supported service is available to garages between the hours of 6am to 10pm daily, 365 days of the year. Technical problems that have occurred have never impacted all garages and, save one recent incident, have not lasted a complete day. Supported service availability to the end of April 2006, is 99.37 per cent. (accuracy measured on a minute basis). Over the same period, the number of days without any technical problem occurring was 350 days (93 per cent.).

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent by the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) on the new MOT computer system. [69553]

Dr. Ladyman: Expenditure on the MOT computerisation programme was £24 million from the inception of the project to the commencement of roll out (18 April 2005). This includes VOSA internal project costs and payments to Siemens Business Systems. Expenditure to the completion of roll out to all testing stations is £32.1 million.

Petrol Sales

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent estimate he has made of how many litres of petrol are purchased in a year for use in *(a)* road haulage, *(b)* private cars and *(c)* city buses. [69748]

Dr. Ladyman: Consumption of road fuel by weight is published by the Department in "Transport Statistics Great Britain" (see TGSB 2005, Table 3.1 Petroleum Consumption: by transport mode and fuel type). Figures can be converted from tonnes to litres by dividing the weight of the fuel by the density of the fuel (0.000736 tonnes per litre for petrol and 0.000832 tonnes per litre for diesel). No petrol (motor spirit) is consumed by buses or heavy goods vehicles as these vehicles have diesel engines. A copy of the TGSB 2005 is available in the House Library.

Railways

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the rail franchise contracts that are expected to be awarded before the end of 2008. [67270]

Derek Twigg: The following franchise contracts are expected to be awarded before 1 January 2009: South Western, East Midlands, West Midland and Cross Country.

Linda Gilroy: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the passenger growth on the *(a)* Plymouth to Bristol, *(b)* Plymouth to Birmingham, *(c)* Plymouth to London and *(d)* Exeter to Waterloo railway lines was in each year between 1994 and 2005. [63431]

Derek Twigg: Information for years prior to 2002 is not available in the form requested. The figures for years from 2002 onwards are as follows:

Year[1]	Percentage passenger growth
(a) Plymouth to Bristol	
2002-03	15
2003-04	8
2004-05	-6
2005-06	7
(b) Plymouth to Birmingham	
2002-03	-7
2003-04	-6
2004-05	-12
2005-06	13
(c) Plymouth to London	
2002-03	12
2003-04	7
2004-05	-4
2005-06	3
(d) Exeter to Waterloo	
2002-03	-2
2003-04	-7
2004-05	4
2005-06	-9

[1]Rail reporting year which is April to March

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many *(a)* members of departmental staff and *(b)* external consultants were employed to research and write the North East regional planning assessment for the railway; [68876]

(2) what the total cost was of *(a)* preparing and *(b)* producing the North East regional planning assessment. [68877]

Derek Twigg: The preparation and writing of the draft North East regional planning assessment (RPA) was carried out by a single consultancy firm procured by the Strategic Rail Authority at a fee cost of £224,997 (including VAT). Data for the exact number of consultants employed are not available.

A number of SRA, and subsequently Department for Transport (DfT) staff supported the development and production of the published RPA, but were not solely dedicated to this task. SRA and DfT staff costs for the RPA work alone are therefore not available. However, it is estimated that around 15 per cent. of a full-time DfT post (plus formerly 25 per cent. of a full-time SRA post) was spent supporting this work, with additional administrative support.

The total cost to date of publication of the RPA by the Department is £6,903 (including VAT).

Regional Transport Boards

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether the meetings of each regional transport *(a)* board and *(b)* forum are open to the public; [69548]

(2) if he will list the members of each regional transport *(a)* board and *(b)* forum; [69549]

(3) to whom the regional transport board or forum is accountable in each of the English regions. [69550]

Dr. Ladyman: It is for individual regions to consider what structures to put in place to consider transport matters. The membership, meeting arrangements and accountability of these bodies are also matters for individual regions, but will generally depend on their allotted functions, which may vary; for example developing the draft regional transport strategy or preparing advice on regional funding allocations and providing a consultation mechanism for these processes.

Road Accidents

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many vehicle accidents occurred on A roads in *(a)* Hampshire and *(b)* England in each year

since 1990; and how many (i) fatalities and (ii) serious injuries there were as a result in each year. [69675]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of personal injury road accidents reported to the police on A roads in *(a)* Hampshire (excluding the unitary authorities of Southampton, Portsmouth and Isle of Wight) and *(b)* England and the resulting fatalities and serious injuries in each year from 1990 to 2004 (the latest year for which figures are available) are given in the table.

Accidents, fatalities and serious injuries in Hampshire (excluding unitary authorities) and England on A roads: 1990 to 2004

	Accidents		Fatalities		Serious injuries	
	Hampshire	England	Hampshire	England	Hampshire	England
1990	2,042	106,660	72	2,587	559	24,864
1991	1,827	96,701	39	2,253	473	21,100
1992	1,759	96,285	41	2,029	470	20,090
1993	1,764	95,727	44	1,900	427	18,591
1994	1,846	97,824	39	1,851	398	18,905
1995	1,778	95,693	34	1,701	472	18,645
1996	1,809	97,575	34	1,715	397	18,597
1997	1,823	99,328	28	1,726	386	17,950
1998	1,687	98,150	37	1,592	330	17,148
1999	1,735	96,691	31	1,667	330	16,235
2000	1,718	96,748	35	1,670	348	15,895
2001	1,644	95,051	23	1,676	271	15,494
2002	1,594	91,773	47	1,722	341	15,016
2003	1,580	87,818	53	1,694	318	13,895
2004	1,350	83,861	25	1,513	232	12,648

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many vehicle accidents have occurred on motorways in each year since 1990; and how many *(a)* fatalities and *(b)* serious injuries occurred as a result in each year. [69676]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of personal injury road accidents reported to the police on motorways in Great Britain and resulting fatalities and serious injuries in each year from 1990 to 2004 (the latest year for which figures are available) are given in the table.

This information has been published in annual publication series "Road Casualties Great Britain", which are available in the Library of the House.

Accidents, fatalities and serious injuries on motorways, GB: 1990 to 2004

	Total number of personal injury accidents on motorways	Fatalities	Injuries
1990	6,687	229	1,643
1991	6,289	234	1,394
1992	6,630	238	1,338
1993	6,863	201	1,338
1994	7,225	157	1,358
1995	7,392	180	1,333
1996	7,787	165	1,298
1997	8,678	191	1,422
1998	8,861	174	1,301
1999	9,118	202	1,385
2000	9,394	189	1,401
2001	9,128	203	1,404
2002	8,942	224	1,283
2003	8,746	217	1,234
2004	9,072	164	1,137

Road Construction

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which *(a)* local road major schemes and *(b)* local public transport schemes were remitted to the regions and are now being considered for approval. [68099]

Gillian Merron *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* The following schemes were remitted to the regions in December 2004 for advice on their priority for funding:

(i) Schemes seeking Provisional Approval under the Local Transport Plan programme:

(a) local road major schemes

South East Manchester Relief Road

A1073 Spalding to Eye Improvement Scheme, Lincolnshire

A509 Isham to Wellingborough Improvement Scheme, Northamptonshire

A47 Earl Shilton Bypass, Leicestershire

East Kent Access Phase 2, Kent

Rotherwas Access Road, Herefordshire

A41 Expressway/All Saints Way Junction Improvement, West Midlands

A452 Chester Road Access Improvement, West Midlands

A142 Ely Southern Bypass, Cambridgeshire

A5225 Wigan Gateway

A228 Colts Hill, Kent

A31 Hickley Corner, Surrey

A415 Marcham Bypass, Oxfordshire

A41 Expressway/A4031 All Saints Junction Improvement, Sandwell

A457 Dudley Road Traffic Management Stage 2

Westbury Bypass, Wiltshire

Beverley Integrated Transport System, East Riding of Yorkshire

(b) local public transport schemes

Manchester Yellow Bus

Rochdale Bus Station

Altrincham Bus Station

Aylesbury Public Transport Scheme

Birmingham New Street Station

Coventry Rapid Transit

West Midlands Urban Traffic Control

Bradford Interchange

East Riding Beverley Integrated Transport scheme

(ii) Schemes which had previously received Provisional Approval under the Local Transport Plan programme:

(a) local road major schemes

A1056 Tyneside Northern Gateway, North Tyneside

Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor, Darlington

A688 Wheatley Hill to Bowburn Link Road, Durham

Wigan Inner Relief Route

A34 Alderley Edge and Nether Alderley Bypass, Cheshire
Ashton Northern Bypass Stage 2, Tameside
A57 Glossup Spur, Tameside
Hall Lane Area Improvements, Liverpool
Kiln Lane Link Road, Surrey
M4 Junction 11 and Mereoak Roundabout, Reading
A24 Ashington to Southwater, West Sussex
A24 Horsham to Capel, West Sussex
(b) local public transport schemes
Manchester JETTS Quality Bus Corridor
Leigh-Salford-Manchester Quality Bus Corridors
Warrington Bus Interchange
Leeds A65 Kirkstall Road Quality Bus Corridor

Advice submitted by the regions in January 2006 covers both the remitted schemes listed and other schemes considered for funding within Regional Funding Allocations. We will be responding to the regions' recommendations in due course.

Road Tax

Jeremy Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport at what age the Government ceases to exempt motorists with disabilities from road tax. [69753]

Dr. Ladyman: Exemption from Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) is available to motorists in receipt of certain mobility allowances; the higher rate mobility component of disability living allowance (DLA) and war pensioners mobility supplement (WPMS). There is no age limit as long as the motorist is in receipt of a qualifying allowance.

Subsidies

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the subsidies paid to each *(a)* passenger transport authority and *(b)* other county council and transport authority area in each of the past ten years. [60025]

Gillian Merron: The largest subsidy is the Revenue Support Grant, which is provided to all local authorities to assist in their delivery of services. Services supported by this grant include, for example, procurement of public transport services and routine maintenance of highways. As RSG is provided as a 'single pot' it is not possible to identify the amount used by each passenger transport authority or local transport authority specifically on transport.

Local transport authorities receive subsidy for capital investment through supported capital in the local transport settlement for integrated transport and highways maintenance, and through direct grant in respect of major schemes. A table has been placed in the Libraries of the House showing the total allocations. Most authorities have also received Rural Bus Subsidy Grant since 1998, which is shown in the second table that has also been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Smaller subsidies to local authorities include the Rural and Urban Bus Challenge Grant and Kickstart. Information on these grants is available in the Library of the House. Information on rail grants is contained in the strategic rail authority's annual reports.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Christmas Day Trading Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the operation of the Christmas Day Trading Act 2004; and what recent representations he has received about the operation of this Act. [69634]

Mr. McCartney: The public consultation during 2003 showed 97 per cent of respondents in favour of maintaining the special nature of Christmas Day. The Department has received no representations about the operation of the Act and we have no plans to revisit this issue.

Corruption (Kenya)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent assessment he has made of whether British companies have been involved in corruption in Kenya. [68228]

Mr. McCartney: The UK takes a firm stand on combating corruption in international trade. The Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 includes provisions on bribery and corruption. The UK also ratified the UN Convention against Corruption in February 2006. There have so far been no cases brought to our attention under the legislation alleging that UK companies have been involved in corrupt practices in Kenya.

Developed Countries (UK Trade)

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the UK's international trade with developed countries. [68475]

Mr. McCartney *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The Government's approach to international trade is set out in the 2004 trade and investment White Paper: "Making globalisation a force for the good". We are committed to a global trading system that is fair as well as free. The UK's trade (imports and exports) in goods and services with OECD countries totals around £490 billion.

Domestic Dog and Cat Fur

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department has taken since his written ministerial statement of 27 January 2005, *Official Report*, columns 33-4WS, on

domestic dog and cat fur (alleged imports), to investigate the alleged import of domestic cat and dog fur into the UK. [68077]

Mr. McCartney: The Government have sought to establish the facts about the extent of the alleged trade in domestic cat and dog fur in the UK. We have found no evidence that such fur is being imported into this country in significant volumes. The Government have also been working to establish a scientific test to make it possible to ascertain reliably from what species of animal any given fur sample has come.

We firmly believe that action on this issue should and would best be taken at EU level as a harmonised approach would have greater impact, enhance animal-welfare standards within the EU itself and avoid obstacles to the operation of the single market. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs supported calls for the European Commission to investigate these allegations when the Agriculture and Fisheries Council met in May 2005.

In January 2006, the Commission published its Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals, which proposes action in the course of 2006 to address public concerns on the trading of cat and dog fur and derived products. On 20 February, Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner Kyprianou stated at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council that the Commission was planning to publish a proposal on the import of cat and dog fur within the next few months.

Energy Imports

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost of UK energy imports of *(a)* gas, *(b)* oil and *(c)* electricity was in each of the last five years. [69684]

Malcolm Wicks: Energy value balances produced by the DTI show the following values for imported gas, oil, and electricity. Further information on the methodology used to produce the value balances is contained in Chapter 1 of the Digest of UK Energy Statistics, copies of which are available in the House Library or on the DTI website at: http://www.dti.gov.uk/files/file19257.pdf.

Commodity	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*£ million 2005*[1]
Gas	185	260	135	670	1,740
Crude oil	6,235	6,425	6,495	8,615	11,565
Electricity	180	190	170	345	440

[1] Data for 2005 are provisional

EU Manufacturing

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the extent to which export subsidies are given by EU member state governments to support their domestic manufacturing industry. [68739]

Mr. McCartney: Direct export subsidies are illegal under the state aid rules which apply under the treaty of Rome. These rules are enforced by the European Commission and reports on the action it takes against member states who breach them are published on its website at: http://europa.eu.int/coinm/competition/state_aid/scoreboard/

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the Government plan to challenge export subsidies given to manufacturers by other EU member state governments; and if he will make a statement. [68740]

Mr. McCartney: Direct export subsidies are always illegal. Only the European Commission can take action against illegal subsidies. If the Government had any evidence of such subsidies we would bring this to the attention of the Commission at once. It also open to any UK company in possession of such evidence to complain direct to the Commission.

Guidance on how to complain to the Commission can be found at http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgb/droit_com/index_en.htm#aides

Hotelware (Tariffs)

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on negotiations between the European Commission and the United States authorities regarding tariffs applied to hotelware. [67157]

Mr. McCartney: Negotiations between the European Commission and the US authorities on tariffs applied to hotel ware form part of the Doha development agenda negotiations on non-agricultural market access.

Italian Subsidies

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what information he has received on subsidies available in Italy. [68742]

Mr. McCartney: The Department's main source of information on state aid granted in all member states including Italy is the European Commission's twice yearly scoreboard for global information on state aid granted in other member states: http:/Veuropa.eu.int/coinni/competition/state_aid/scoreboaiW2005/autuinn_en.pdf

Information on aid schemes and individual aids in all member states which have been notified to and approved by the European Commission can also be found on the Commission's website:

http://europa.eu.int/conini/competition/stateaid/register/

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on how many occasions Ministers of State in his Department stayed overnight in *(a)* five star, *(b)* four star and *(c)* three star hotels on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [69000]

Mr. Darling: This information is not readily available and can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

However, under the terms of the ministerial code and travel by Ministers, when travelling on official business, Ministers are expected to make efficient and cost-effective travel arrangements.

Post Office Card Account

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much interest has accrued from balances kept on Post Office card accounts since its inception; to which organisation these balances accrue; and if he will make a statement. [69893]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Any interest accrued from balances on Post Office card accounts is shared between Post Office Ltd. and its suppliers of the card accounts. This sum helps to offset some of the costs of operating the card account. Details of the amount of interest that accrues is commercially confidential.

Sakhalin II Project

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions Shell has had with his Department on the Sakhalin II oil and gas project. [68586]

Mr. McCartney: DTI and UK Trade and Investment (and the latter's predecessor, Trade Partners UK) have had a number of meetings with Shell at which Sakhalin II has been discussed. However, most of the meetings relating to Sakhalin II since May 2001 have taken place in the context of the Export Credits Guarantee Department's (ECGD) due diligence and have been with Sakhalin Energy Investment Company (SEIC), in which Shell Sakhalin Holdings B.V. is the major shareholder, rather than with Shell itself.

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what criteria the Export Credits Guarantee Department use when assessing whether to support the Sakhalin II oil and gas project. [68588]

Mr. McCartney: The Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) has published its Case Impact Analysis Process, which sets out the criteria that it uses to assess the environmental and social impacts of projects. This can be found on its website at www.ecgd.gov.uk/ecgd_case_impact_analysis_process_ may2004.doc.

In addition to the environmental and social impacts, in assessing the Sakhalin II project ECGD will need to consider the financial, commercial and legal aspects of the project.

Statutory Instruments

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the operation of Statutory Instrument number *(a)* 2001/2673, *(b)* 2001/2660, *(c)* 2001/4010, *(d)* 2002/3128, *(e)* 2003/3319 and *(f)* 2003/1656. [69633]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Government are proud of their record on employment regulation. This has given the UK a skilled and flexible work force. We have given people decent rights at work without jeopardising their prospects for employment. Both employers and employees have rights and responsibilities towards each other and we strive to find the right balance and consult closely on all our regulations.

The Regulations behind the above statutory instruments are as follows:

SI 2001/2673

The Regulations behind Statutory Instrument 2001/2673 amended the National Minimum Wage Regulations 1999 and came into force on 1 October 2001. They increased the adult minimum wage rate from £3.70 to £4.10 an hour and the rate for workers aged 18-21 (inclusive) from £3.20 to £3.50 an hour. They also made a number of other amendments relating to the level of the accommodation offset and workers taking part in accredited training. Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs is responsible for enforcing compliance with the national minimum wage legislation.

SI 2001/2660

SI 2001/2660 introduced two technical changes to the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 to implement the Burden of Proof Directive—97/80/EC—the aim of which was to ensure that victims of sex discrimination are provided with effective access to justice, and in doing so promote equal treatment. This Directive applied to the employment field only. These regulations are enforceable through the Employment Tribunal system.

SI 2001/4010

SI 2001/4010 extended parental leave entitlement for parents of disabled children under 18 from 13 weeks' parental leave to 18 weeks' leave which can be taken up to their child's 18th birthday. SI 2001/4010 also extended the right to parental leave to parents of children under 5 on 15 December 1999. These parents were able to take their parental leave until 31 March 2001. SI 1999/3312, which SI 2001/4010 amended, is enforceable through the employment tribunals system.

SI 2002/3128

SI 2002/3128 introduced measures to protect young workers and provide fair minimum standards which ensure that young people are protected from excess working time leading to fatigue, risks to health and safety and possible damage to their education. These Regulations are enforceable and I have not been made aware of any difficulties with their operation.

SI 2003/3319

The Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations 2003 (Statutory Instruments 2003/3319) govern the private recruitment industry in the UK and seek to protect those using the job-finding services provided by employment agencies. It is enforced by the DTIs Employment Agency Standards (EAS) Inspectorate. The Inspectorate can prosecute an agency found to be in breach of the legislation and can also apply for a Prohibition Order preventing an individual from operating as an agency or employment business for up to 10 years. The EAS has a helpline; the number is 0845 955 5105.

SI 2003/1656

SI 2003/1656 amended the Equal Pay Act 1970 in three respects to reflect requirements of European Community law, specifically Article 141 of the Treaty of Rome (equal pay), as applied in a number of recent cases before the European Court of Justice and the domestic courts. It extended the previous two-year limit on the period over which an employment tribunal could award back pay in successful equal pay cases, extended the six-month time limit within which a woman must bring an equal pay claim before an employment tribunal in specific, limited cases, and introduced a new rule that enables equal pay claims to be brought during the period of a stable employment relationship or within six months of it ending. These Regulations are enforceable through the Employment Tribunal system.

TREASURY

Planning Gain Supplement

11. **Mr. Neil Turner:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on progress in implementing the planning gain supplement. [69714]

Mark Lazarowicz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects to bring forward proposals on the planning gain supplement. [69716]

John Healey: As set out in the 2006 Economic and Fiscal Strategy Report, the Government will make further announcements on PGS implementation by the end of the year.

The Government received approximately 800 responses to their consultation on PGS and are considering views carefully and continuing to engage with stakeholders.

Economic Growth

14. **Mr. Borrow:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on economic growth in the first quarter of 2006. [69718]

Ed Balls: On the basis of latest estimate, UK GDP grew by 0.6 per cent. in the first quarter of 2006 and stood 2.25 per cent. higher than in the first quarter of 2005, fully consistent with the Budget forecast. This represents the 55th consecutive quarter of uninterrupted economic growth, maintaining the longest expansion on record and is clear testament of the success of this Government's macroeconomic policies.

Inflation

15. **John Smith:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of inflation is in the UK, the EU and the USA; and if he will make a statement. [69719]

John Healey: At present, the rate of CPI inflation in the UK is 1.8 per cent.; close to target despite recent rises in oil prices. This is below the current rate of CPI inflation in the United States of 3.4 per cent., and below the rate of more than 2 per cent. in both the euro area and the EU as a whole.

Drug Misuse

17. **Mr. Blizzard:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what criteria he will use to determine the level of public expenditure for combating drug abuse in the forthcoming spending review. [69721]

Mr. Timms: Tackling drugs remains one of the Government's highest priorities, and that priority will be reflected in the forthcoming spending review. We will ensure that spending continues to contribute to improving health and reducing crime.

Working Tax Credit

18. **Mary Creagh:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people claimed working tax credit in *(a)* Wakefield and *(b)* West Yorkshire in the latest year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [69722]

Dawn Primarolo: In April 2006, there were 33,000 in-work families with child or working tax credit awards in the local authority of Wakefield, and 9,300 in the constituency of Wakefield. There were 204,500 thousand in-work families with child or working tax credit awards in the metropolitan county of West Yorkshire.

Climate Change

19. **Nia Griffith:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the role of taxation policy in combating climate change. [69723]

John Healey: The Government set out their framework for using the tax system to meet their environmental objectives in their "Statement of Intent on Environmental Taxation" in 1997. This principled framework was developed further in the Treasury 2002 publication "Tax and the Environment".

Alongside other policy instruments, tax measures have been a significant part of the UK's Climate Change Programme that was launched in 2000. For instance, the climate change levy package has delivered over 28 million tonnes of carbon emissions savings so far.

Energy and Environmental Research Institute

20. **Mr. Jamie Reed:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on public funding for the energy and environmental research institute which he announced in his Budget. [69724]

John Healey: The new National Institute for Energy Technologies will be a 50:50 public-private partnership. The intention is that the private sector investment would be matched (up to a pre-determined limit) by public science and technology investment.

Pensions

21. **Rob Marris:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the impact of tax relief on pension contributions on levels of savings in occupational pension schemes. [69725]

Ed Balls: Tax relief on pension contributions is just one of the range of fiscal incentives designed to encourage both workers and their employers to save for retirement via an occupational pension scheme. The current annual net cost of the tax treatment of approved pensions is approximately £12 billion.

Inflation Report

22. **Ms Keeble:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the implications for economic growth of the Bank of England's latest inflation report; and if he will make a statement. [69726]

Ed Balls: The Bank of England's latest Inflation Report forecasts suggest somewhat stronger growth over the next two years than the independent consensus.

Business Rate (Civic Penalties)

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many civic penalties have been issued for failure to provide information to the Valuation Office Agency for business rates valuations since they were introduced; what average penalty has been levied; and what the estimated aggregate revenue from the penalties has been. [62281]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

809 civil penalty notices have been issued for failure to provide information requested for non-domestic rating purposes. The average penalty levied is £220, and the total amount collected since the powers were introduced is £178,350. All monies are paid into the Consolidated Fund. They are neither retained by nor accessible to the Valuation Office Agency.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer by what means an individual can appeal against the imposition of a civic penalty for failure to provide information to the Valuation Office Agency for business rates valuations. [62282]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

An individual can appeal to the local valuation tribunal if aggrieved by the imposition of a penalty for failure to provide rental information requested by a valuation officer. The appeal needs to be made within 28 days of the penalty notice being served. The tribunal can mitigate or remit any penalty on the grounds that the appellant had a reasonable excuse for non-compliance and/or that the information is not in the possession or control of the appellant.

Cancer

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the death rate for cancer was in *(a)* males and *(b)* females under 75 years of age in each year since 1976. [68832]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 11 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what the death rate for cancer was in (a) males and (b) females under 75 years of age in each year since 1976. (68832)

The most recent year for which figures are available is 2004. The attached table shows the age-standardised death rate from cancer, for males and females aged under 75 years in England and Wales for the years 1976 to 2004. Although coding changes within this period mean that figures are not completely comparable between 1976 and 2004, nevertheless a strong overall downward trend can be seen in cancer mortality across these years.

Death rates[1] from cancer[2], for males and females aged under 75[3], England and Wales, 1976 to 2004[4]

	Deaths per 100,000 population	
	Males	*Females*
1976	200.9	137.1
1977	196.8	135.6
1978	197.6	136.4
1979	195.8	137.5
1980	193.6	137.6
1981	190.9	137.5
1982	188.1	137.8
1983	191.2	137.7
1984	192.2	141.3
1985	188.6	140.8
1986	185.6	139.5
1987	183.8	139.9
1988	185.4	140.2
1989	182.4	139.1
1990	179.9	136.8

Death rates[1] from cancer[2], for males and females aged under 75[3], England and Wales, 1976 to 2004[4]

	Deaths per 100,000 population	
	Males	*Females*
1991	178.2	135.3
1992	176.3	133.7
1993	170.8	131.2
1994	167.6	128.8
1995	164.1	126.9
1996	160.3	123.7
1997	154.2	121.3
1998	153.8	119.3
1999	148.0	116.8
2000	143.6	114.7
2001	141.7	113.0
2002	140.7	111.4
2003	136.9	108.5
2004	133.0	107.3

[1] Rate per 100,000 population standardised to the European Standard Population.

[2] Selected using the International Classification of Diseases, Eighth Revision (ICD-8) codes 140-207 for the years 1976 to 1978, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes 140-208 for the years 1979 to 2000, and Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes C00-C97 for 2001 onwards. Between 1984 and 1992 a different interpretation ofICD-9 selection rule 3 was used to code underlying cause of death in England and Wales to that used internationally. This change means that comparisons between this period and years before and after, should be interpreted with caution. The impact of the change on mortality statistics was analysed and reported in annual mortality publications in 1984 and 1994*. The introduction of ICD-10 for coding cause of death in 2001 also means that figures are not completely comparable with data for years before this date. Comparisons between the data before and after 2001 should therefore also be interpreted with caution. An article specifically examining the effect of the change in classification for cancer trends was published in Health Statistics Quarterly 23**. More information about these changes, as well as the results of the study, can be found on the National Statistics website at www.statistics.gov.uk/icd10mortality

[3] Aged 0 to 74 years, excluding babies aged under 28 days from 1986 onwards.

[4] Figures are for registrations of death in each calendar year from 1976 to 1992 and for occurrences of death in each calendar year from 1993 onwards. * Mortality statistics: Cause 1984. DH2 No. 11, pg viii-ix. Mortality statistics: Cause 1993 (revised) and 1994. DH2 No. 21, pg xxv-xxxiii. ** Brock A, Griffiths C, Kooney C (2004) The effect of the introduction of ICD-10 on cancer mortality trends in England and Wales. Health Statistics Quarterly 23, 7-17.

Cash Machines

Ben Chapman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent discussions he has had with banks on fee-charging cash machines; and if he will make a statement. [69720]

Ed Balls: On 4 May 2006, the former Economic Secretary to the Treasury convened a meeting of representative stakeholders, including banks, independent ATM providers and consumer groups, to address ATM charging. The discussion was open and extremely constructive. With the agreement of industry and consumer bodies present, my predecessor invited John McFall MP to chair a working group to take forward work on the key issues. This group will report back to me within a specific time-frame.

Census Records

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many communications have been received by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Office for National Statistics from hon. Members since 1 January 2005 on the failure of the Registrar General to transfer decennial census records for England and Wales to the National Archives not later than 30 years after their creation in accordance with the Public Records Act 1958 s.3(4). [66496]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 11 May 2006:

As National Statistician and Registrar General I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many communications have been received by (a) the Treasury and (b) the Office for National Statistics from hon. Members since 1st January 2005, on the failure of the Registrar General to transfer decennial census records for England and Wales to the National Archives not later than 30 years after their creation in accordance with the Public Records Act 1958 s.3(4). 66496

There has been just one communication in total from Members of Parliament since 1 January 2005 concerning the transfer of census records but this related to the 1981 and 1991 Censuses which are, of course, not yet 30 years old.

I should clarify that in accordance with Section 3(4) of the Public Records Act I have obtained approval for retention of decennial census records which are over 30 years old. Lord Chancellor's Retention Instrument number 81 approves retention of the 1921 and 1951 censuses and the Lord Chancellor's Retention Instrument number 63 approves retention of the 1961 and 1971 censuses. There are no surviving decennial population census records for 1931 and no census was taken in 1941.

Charges (Bank/Credit Card)

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take steps to limit punitive charges that can be levied when *(a)* a bank account goes overdrawn and *(b)* a credit card limit is breached. [64056]

Ed Balls: The Office of Fair Trading has been investigating the question of credit card default charges. In April it produced a statement of the principles they think card issuers should follow in setting default charges in their standard contracts with consumers in order to meet the test of fairness set out in the Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations 1999.

The OFT has made it clear that it expects all credit card issuers to recalculate their default charges in line with the principles set out in the statement and to take action where needed to reduce the level of credit card default fees. The OFT also noted that the principles also apply to default charges in other consumer contracts such as those for bank overdrafts, store cards and mortgages.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what opportunities exist for people to work beyond retirement age in his Department. [69066]

John Healey: The Treasury looks sympathetically at requests from its employees to work beyond its current retirement age of 60. The Department's retirement age policy is currently under review to take account of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the staff in his Department is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled, broken down by grade. [69068]

John Healey: 56.3 per cent. of the staff of the Treasury are male. The breakdown by grade is as follows:

	Percentage
Range A	0.5
Range B	6.6
Range C	9.8
Range D	34.1
Range E	34.1
SCS	11.4
Special Advisers	1.1
Students	2.5

The grade breakdown of the 43.7 per cent. of staff who are female is as follows:

	Percentage
Range A	1.2
Range B	18.6
Range C	15.2
Range D	307
Range E	23.8
SCS	8.6
Special Advisers	0.4
Students	1.4

3.5 per cent. of Treasury staff have declared themselves as having a disability. The grade breakdown is as follows:

	Percentage
Range A	44.4
Range B	6.0
Range C	5.1
Range D	2.4
Range E	2.4
SCS	1.7
Special Advisers	0.0
Students	0.0

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of his private office staff is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled. [69067]

John Healey: 76.9 per cent. of the staff of the Chancellor's Office are male and 23,1 per cent. are female. None of the staff concerned have declared themselves as being disabled.

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total cost was of *(a)* staff away-days and *(b)* staff team building exercises in his Department in each of the last three years. [69065]

John Healey: The total cost recorded for staff away-days and team building exercises in 2005-06 is £54,000. Costs for earlier years could be disaggregated only at disproportionate cost.

Staff Vetting

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* EU foreign nationals and *(b)* non-EU foreign nationals have been employed in his Department in each of the last five years; what vetting procedures are in place for each category of staff; and whether these include liaison with foreign law enforcement agencies. [68024]

John Healey: The information requested in respect of the Treasury is set out in the following table.

	EU nationals	*Non-EU nationals*
2001	11	12
2002	6	14
2003	12	22
2004	9	12
2005	12	18

All staff working in the Treasury are required to undergo national security vetting. The level of vetting that is appropriate will depend on the particular post that they are going to fill. Where necessary, the vetting process will include a check of time spent overseas.

Doncaster, North (Statistics)

Edward Miliband: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people resident in Doncaster, North were employed in transport services in *(a)* 1984, *(b)* 1994 and *(c)* 2004. [68407]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 11 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about employment in the transport service. (68407)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of employment for local areas from the annual local area Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Annual Population Survey (APS) following International Labour Organisation definitions.

It is estimated that 1,000 people, resident in the Doncaster North Parliamentary Constituency, were employed in transport services (1992 Standard Industrial Classification classes 60 - land transport, 61 - water transport and 62 - air transport) for the 12 months ending December 2004 from the APS. LFS industry class data for parliamentary constituencies are only available from the 12 month period ending February 1999.

The estimate, as with any from sample surveys, is subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Economic Inactivity

Jim Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the rates of economic inactivity were for people of working age in each *(a)* region, *(b)* country in the UK and *(c)* parliamentary constituency in Tyne and Wear in each year from 1995 to 2005. [69578]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 11 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your parliamentary question about economic inactivity. (69578)

The Office for National Statistics compiles statistics of economic inactivity for local areas from the annual population survey following international labour organisation definitions.

Table 1, attached shows the economic inactivity rates for persons of working age (males aged 16 to 64 and females aged 16 to 59) for each region and country of the UK for the 12 month period ending December 2004. Table 2, attached, shows the equivalent rates for each parliamentary constituency in Tyne and Wear.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Table 1: Working age economic inactivity rates for each region and country of the UK: January 2004 to December 2004.

Region and country	*Percentage Economic inactivity rates for persons of working age*
North East	25.6
North West	23.8
Yorkshire and The Humber	22.5
East Midlands	21.2
West Midlands	22.5
Eastern	18.3
London	25.5
South East	18.0
South West	19.4
England	21.7
Wales	25.1
Scotland	21.0
Northern Ireland	28.5
United Kingdom	22.0

Note: Estimates are subject to sampling variability.
Source: Annual population survey. Working age is males aged 16 to 64 and females aged 16 to 59..

Table 2: Working age economic inactivity rates for each Parliamentary Constituency in Tyne and Wear: January 2004 to December 2004

Parliamentary constituency	*Percentage Economic inactivity rates for persons of working age*
Blaydon	22.6
Gateshead East & Washington West	18.9
Houghton & Washington East	24.5
Jarrow	26.8
Newcastle upon Tyne Central	30.9
Newcastle upon Tyne East & Wallsend	26.5
Newcastle upon Tyne North	21.8
North Tyneside	19.0
South Shields	30.0
Sunderland North	30.9
Sunderland South	30.0
Tyne Bridge	32.3
Tynemouth	23.5

Note:
Estimates are subject to sampling variability
Source:
Annual Population Survey. Working age is males aged 16 to 64 and females aged 16 to 59.

Energy Efficiency (Scotland)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what proportion of the funding he announced in the Budget for local authorities and energy companies to work together for energy efficiency will be allocated to Scotland; [69905]

(2) whether the additional funds announced in his budget to help local authorities and others to work in partnership with energy companies to promote and incentivise energy efficiency measures for households apply to Scotland; [69906]

(3) what discussions he has had with the Scottish Executive on the allocation of funds from the additional £20 million announced in his Budget for energy efficiency measures. [69907]

Mr. Timms: The Scottish Executive received additional funding totalling £87 million as a consequence of additional funding for Government Departments in the March 2006 Budget. The allocation of these funds to specific services is a matter for the Scottish Executive.

Treasury Ministers and Scottish Ministers are in regular contact on matters of common interest.

Infant Mortality

Tim Loughton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the 10 areas with the *(a)* highest and *(b)* lowest rates of infant mortality; and if he will make a statement. [69334]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 11 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning the 10 areas with the (a) highest and (b) lowest rates of infant mortality. (69334)

The attached table gives infant mortality rates for the aggregate period 2002-2004, for the 10 primary care organisation (PCO) areas in England with the highest rates of infant mortality and the 10 PCO areas with the lowest rates of infant mortality.

Infant mortality rates[1] for the 10 primary care organisation (PCO) areas[2] in England with the highest rates of infant mortality and the 10 PCO areas with the lowest rates of infant mortality, 2002-04

10 PCO areas with the highest infant mortality rates (IMR)	*IMR*	*Number of infant deaths*
Heart of Birmingham Teaching	12.4	218
North Kirklees	11.1	85
Bradford City Teaching	10.4	94
South Stoke	9.9	45
Eastern Birmingham	9.1	89
North Bradford	9.0	29
Doncaster Central	8.8	23
North Stoke	8.8	41
Central Manchester	8.6	62
Preston	8.5	45
10 PCO areas with the lowest infant mortality rates (IMR)		
Central Suffolk	1.4	4
East Elmbridge and Mid Surrey	1.5	13
East Devon	1.8	5
North East Oxfordshire	2.1	6
Teignbridge	2.1	6
Chiltern and South Bucks	2.2	11
South Somerset	2.2	10
Mid-Hampshire	2.4	13
Royston, Buntingford and Bishop's Stortford	2.4	6
Hertsmere	2.4	8

[1] Deaths at ages under one year per 1000 live births.
[2] For comparability, PCO boundaries at November 2005 are used for all years.
[3] Where rates are calculated from fewer than 20 deaths, the reliability of the measure may be affected by the small number of events.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will provide a substantive response to question 63954, tabled by the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight on 30 March on tax credits. [70138]

Dawn Primarolo: I have already done so.

Pregnancy Rates

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the pregnancies rates for *(a)* 15 to 16 and *(b)* 13 to 14 year olds were in the last period for which figures are available. [69661]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 11 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what the pregnancy rates for *(a)* 15 to 16 and *(b)* 13 to 14 year olds were in the last period for which figures are available. (69661)

The most recent year for which conception statistics are available is 2004 and figures for this year are provisional.

Number of conceptions to girls aged under 14 by single year of age are not published by ONS to protect the confidentiality of individual's information due to small number of events at younger ages. It is therefore not possible to provide conception rate for girls aged 13-14; we can instead provide information for all aged under 14 combined.

Conception figures for women aged under 14, 14 and 15 to 16 for England and Wales are given in the following table.

Conceptions at ages under 14, 14 and 15-16, England and Wales, 2004

Age	*Number*	*Rate[1]*
Under 14	341	1.0
14	1,751	5.2
15-16	19,137	28.3

[1] Rates for women aged under 14, 14 and 15-16 are based on the female population of women aged 13, 14 and 15-16 respectively.

Public Expenditure

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update Table 8.17 of the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2005 to show *(a)* current and *(b)* capital expenditure for each year from 1999-2000 to 2005-06. [69916]

Mr. Timms: We do not have any plans to modify Table 8.17 of the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA) 2005 to show current and capital expenditure or for the table to cover a run of years. Updated estimates of expenditure analysed by country and region, including an update of Table 8.17 to cover 2004-05, will be published in PESA 2006 (Cm8511), on 15 May 2006.

Stamp Duty

Mr. Gray: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what projections he has made for the revenue from stamp duty on *(a)* property and *(b)* share transactions in each of the next three financial years. [69837]

Ed Balls: Projected revenues for total stamp taxes in 2006-07 were published in Table C8 of the Budget 2006 report. The breakdown between stamp taxes on land and property and stamp taxes on shares is as follows:

Taxes	*£ billion 2006-07*
Stamp taxes on land and property transactions	8.1
Stamp taxes on share transactions	4.0
Total stamp taxes	12.2

Projections of total stamp taxes are only shown in the Budget 2006 report up to 2006-07 and this is therefore the last year for which forecast receipts are currently given in replies to parliamentary questions.

Tax Credits

Danny Alexander: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress has been made in response to the ombudsman's recommendation of an independent right of appeal on decisions to recover tax credit overpayments; and if he will make a statement. [67258]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC are exploring with the adjudicator whether her office could provide an independent review of disputed overpayment decisions.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he has taken to prevent abuse of the new £25,000 income disregard rule in tax credit assessments. [69160]

Dawn Primarolo: The tax credit regulations already contain anti-avoidance provisions which HMRC would seek to deploy in the event of an attempted abuse of this kind.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many additional staff have been brought in to the tax credit call centres to deal with the current annual declarations. [69161]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC keep the demand and service levels of the Tax Credit Helpline under constant review and have the flexibility to adjust resources as and when needed.

Trade Statistics

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the UK's balance of trade was with *(a)* the USA, *(b)* China, *(c)* India, *(d)* Japan, *(e)* the remainder of South East Asia and *(f)* South America in each of the last eight years; and what assessment he has made of the trends over this period. [69937]

Ed Balls: The Office for National Statistics publishes trade in goods and services data by country in their annual Pink Book publication (http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=1140&Pos=1&ColRank=1&Rank=272). Trends in the UK's trade with the rest of the world vary significantly across regions. For example, the UK runs a substantial trade surplus with the United States, while it is currently running a trade deficit with the majority of south-east Asian and south American economies.

These trends are likely to partly reflect broader global trends, with emerging economies accounting for an increasing share of global output, trade and investment. These changes have significant implications for the world's advanced economies, bringing with them new challenges and opportunities.

Unemployment

Mark Pritchard: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the level of unemployment in the West Midlands in 2004-05. [69727]

Ed Balls: In 2004-05, claimant unemployment in the West Midlands reached a record low, and was 243,000 lower than its peak in March 1986.

Between May 1997 and March 2006, claimant unemployment in the West Midlands has fallen by 40,000 (27.1 per cent.) and the rate is now 5.2 per cent.

Vehicle Excise Duty Forms

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps were taken following the changes announced in the Budget to ensure that correct renewal information was included on vehicle excise duty renewal forms despatched in April for renewal in May. [69827]

Dr. Ladyman: I have been asked to reply.

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) issues around 3 million V11s every month. This volume means that they are printed up to eight weeks in advance and are timed to arrive with the registered keeper of a vehicle about three weeks before the licence is due for renewal. Because the forms have to be printed so far in advance it was not possible to print the post budget rates of vehicle excise duty (VED) on most forms for May dates of liability. The rates of duty shown were correct at the time of printing.

When the date of the next Budget is known, DVLA will ensure that the warning message will be placed on all reminders that may show out of date rates of VED to prevent confusion arising in the future.

Electoral Roll

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what was the size of the total electorate for the *(a)* Vale of Clwyd and *(b)* Denbighshire in each of the last 10 years; [65905]

(2) what the *(a)* size of the electorate and *(b)* registration rate was in each local authority in (i) England, (ii) Wales, (iii) Scotland and (iv) Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [68582]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 11 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions regarding (1) the size of the electorate and the registration rate in each local authority in (i) England, (ii) Wales, (iii) Scotland and (iv) Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years; (2) the percentage of those eligible to vote who were registered to vote in each local authority in (a) England, (b) Wales, (c) Scotland and (d) Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years and (3) the total electorate for (a) the Vale of Clwyd and (b) Denbighshire in each of the last 10 years. (68582, 64195 and 65905)

Firstly, please allow me to explain why it has taken a little while to reply to your questions. I understand from the House of Commons Library that you are most interested in Parliamentary electorate by local authority. This is not a standard output so it has taken some time to collate the data and ensure it is on an equivalent basis. This is further complicated by different data being available for England & Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. Electoral data are held locally by the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS), the Electoral Office Northern Ireland (EONI) and for England & Wales the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Regarding the question on total electorate for Denbighshire and the Vale of Clwyd, we do not normally publish data on total electorate (rather we publish local/European electorate and separately Parliamentary electorate data). For years up to and including 2001, data are not held electronically in a form that enables us to calculate 'total electorate'. Therefore, in

order to obtain the data you requested we have referred to the annual paper returns from Denbighshire to collate the necessary data.

Historical UK Electorate by LA

Electoral data are available on the number of people registered to vote in Parliamentary elections and also on the number of people registered to vote in local/European elections. Annual population data are only available on a "usual residence" basis: the mid-year population estimates. Since population data are available by age, the mid-year population aged 18 and over can be calculated. Thus it is possible to calculate an estimate of the 'registration rate' using "the percentage of the usually resident population, aged 18 and over who are registered to vote" as either Parliamentary or local/European electors).

It is not possible to 'split' estimates of the usual resident population in order to give estimates of the population entitled to vote. We do not hold data (e.g. populations of non-EU citizens) that enable us to produce such a 'split'.

The attached tables (one for each year), therefore, provide information, for each local authority in the UK, on (i) the annual 'usual resident' mid-year population; (ii) the size of the (a) Parliamentary electorate and (b) local/European electorate; and (iii) the percentage of the "estimated usually resident population" aged 18 and over who are registered to vote as (a) Parliamentary electors and (b) local/European electors. These are labelled as 'registration rates' on the tables and this term is used in the remainder of this reply. These data provide the closest available approximation to the information you requested. It is not possible to calculate the percentage of the eligible population who are registered to vote: the resident population aged 18 and over is not the same as the number of people eligible to vote.

This 'registration rate' is not a published National Statistic: there are a number of issues that mean care needs to be taken when interpreting the data. In particular care needs to be taken when considering local authorities where the usually resident population differs radically from the population eligible to vote. An example of such a local authority is Forest Heath. There are a large number of United States Air Force personnel, contractors, and dependants in Forest Heath who, as American citizens, are not eligible to vote. These people are however included in the population estimates as they are usually resident. Therefore, the estimated 'registration rate' calculated for Forest Heath is considerably reduced. However, the Office for National Statistics (ONS), in order to aid comparisons of the resident population of voting age and the number of people who are registered to vote, does calculate 'registration rates' on occasion in the manner outlined above.

The attached tables give comparisons between the number of registered electors and annual mid-year population for the ten years up to mid-2004 (the latest available population estimates for the UK) for all local authorities in the UK. Each table shows a comparison against Parliamentary electorate (where available) and against local/European electorate. The availability of Parliamentary electorate by LA differs by country as this is a non-standard output. Data availability also differs from year to year. Recent improvements to the way the data are held for England and Wales mean these data can now be calculated for more recent years. For England and Wales data on Parliamentary electorate by LA, for years prior to 2002, could only be calculated by reference to individual paper LA annual returns and would involve disproportionate cost. For Scotland, 2004 data on Parliamentary electors by LA will be available shortly and we will provide you with an update of these tables when they become available. For Northern Ireland data on Parliamentary electors by LA are not currently available.

In order to give an estimate of the number of electors at the mid-year point, 30 June, a weighted average is taken of the two closest sets of electoral data. This gives the best possible comparison with the population estimates. Footnotes to the tables indicate the formulae used to calculate these weighted comparisons.

Attainers have been excluded from the electorate data to give the best possible comparison. Therefore, the data may differ to that published elsewhere.

We have also updated the data where there are known (small) errors in or updates to previously published data. This means that the attached data provide the best possible comparison.

The local/European electorate gives a better comparison than parliamentary electorate to the usually resident population as EU citizens are included and UK citizens resident abroad are excluded from the local/European electorate. However, a number of other difficulties remain when comparing these sources. For example not everyone who is usually resident is entitled to vote (foreign citizens from outside of the EU and Commonwealth, prisoners, etc. are not eligible) and people who have more than one address may register in more than one place (e.g. students may register at parental and term-time addresses). These factors may have a differential impact from place to place.

There is also inevitably some double counting of the registered electorate (both parliamentary and local/European) as electoral registration officers vary in how quickly they remove people from the registers after they have moved away from an area or after they have died. This is the main reason some areas show apparent rates in excess of one hundred per cent.

In order to aid comparison two further tables are attached that show the estimated 'registration rates' for all ten years. Table A shows these rates for Parliamentary electors and Table B for local/European electors. However, any comparison of these data across years should be made carefully as electoral legislation and other changes (such as EU expansion) can change the size of the electorate.

A copy of the tables will be placed in the House of Commons Library.

The tables provide as comprehensive as possible comparisons between historic local authority population and electorate numbers. I understand from the House of Commons Library that you are also interested in the percentage of residents who are registered to vote on a Parliamentary constituency basis. Official Report number 82 column 1719, 12 December 2005, provides the best possible consistent UK comparison for Parliamentary constituencies. For England and Wales we hope to investigate the possibility of producing population estimates by Parliamentary constituency in the future using Small Area Population Estimates. For Northern Ireland, population estimates by Parliamentary constituency are already available from the Northern Ireland Statistical and Research Agency (NISRA). You may also be interested in the Electoral Commission study "Understanding electoral registration": http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/templates/search/document.cfm/13545.

Total Electorate for Denbighshire and Vale of Clwyd

The table below provides the requested 'total electorate' information for Denbighshire and the Vale of Clwyd, for the past 9 years. The total electorate figures shown here are those who are registered to vote as either Parliamentary electors, or local/European electors., or both.

Data for 1996 are not readily available. The data are derived from data as reported by Denbighshire, and for years up to and including 2001, have been collated from the original paper returns.

Total electorate for Vale of Clwyd and Denbighshire 1997 to 2005

	Total electorate[1]	
Year[2]	*Vale of Clwyd*	*Denbighshire*
1997	52,966	70,770
1998	52,418	70,198
1999	51,402	69,011
2000	50,696	67,933
2001	51,237	68,556
2002	51,409	68,936
2003	50,627	68,060

Total electorate for Vale of Clwyd and Denbighshire 1997 to 2005

	Total electorate[1]	
Year[2]	Vale of Clwyd	Denbighshire
2004	52,356	70,193
2005	53,251	71,316

[1] Total number registered to vote as parliamentary or local electors, combined.
[2] Data for years up to and including 2000 relate to 16 February, data for 2001 and subsequent years relate to 1 December.
Source:
Office for National Statistics

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Angola

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* direct and *(b)* bilateral aid his Department has allocated to Angola in 2006-07; how much he expects to be allocated in 2007-08; and if he will make a statement. [69221]

Hilary Benn: The DFID bilateral programme in Angola has commitments of £5 million for the financial year 2006-07. Expenditure is concentrated in the following areas:

Relief and recovery. This includes support for bridge repairs that are necessary to allow humanitarian aid to reach affected areas of the country. Funding has also been provided for emergency operations to contain the outbreak of the Marburg virus in 2005.

Strengthening democratisation. Our work here focuses on decentralisation and supporting civil-society contributions to the elections process. We also work with the World Bank to try and improve governance in the country and support the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative.

Urban poverty in Luanda. This programme has created space for local communities to organise and better engage with local government on a range of issues, such as local water supply. The programme will end this year.

HIV and AIDS. We are providing support for condom promotion, access to testing and behaviour change programmes, and are also providing anti-retrovirals.

This year, Angola has also received approximately £1.3 million from the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP). ACPP funds are agreed on a yearly basis. In addition, DFID continues to support de-mining operations in Angola. £1 million has been provided this year for de-mining in the country. A similar commitment is expected in 2007-08.

Angola will also be involved in regional programmes that DFID in Southern Africa is currently developing. This regional programme is a £20 million per annum commitment, addressing regional peace and security, trade and growth, and resilient livelihoods concerns. As part of this regional commitment, we have recently approved an £18 million UNICEF programme to address children affected by AIDS. Around £3 million of this programme will be directed to Angola.

All DFID bilateral resources are managed through third party civil society and UN organisations and not by the Government of Angola.

Allocated bilateral expenditure from DFID is expected to be £3 million for 2007-08. Angola also benefits from DFID contributions to European Union and the World Bank operations in Angola. The EU has committed €146 million over the five year period from 2002-07. The World Bank's contribution this year is approximately US$30 million.

Animal Welfare

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list his Department's *(a)* advisory bodies and *(b)* committees concerned with animal health and welfare; and if he will make a statement. [67181]

Mr. Thomas: I refer the hon. Member to the response given by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Bradshaw) on 9 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 127W.

Chad

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will urgently assess the food situation in Chad. [69526]

Hilary Benn: DFID staff continually monitor the humanitarian situation (including food needs) in Chad, and undertake periodic assessments in the east of the country. Of immediate concern is the food situation of the estimated 50,000 Chadians who have been displaced as a result of attacks and violence in the border area with Darfur. The World Food Programme (WFP), along with other UN agencies and non governmental organisations (NGOs), are currently assessing needs and are launching programmes to assist these displaced and vulnerable people.

Another critical issue at this time of year is the pre-positioning of food aid for the 205,000 Darfur refugees in Chad prior to the start of the rains. The WFP has indicated that, despite the deterioration of security in April, this process is on-track. The UK provided the WFP with £2 million for its operations in Chad last financial year, and we are considering providing further support.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many people in his Department have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* dismissed for (i) inappropriate use of the internet while at work and (ii) using work telephones to access premium rate telephone numbers in each of the last five years. [67995]

Mr. Thomas: All DFID staff can access the internet while at work. Our policy on the Acceptable Use of IT is set out in our security manual, available on our intranet, and is drawn to the attention of staff on first appointment. Each time staff log on to our computer network, they are required to acknowledge that they have read and agree to comply with the Acceptable Use of IT policy. Our system also alerts staff when logging in that their activity on the system may be monitored. The policy provides clear guidance that misuse of official equipment will be a disciplinary offence, and, subject to the particular offence, could lead to dismissal. The policy applies to civil servants working in the UK and overseas, and to our locally appointed staff overseas, who work under local contacts.

Although internet activity on all DFID computers is logged every day, analysis is only undertaken when suspicion of misuse is raised. All premium rate telephone numbers are barred from DFID office telephones except for mobile telephones. Itemised bills for DFID mobile telephones are checked by individual departments.

DFID did not hold a central disciplinary record until October 2004. In the last five years, we have details of one disciplinary case which did not result in dismissal and three dismissals (one of whom was provided by an agency and dismissed by the agency) for inappropriate use of the internet while at work. The following table lists the cases by year.

	Disciplined	*Dismissed*
2002	1	0
2004	0	[1]2
2005	0	1
Total	1	3

[1] one locally appointed and one agency staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many *(a)* EU foreign nationals and *(b)* non-EU foreign nationals have been employed in his Department in each of the last five years; what vetting procedures are in place for each category of staff; and whether these include liaison with foreign law enforcement agencies. [68014]

Mr. Thomas: DFID collects information on Ethnic Origin and nationality for its home civil service (HCS) and equivalent staff in line with the categories defined in the 2001 Census and which were agreed with the Commission for Racial Equality. Provision of this information by staff is voluntary.

Our records show that in the years 2001 to 2006, 115 HCS staff have declared their Ethnic Origin as "Any other" which is defined as other than "British or Mixed British"; "English"; "Irish"; "Scottish" or "Welsh".

The following table shows these results:

Ethnic nationality	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*Total*
Bangladeshi	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Indian	—	1	6	3	—	—	10
Pakistani	—	1	2	—	—	—	3
African	2	4	—	1	1	—	8
Caribbean	2	—	—	1	—	—	3
Asian and White	—	2	2	—	—	—	4
Other Mixed Ethnic	—	—	—	2	1	—	3
White	18	15	16	16	8	2	75
Any Other Ethnic background	—	1	4	1	—	—	6
Unknown or Unspecified	—	—	1	—	1	—	2
Total	22	25	31	24	11	2	115

As staff are not obliged to state the exact nationality which corresponds to ethnic origin we cannot provide a breakdown between EU foreign nationals and non-EU foreign nationals.

For our HCS and equivalent staff, DFID carries out a basic verification check of identity and eligibility to work in the UK for EU foreign nationals and non-EU foreign nationals, when candidates attend the selection process. Further vetting for selected candidates, which can include criminal record checks with foreign law enforcement agencies, is undertaken by our Security Section.

In addition to HCS staff, DFID also employs staff appointed in country (SAIC) in our overseas offices. We do not hold specific nationality information on these staff, but the vast majority are nationals of the country in which they are appointed, and, therefore non-EU foreign nationals. We do not hold a central record of annual appointments, but the total numbers of SAIC in post in each year since 2001, is as follows:

	SAIC staff numbers
2001	424
2002	739
2003	874
2004	914
2005	989
2006	932

For Staff Appointed in Country, our Security Section carries out a basic check of identity, including references. The DFID overseas offices are required to confirm to Security Section that they have completed the relevant police checks for criminal records, where possible, with the local police authorities in the country of appointment.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what opportunities exist for people to work beyond retirement age in his Department. [69020]

Mr. Thomas: DFID's current retirement age is (i) for UK staff below the senior civil service and our locally appointed staff overseas who work under local contracts (unless local law dictates otherwise)—60, with staff having the option to continue working up to 65 if they wish, subject to continued capability and satisfactory service; (ii) for the senior civil service—60. We have flexibility to retain members of the senior civil service beyond 60 in certain circumstances if it is judged to be in the public interest, and similarly, exceptionally, staff below the senior civil service beyond 65. Currently there are three senior civil servants aged beyond 60, and three staff below the senior civil service aged beyond 65.

From 1 October 2006, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations come in to force, introducing wide ranging provisions against discrimination on age in employment and vocational training. The Regulations introduce a default retirement age of 65. DFID is presently considering what its retirement age should be from October 2006. For the senior civil service, it will be 65, in line with the default retirement age. DFID retains its delegated authority to set the retirement age for staff below the senior civil service and will decide shortly whether to adopt the default retirement age of 65 or to have no retirement age at all. The Age Regulations also introduce a "duty to consider" procedure to ensure retirements at whatever age are fair. This will allow employees to request to work beyond the normal retirement age, and require discussions between DFID and the employee about when the employee will retire. Both parties will have to give adequate notice in order to ensure the retirement constitutes a fair dismissal in employment law.

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men are employed in the Department; what the average pay was for (i) women and (ii) men in the Department in (A) 1997 and (B) 2006; what women's average pay is as a percentage of men's average pay; and how many (1) women and (2) men the Department employed in each of the last five years, broken down by grade. [67777]

Mr. Thomas: The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the civil service by Department. These include data on the employment of men and women.

The number of permanent and pensionable home civil service (HCS) staff employed by DFID as at 1 May 2006 broken down by gender is: male: 949 and female: 898.

The average (median) pay for HCS staff employed by DFID as at 1 May 2006 by gender are as follows:

1 May 2006

Headcount

	Full-time staff			*Part-time staff*			*Full-time equivalent*		
	Male	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
Median	32,738	26,652	29,570	12,518	20,594	13,358	32,557	22,151	29,467
Female median pay as percentage of male median pay		81.4			164.5			68.0	

Note:
A new payroll system introduced in 2004 holds data only from 2001 onwards equivalent figures for 1997 therefore can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The number of HCS staff employed by DFID broken down by gender and grade in each of the last five years are shown in the following tables:

1 April 2002

All non-industrial staff

Headcount

	Full-time staff			*Part-time staff*			*Full-time equivalent*		
Responsibility level	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
SCS	50	10	60	0	0	0	50	10	60
Grades 6/7	268	136	404	1	3	4	268.9	138	406.9
SEO/HEO	194	144	338	1	19	20	194.5	155.6	350.1
EO	135	133	268	1	27	28	135.5	150.1	285.6
AO/AA	154	235	389	2	42	44	155.1	258.8	413.9
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	801	658	1459	5	91	96	804	712.5	1516.5
All industrial staff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

1 April 2003

All non-industrial staff

Headcount

Responsibility level	*Full-time staff*			*Part-time staff*			*Full-time equivalent*		
	Male	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
SCS	47	13	60	3	0	3	49.4	13	62.4
Grades 6/7	310	157	467	2	11	13	311.4	165	476.4
SEO/HEO	217	186	403	0	18	18	217	197.1	414.1
EO	130	120	250	1	25	26	130.5	134.5	265
AO/AA	140	216	356	2	43	45	141.3	240.9	382.2
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	844	692	1536	8	97	105	849.6	750.5	1600.1
All industrial staff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

1 April 2004

All non-industrial staff

Headcount

Responsibility level	*Full-time staff*			*Part-time staff*			*Full-time equivalent*		
	Male	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
SCS	56	19	75	1	0	1	56.9	19	75.9
Grades 6/7	362	202	564	4	20	24	364.8	216.7	581.5
SEO/HEO	232	192	424	0	22	22	232	206.2	438.2
EO	142	137	279	3	23	26	143.6	150.7	294.3
AO/AA	141	224	365	1	41	42	141.5	248.6	390.1
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	933	774	1707	9	106	115	938.8	841.2	1780
All industrial staff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

1 April 2005

All non-industrial staff

Headcount

Responsibility level	*Full-time staff*			*Part-time staff*			*Full-time equivalent*		
	Male	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
SCS	61	22	83	2	1	3	62.5	22.6	85.1
Grades 6/7	407	218	625	6	23	29	411.1	234.4	645.5
SEO/HEO	261	245	506	2	23	25	262.1	259.6	521.7
EO	133	145	278	3	23	26	134.6	159.8	294.4
AO/AA	124	184	308	1	44	45	124.5	211.3	335.8
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	986	814	1800	14	114	128	994.8	887.7	1882.5
All industrial staff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

1 April 2006

All non-industrial staff

Headcount

Responsibility level	*Full-time staff*			*Part-time staff*			*Full-time equivalent*		
	Male	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
SCS	56	22	78	3	3	6	58.4	23.8	82.2
Grades 6/7	378	253	631	2	22	24	379.7	267.7	647.4
SEO/HEO	267	210	477	0	25	25	267	226.4	493.4
EO	129	131	260	5	23	28	131.5	145.3	276.8
AO/AA	107	171	278	2	38	40	107.9	193.8	301.7
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	937	787	1724	12	111	123	944.5	857	1801.5
All industrial staff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total cost was of *(a)* staff away days and *(b)* staff team building exercises in his Department in each of the last three years. [69019]

Mr. Thomas: DFID does not separately record its expenditure on staff away days and staff team building exercises, and therefore is unable to provide the breakdown requested without incurring a disproportionate cost.

DFID is committed to ensuring staff have the right skills and expertise to meet our commitment to the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals. In November 2005, DFID launched a new "People Strategy", which outlined our vision and commitments on how we will lead, manage, develop and support our people over the next three years. Individual departments within DFID plan and manage development away days and team building exercises for their staff in accordance with their specific needs in the context of business planning, continual professional development and performance improvement. Costs are usually met through delegated divisional or departmental training budgets.

Disabled Children (Developing Countries)

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the projects his Department is funding to ensure disabled children are given access to education in developing countries. [69555]

Mr. Thomas: All children, including those with disabilities or living in difficult circumstances, should have equal access to a good quality basic education. DFID is committed to working with the Governments of developing countries towards the education of all children, including those with disabilities.

DFID's policy on social exclusion is laid out in its September 2005 policy paper entitled 'Reducing poverty by tackling social exclusion'. The paper sets out how DFID will build on the work that is already under way and some practical actions that DFID is taking to tackle social exclusion and make a real difference to the lives of excluded people.

Also, DFID's strategy paper of last year, 'Girls' education: towards a better future for all' recognised that certain groups of girls are more likely to be excluded from school on the basis of caste, ethnicity, religion or disability and that disabled children, and among them disabled girls in particular, constitute a significant group that is denied access to education. The challenge is to support governments to provide quality education for excluded groups.

It is not possible, without incurring a disproportionate cost, to identify a comprehensive list of projects supported by DFID which include supporting disabled children's right to education. DFID's approach is to support developing country governments' own education plans rather than directly manage discrete projects. In India, for example, DFID has supported through its country programme, the District Primary Education Programme, which promotes inclusive education, and some states have been successful in integrating disabled children into mainstream schools. In Vietnam, DFID has co-financed with the Government of Vietnam, the World Bank and other donors the Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children programme, a £243 million project which was launched in October 2003 and includes a strong focus on primary education for disabled children.

DFID also provides funding through UK non-governmental organisations to support projects that benefit disabled people and advocate for disabled people's rights. DFID has partnership agreements with a number of organisations that support disability-focused activities, such as World Vision, HelpAge International, Save the Children and VSO, among others. In addition, through our partner, Action on Disability and Development, with whom we have a six-year Programme Partnership Agreement, we work to promote greater participation and inclusion of disabled people and their organisations in decision-making processes, particularly on partner governments' Poverty Reduction Strategies.

Farming (India)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken by his Department *(a)* to modernise agricultural practices, *(b)* to increase productivity and *(c)* to improve access to credit for farmers in India. [68172]

Mr. Thomas: Agriculture in India is generally a success story. India is self-sufficient in staple grain crops in most years and stores a substantial surplus. The so-called 'green revolution' has been the main driving force behind this success, promoting the use of improved crop varieties and fertilisers in areas with access to irrigation.

However, the benefits of new technologies have not been equitably distributed. DFID's focus has been on improving the livelihoods of farmers and other rural people in rain-fed areas which are not suited to the particular packages of improvements offered by the green revolution. The focus on livelihoods, rather than agriculture, recognises that poor people are often landless and depend on a diverse range of activities to support themselves. However, DFID-supported projects have developed and tested appropriate new agricultural technologies and tools in these areas that have resulted in increases in production and income, more efficient and sustainable use of soil and water resources and reduction of hard manual labour, particularly for women. Some examples are treadle pumps for small-scale irrigation, seed drills and paddy rice transplanters, which have made work easier as well as contributing to improvements in production.

Consistent with this approach, DFID has concentrated on micro-credit rather than agricultural credit. DFID is working with the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) to develop the capacity of micro-finance institutions to on-lend to individuals or groups. Approximately 45 per cent. of these loans are for agriculture, livestock, fisheries or related activities. DFID's rural livelihoods projects incorporate revolving funds at the village level to support agriculture, livestock and micro-enterprise activities.

Fledgling Democracies

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1231-32W, on fledgling democracies, why his Department does not track multilateral aid; and what mechanisms are in place in his Department to evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes which UK aid funds. [68210]

Mr. Thomas: DFID reviews the effectiveness of all bilateral projects over £1 million at least once a year. This includes money which DFID country programmes channel through multilateral agencies since according to international convention this aid is classified as bilateral. DFID has a public service agreement target to achieve a sustained increase in the quality of DFID's bilateral projects. DFID reports progress towards this target in the Departmental Report and the Autumn Performance Report. This year's Departmental Report will be published on 9th May.

This monitoring system cannot track core contributions to multilateral agencies because these funds are pooled. However, DFID uses a Multilateral Effectiveness Framework and other assessments to evaluate the performance of the multilateral agencies. During 2004, DFID used the Multilateral Effectiveness Framework to assess 23 multilateral agencies against their objectives. These objectives were agreed jointly with DFID and set out in an Institutional Strategy Paper. These institutional strategies are publicly available. DFID uses the results of the Multilateral Effectiveness Frameworks and other mechanisms to inform decisions around funding for the multilateral agencies.

HIV/AIDS

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what estimate he has made of the percentage of pregnant women with HIV/AIDS in developing countries who receive *(a)* information, *(b)* drugs and *(c)* antenatal treatment in order to prevent transmission of the virus to the child; [68161]

(2) what steps are being taken by his Department to link HIV/AIDS and family planning policies, with particular reference to the use of condoms; [68162]

(3) what assessment he has made of the relationship between steps taken to improve maternal health and the achievement of HIV/AIDS targets. [68163]

Mr. Thomas: There is a close relationship in action to improve reproductive health and family planning, maternal health and to make progress on HIV and AIDS. Closing the gap in unmet needs for family planning would make a big contribution to helping to lower maternal mortality. Sexual and reproductive health services are vital in ensuring that women have a choice about if and when to have children, and play a key role in helping them avoid sexually transmitted infection including HIV, including through condom provision.

HIV pregnant women with HIV and AIDS are four times more likely to die in pregnancy and childbirth than uninfected women. Women with HIV need care and services in pregnancy to help protect their own health and to help prevent transmission of HIV to their babies. The United Nations Secretary-General's progress report on the 2001 Declaration of Commitment on HIV and AIDS, released in April, estimates that only 9 per cent. of HIV positive women in low and middle income countries currently receive antiretroviral drugs to prevent mother to child transmission of HIV. In countries with weak health systems this falls to less than 1 per cent.

DFID is working to support stronger health systems, with more adequate staff, equipment and drug supplies that are needed to improve access to HIV treatment, as well as to provide women with the care needed in pregnancy, especially when complications arise. Sustained improvements in maternal health and AIDS prevention, treatment and care will in large part depend on strengthening basic health services. Access to sexual and reproductive health and family planning services must be an essential part of this effort, and we are working to ensure that the forthcoming United Nations General Assembly High Level Meeting on AIDS in June gives a clear and strong message on the importance of sexual and reproductive health to efforts to make progress in HIV and AIDS.

Palestine

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer to my right hon. Friend the Member for Richmond, Yorkshire (Mr. Hague), of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 529W, on Palestine, if he will place in the Library a copy of the accounts of the Palestinian Authority audited by PricewaterhouseCoopers. [69175]

Hilary Benn: PricewaterhouseCoopers have not yet completed their audit of the Palestinian Authority's accounts for 2003-04, although we expect them to do so shortly. As soon as the audit is completed and the details published a copy of the audit report will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Shan Refugees (Thailand)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Thailand about the treatment of Shan refugees living in Thailand. [68242]

Mr. Thomas: Discussion with the Government of Thailand about the treatment of Shan refugees living in Thailand is carried out by the British embassy in Bangkok through the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). The UNHCR's advocacy efforts with the Government of Thailand aim to improve the situation in the Burmese refugee camps in Thailand and to bring

about a relaxation of the regulations prohibiting freedom of movement and employment outside the camps. In light of the fact that the Government of Thailand have agreed to expand resettlement opportunities from the camps, the UNHCR is stepping up its efforts to promote alternative solutions for Burmese refugees.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many trade delegations to the UK from each sub-Saharan country have received funding from the Department's bilateral country programme since 1997. [67818]

Mr. Thomas: DFID provides some support to sub-Saharan African countries for the development and facilitation of their national policies on trade, and specific issues like tourism, through its bilateral programmes. Much of DFID's support on trade to sub-Saharan Africa is provided regionally through programmes such as the Capacity-Building for Trade Policy and Negotiations and the Southern Africa Trade and Poverty Programme, and multilaterally through institutions like the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Governments can access funds for trade delegations to the UK and other destinations from a variety of sources, many supported by DFID funds, such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Trust Fund for Least Developed Country Travel managed by UNCTAD. This information is not held centrally and would involve a disproportionate cost to collect. For example, a delegation of developing country trade negotiators including from sub-Saharan Africa came to the UK at the end of last year. This was funded by the European Development Fund, to which the UK makes subscriptions.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Solicitor-General what opportunities exist for people to work beyond retirement age in his Department. [68987]

The Solicitor-General: I am answering this question on behalf of my Department's, the Crown Prosecution Service, Serious Fraud Office, Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office, Treasury Solicitor's Department and HMCPS Inspectorate.

In all the Departments the normal retirement age for members of the senior civil service is 60. However heads of Departments have the flexibility to retain members of the SCS beyond 60 if they judge it to be in the public interest and are satisfied about the fitness and efficiency of the individual to carry out his or her duties. This flexibility has been used from time to time.

For staff below the SCS all Departments have reviewed, or are reviewing their retirement policies.

For the CPS the normal retirement age is 60, though former local authority staff that joined the CPS in 1986 retain the contractual right to remain in service until age 65, under the CPS (Transfer of Staff) Regulations 1985.

Staff at level E and below may give notice of their intention to remain beyond age 60. All other staff must demonstrate that they meet the normal requirements of their level in terms of performance, attendance and conduct.

The SFO has a flexible retirement policy covering staff below the SCS. The policy offers a minimum retirement age of 60 years at which employees may opt to retire and receive full accrued superannuation benefits as of right. Employees cannot remain in employment beyond the day prior to their 65th birthday.

The Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office has now adopted a retirement policy that enables staff to continue working until the maximum age of 65.

The Treasury Solicitor's Department raised its normal retirement age for people below the SCS from 60 to 65 on 1 June 2006. The Department now allows people to retire at any time between the ages of 60 and 65.

HMCPS Inspectorate has decided not to change its policy, pending the creation of a single cjs inspectorate currently being debated in the Police and Justice Bill.

PRIME MINISTER

Foreign Criminals

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 968, what advice he relied on for his statement that the Human Rights Act 1998 does not prevent the automatic deportation of foreign criminals on completion of their sentence. [70150]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave at my monthly press conference on 8 May 2006, a transcript of which is available on the No.10 website.

Ministerial Duties (Deputy Prime Minister)

James Duddridge: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the *(a)* responsibilities, *(b)* salary and *(c)* nature and value of official benefits-in-kind of each Minister in (i) the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister before the week beginning 1 May and (ii) the Department for Communities and Local Government in the week beginning 8 May; [70031]

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Prime Minister what duties he has allocated to the Deputy Prime Minister that relate to the responsibilities of the Department for Trade and Industry. [69875]

The Prime Minister: A full list of the Government and details of machinery of Government changes were announced on 5 May. Copies are available in the Libraries of the House and on the No. 10 website. Details of salaries paid to Ministers are available in the Libraries of the House.

Ministerial Residences

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister what criteria he used in allocating official residences to members of the Government. [69871]

The Prime Minister: I act in accordance with the way previous Prime Ministers have allocated official residences.

Peerages

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister whether Cameron Mackintosh was offered a peerage; and if he will make a statement. [69883]

The Prime Minister: It has been the practice of successive Governments not to comment on nominations for honours and peerages.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Child Behaviour

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the programmes run by his Department to modify behavioural patterns of children since 1997; and what the cost was in each case. [68602]

Jim Knight: Funding for behaviour improvement in schools comes from a wide variety of sources and is aggregated to varying degrees with funding for other activities, in particular, on initiatives which have the combined purpose of improving behaviour and attendance and on reducing exclusions. It is therefore impossible to give discrete totals just for behaviour improvement related activities.

The information in the following table lists the main programmes funded by this Government since 1997 that most directly relate to improving behaviour and attendance in schools and the amounts of funding in each case.

Grant/scheme	*Amount £ Million*
Behaviour Grant	
1997-98	10.4
1998-99	11.4
Schools Inclusion: Pupil Support Grant	
1999-2000	28.5
2000-01	69.1
2002-03	84.5
Behaviour Improvement Programme	
2002-03	50
2003-04	85
2004-05	95
2005-06	121
National Strategies Behaviour and Attendance Strand	
2003-04	24
2004-05	24
2005-06	24
Primary Behaviour and Attendance programme	
2003-04	5
2004-05	5
2005-06	5
Funding to EiC areas for Learning Support Units and Learning Mentors	
1999-2000	17
2000-01	69
2001-02	103
2002-03	121
2003-04	134
2004-05	143
2005-06	152

City Academies

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what the capital cost is of each city academy in operation; [67851]

(2) what average amount of funding per academy has been released by his Department during the feasibility phase of planning the establishment of a new academy. [69826]

Jim Knight: The current capital allocation for the 27 academies currently in operation is given in the following table.

Open academy	*Current agreed capital cash limit (£)*
The Academy at Peckham	30,169,539
The Academy of St. Francis of Assisi	20,868,385
The Business Academy Bexley	38,459,531
Capital City Academy	26,994,000
The City Academy, Bristol	27,666,644
The City of London Academy	33,361,132

Open academy	*Current agreed capital cash limit (£)*
Dixons City Academy	6,510,494
Djanogly City Academy	21,587,127
Greig City Academy	16,479,000
Haberdasher's Aske's Hatcham College Academy	7,045,000
Haberdasher's Aske's Knights Academy	40,380,591
The Harefield Academy	26,418,502
The King's Academy	22,301,104
Lambeth Academy	25,445,886
London Academy	31,398,939
MacMillan Academy	13,028,620
Manchester Academy	19,786,149
The Marlowe Academy	27,803,246
Mossbourne Community Academy	27,973,726
The Northampton Academy	27,358,929
Salford City Academy	15,052,758
St. Paul's Academy	31,189,300
Stockley Academy	25,809,685
Trinity Academy	25,070,483
Unity City Academy	20,590,000
Walsall Academy	17,321,463
West London Academy	31,163,389

The average cost of a new secondary school in a high cost inner city area is similar for academy and non-academy schools.

The average amount of funding per academy released by my Department during the feasibility phase is £252,959. This figure is based on the funding released to the 27 open academies and to 30 other academies yet to open but which have entered feasibility and to which payments have been made.

Education Act 1996

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will make a statement on the operation of section *(a)* 512, *(b)* 512ZB and *(c)* 512A of the Education Act 1996; what recent representations he has received on the operation of these sections; if he will place in the Library copies of such representations; and whether he plans (i) to amend and (ii) to repeal these sections; [68836]

(2) under what legislation children attending *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools receive free school meals; and if he will make a statement. [69622]

Jim Knight: Section 512 of the Education Act 1996, as amended by Section 201 of the Education Act 2002, sets out a local authority's responsibilities in relation to meals, milk and other refreshments provided in local authority maintained schools in England. This includes a duty on local authorities to provide:

Free school lunches to eligible pupils;

Paid for lunches where one is requested; and

Free milk to eligible pupils where provision is made.

Section 512A sets out the circumstances under which the functions relating to school lunches are transferred from a local authority to a school governing body.

Section 512ZB of the Education Act 1996; The Education (School Lunches) (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Order 2003; The Education (Free School Lunches) (Prescribed Tax Credits) (England) Order 2003; and The Education (Free School Lunches) (State Pension Credit) Order 2005 set out free school lunch eligibility criteria.

In September 2005, the School Meals Review Panel recommended, in their report 'Turning the Tables: Transforming School Food', that the Secretary of State should consider the impact of possible increases in the cost of school meals on low income families, whose income level places them just outside eligibility for free school meals.

We have no plans to amend or repeal Sections 512, 512A or 512ZB of the Education Act 1996.

Food Education

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the strategies introduced by his Department to support and enhance food education in schools; if he will introduce further professional development for teachers in this area; and if he will make a statement. [69139]

Jim Knight: The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) will put a greater emphasis on practical cooking skills in the review of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 3. QCA is also revising the criteria for food related GCSEs to put a greater emphasis on diet and health, consumer awareness, food safety and hygiene and food preparation skills. The Training Development Agency is aiming to increase the number of food technology training places in initial teacher training. We have invested £1.5 million in professional development for primary teachers through our Food in Schools programme. However, in each school, headteachers and governors set priorities for professional development and it is for them to decide whether further food education provision is needed for their staff.

In addition, our aim is for all schools to be working towards Healthy Schools status by 2009. The programme now includes a compulsory healthy eating strand. Schools develop whole school food policies, linking what is taught across the curriculum with the food children eat at school, to ensure that consistent messages about healthy food choices run throughout all aspects of school life. Healthy Schools co-ordinators are being trained to support schools, including on healthy eating.

Fresh start

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much income has been received from the sale of assets of schools closed under the Fresh Start scheme; and how much of this came from the sale of school playing fields. [68639]

Jim Knight: The Fresh Start scheme involves the closure of a struggling school and the opening of a new school on the same site, usually in refurbished buildings, and under an approved plan to improve standards at

the new school. Comprehensive data on subsequent disposal of assets at Fresh Start schools, and therefore income, is not centrally available. However, since 1998, disposal of areas capable of forming a sports pitch has needed approval from the Secretary of State, and there is no recorded instance of such an approval at a Fresh Start school.

GCSE

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils achieved five or more A* to C grades at GCSE in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2006 in (i) Swindon and (ii) England. [69044]

Jim Knight: GCSE examinations have not yet been taken in 2006. The following table shows the percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving five or more GCSEs or equivalents[2] at grades A* to C in 1997 and 2005.

	1997	2005
Swindon local authority[3]	43.0	49.8
England[4]	45.1	56.3

[1] Pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year (i.e. 31 August).
[2] For 1997 includes GNVQ equivalences and for 2005 all other equivalences approved for use pre 16.
[3] LA level figures only cover maintained schools.
[4] England figures cover all schools including independent schools, hospital schools and PRUs.

Illiteracy

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people over the age of 65 years are deemed to be illiterate in *(a)* former mining areas and *(b)* England. [69813]

Phil Hope: The Department for Education and Skills does not collect statistics on the literacy levels of people over the age of 65 years.

The Department does collect statistics on learners starting Skills for Life courses?adult literacy, numeracy and language courses. In the academic year 2003/04 around 18,000 adults aged 60 to 69 and 9,000 adults aged 70 and above in England started Skills for Life courses.

Mr. Des Smith

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much Mr. Des Smith has been paid by his Department; [65094]

(2) when Mr. Des Smith transferred to the specialist schools and academies trust; [65095]

(3) what Mr. Des Smith's official duties were; and to whom he reported. [65096]

Jim Knight: The Department contracts with Veredus Interim Management to provide school improvement support for open academies. To deliver this contract, Veredus Interim Management used successful current or very recently retired headteachers, who had an excellent track record in raising standards to high levels and have experience of working in schools in challenging circumstances. Des Smith was one of the consultant headteachers provided via this contract. His role was to provide support for two newly opened academies. This support involved practical help and advice to the new senior leadership teams helping them to establish monitoring systems and to implement effective school improvement strategies.

The Department made no direct payments to Mr. Smith. The work of individual consultants, including Mr. Smith, was managed by Veredus Interim Management. The contract with Veredus Interim Management was managed by the academies division within DfES.

Mr. Smith ceased doing this consultancy work in January 2006. He did not 'transfer' to the specialist schools and academies trust. Separate from his consultancy work, Mr. Smith was also a member of the SSAT council. He joined the council as a co-opted headteacher representative in November 2005 and resigned in January 2006. He also undertook a very small amount of consultancy work for the trust.

Physical Education

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will take steps to improve physical education in schools during *(a)* the current and *(b)* 2006-07 school year; and if he will make a statement. [69138]

Jim Knight: The Government are investing over £1½ billion in the five years up to 2008 to deliver the first comprehensive national school sport strategy, which went live in April 2003. The strategy's prime objective?a joint Department for Education and Skills and Department for Culture, Media and Sport PSA target?is to increase the percentage of five to 16-year-olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum, to 75 per cent. by 2006 and 85 per cent. by 2008. The long-term ambition?by 2010?is to offer all children at least four hours of sport.

Spearheading action is the creation of a national network of sports colleges and school sport partnerships. There are currently 411 live school sport partnerships incorporating 80 per cent. of schools in England. All maintained schools will be within a partnership by September 2006. Good progress is being made towards the PSA target. The 2004/05 school sport survey found that 69 per cent. of pupils in the 11,4000 schools taking part were spending at least two hours in a typical week on high quality PE and school sport, an 11 per cent. increase on 2003/04. Copies of the survey reports for 2003/04 and 2004/05 have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

Prison Education

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will enable successful charities working in the prison education sector to enter the quality assurance regime. [65578]

Phil Hope: The Government recognise the contribution charities make towards offender learning and the importance of linking charity provision to a quality assurance regime. Charities are already a part of a prison's quality assurance regime and guidance on this matter was issued in March 2004 to Prison Service Heads of Learning and Skills and Education Managers in prisons.

Pupil Participation

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what plans he has to ensure that all schools put into effect the guidance on pupil participation in decision-making; and if he will make a statement; [68438]

(2) what assessment he has made of the impact of the Working Together guidance published in 2002 on dealing with pupil participation in decision-making in schools, with particular reference to its *(a)* circulation and *(b)* implementation; and if he will make a statement. [68439]

Jim Knight: The Department is encouraging schools to put the guidance on participation into practice in ways that are meaningful to children and young people. As a key outcome for all children, local partners including schools and local authorities have to listen to children and involve them in planning and delivery of services. We have ensured that inspection arrangements make the views of children and young people an important part of assessing how local areas are doing, and of school inspections. In addition, we have changed the law so that school governing bodies can now appoint pupils as associate members allowing them to attend governing body meetings and become members of committees.

Printed copies of the guidance were sent to all schools and local education authorities and are available online. Since then 10,853 additional copies have been requested. Evidence from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority monitoring and the National Foundation for Educational Research longitudinal reports shows that more schools than ever before have set up school councils as a way of involving pupils in decision-making processes.

School Meals

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the operation of the Education (Nutritional Standards for School Lunches) (England) Regulations 2000; [68833]

(2) if he will bring forward legislation for mandatory *(a)* nutrient and *(b)* compositional standards for school meals, including maximum and minimum levels for (i) fat, (ii) sugar, (iii) salt, (iv) vitamins and (v) minerals; and if he will make a statement; [68835]

(3) what recent steps he has *(a)* taken and *(b)* plans to take to encourage the sale of healthy foods from vending machines in (i) primary and (ii) secondary schools in (A) Southend and (B) England; and if he will make a statement. [69621]

Jim Knight: School lunches provided in all local authority maintained schools in England must meet the minimum requirements set out in the Education (Nutritional Standards for School Lunches) (England) Regulations 2000. Introduced on 1 April 2001, the first such regulations for over 20 years, they require schools to make foods from the following groups available on a daily basis:

Fruit and vegetables;

Milk and dairy;

Meat, fish and alternative sources of protein; and

Starchy Foods

In addition, the standards make separate requirements in relation to the frequency that certain foods e.g. red meat and fish are served.

Later in May 2006, we intend to announce, in response to recommendations from the School Meals Review Panel and the School Food Trust, a full suite of new standards for school food.

To implement these new standards, we intend to replace the Education (Nutritional Standards for School Lunches) Regulations 2000 with new regulations enshrining new food-based and nutrient-based standards for school lunches. In addition, the Education and Inspections Bill, currently in its parliamentary stages, includes a clause which would enable the application of standards to meals other than lunches and to other food in schools, e.g. tuck shops and vending machines.

These standards, which will form part of our forthcoming announcement, would play a significant role in preventing the sale of less healthy foods and drinks in schools, including through vending machines.

We believe that there are no vending machines in primary schools in England.

Guidance on healthy vending is already in place to support secondary schools and is available through both the joint Department for Education and Skills/ Department of Health 'Food in Schools' programme www.foodinschools.org, and the Food Standards Agency, www.food.gov.uk/news/pressreleases/2004/oct/vendinghealthy.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the operation of the Education (Transfer of Functions concerning School Lunches etc.) (England) (No. 2) Order 1999 (S.I., 1999, No. 2164). [68837]

Jim Knight: Where an authority delegates funding resources for meals to schools, the Education (Transfer of Functions Concerning Schools Lunches etc.) (England)(No. 2) Order 1999 transfers the duty of providing a free meal and a paid meal from the local authority to the governing body of each school whose budget share includes a delegated amount in respect of meals and other refreshment. In most local authorities, the funding of school meals has been delegated down to schools, and therefore the Order passes the local authority's duty in providing meals on to schools.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on (i) the take-up and (ii) the quality of free school meals in (A) primary and (B) secondary school children; and if he will make a statement. [69624]

Jim Knight: The Annual Schools Census collects data on free school meal eligibility and take up. In 2001, DfES commissioned research to explore factors which could improve the take up of free school meals (DfES Research Report 270). In addition, the Department's cost of schooling survey collected information from parents and carers about their child's school meal take up (DfES Research Report 588).

In addition, DfES has commissioned research to assess food consumption and quality of school meals (including free school meals) in maintained schools in England. A study of 'School meals in secondary schools in England' reported in 2004 (DfES Research Report 557). A similar study of maintained primary schools has been conducted and findings will be reported this May.

Part of the remit of the school food trust is to ensure adherence to school food standards; and to increase the take up of school meals.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the operation of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999; if he will amend the regulations to provide for free bottled mineral water for use in school dining halls; and if he will make a statement. [68834]

Jim Knight: The Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 requires all maintained schools to have a wholesome supply of water for domestic purposes, including drinking water. The local authorities together with school governors are responsible for ensuring compliance with the Regulations. The Secretary of State can, under Section 497 of the Education Act 1996, take action to enforce compliance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999.

Independent schools are subject to The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003, which quote The Education School Premises Regulations 1999 in respect of water supplies. The Independent School Standards are the Regulations to which independent schools are inspected under Part 10 of the Education Act 2002. The Independent Schools Registration Authority will consider the inspector's report and can take enforcement action.

Further guidance is available in Building Bulletin 87 (Guidelines for Environmental Design in Schools), which can be viewed on the website: www.teachernet.gov.uk/energy.

New school food and drink standards will require all local authority maintained schools to provide drinking water, free of charge, at all times to registered pupils on school premises. We do not consider there to be valid reasons to stipulate that water should be served in bottles.

We believe that schools are best placed to decide how best to deliver the requirements of the new standards. However, the School Food Trust plans to publish good practice guidance to assist with the implementation of the standards.

School Statistics

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of pupils live outside the local authority in which the school is located in each secondary school that selects *(a)* wholly and *(b)* partly by ability. [68782]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 10 May 2006]:* The information requested for wholly selective schools has been provided in the following table. We are unable to provide figures for partially selective schools as they are not designated as such and therefore the Department has no definitive list.

England	
Number of pupils attending grammar schools	111,426
Number of pupils attending grammar schools residing outside school local authority	23,779
Percentage of pupils attending grammar schools residing outside school local authority	21.4
Number of pupils attending grammar schools with unknown residence	380

Notes:
1. Includes secondary, middle deemed secondary, academies and City Technology Colleges.
2. Includes pupils aged 15 and under.

Source:
School Census January 2006 (provisional)

School Transport

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what discussions he has had with bus operators on developing innovative dedicated transport facilities for children's journeys to schools; [69589]

(2) what discussions he has had with environmental organisations on the steps necessary to create a more sustainable system of school transport. [69594]

Jim Knight: Officials in the Department have regular meetings with representatives from a wide range of organisations, including the environmental, and bus transport sectors, as part of the joint Department for Transport (DfT) and Department for Education and Skills (DfES) "Travelling to School" action plan. This plan includes work with a range of stakeholders to promote sustainable home to school travel, and to increase the proportion of pupils walking, cycling and taking the bus to school.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what steps he is taking to encourage more efficient and sustainable transportation of children to school; [69592]

(2) how many local authorities have made bids for funding to pilot new systems of transport for school children in their area; [69593]

(3) what ring-fenced resources have been allocated in 2006-07 to encourage local authorities to develop innovative systems of school transport. [69596]

Jim Knight: The joint Department for Education and Skills and Department for Transport "Travelling to School" action plan aims to increase the proportion of pupils travelling to school by sustainable means. We want all school in England to develop travel plans by the end of the decade, and the Government are funding a network of travel advisers in each local authority to

support them in drawing up and implementing measures to encourage more pupils to walk, cycle or take the bus to school.

The Education and Inspections Bill includes provisions to improve home to school travel and transport arrangements in three main respects:

By placing a general duty on local authorities to assess the travel and transport needs of all pupils, and to promote sustainable travel to school;

By extending entitlement to free home to school transport for low income families (for secondary aged pupils to any one of the three nearest suitable schools, where the distance travelled is between two and six miles; and for primary aged pupils aged over eight, to their nearest school where this is more than two miles from their home); and

By enabling a small number of local authorities to propose Pathfinder schemes to test innovative approaches to home to school transport to support school choice, reduce the distances pupils are expected to walk to school, and increase the proportion of pupils travelling by sustainable means.

The Department will support these improvements with additional funding as follows:

£4 million per annum to support the new general duty on local authorities from financial year 2007/08;

revenue funding building to £40 million per annum to support the extension of rights for low income groups from financial year 2008/09; and

£4 million pump priming and annual revenue support building up over several years to £12 million for school travel Pathfinder schemes, which we anticipate will start in September 2009.

The Department will seek formal expressions of interest in Pathfinder schemes only after these proposals have been enacted.

Teacher Salaries

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average salary was for a teacher in *(a)* Blackpool, *(b)* Lancashire and *(c)* England in the latest year for which information is available. [66875]

Jim Knight: Provisional estimates show that in March 2004, the latest information available, the average salaries of full-time regular qualified teachers, of all grades, in Blackpool and Lancashire local authorities were £30,830 and £31,520 respectively. In England it was £31,710. These averages include all allowances including, for England, London Weighting.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 7 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1483-84W, to the hon. Member for Peterborough, on teachers' pay, what progress has been made in consideration of the issues arising from the consultation on enabling teachers to access tax-beneficial schemes. [68952]

Jim Knight: We expect that an Order amending the statutory School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, to enable teachers to use salary sacrifice for child care vouchers and other recognised activities and thereby benefit from the advantages of reduced income tax, will be laid before Parliament shortly.

Truancy

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of school-home support organisations in reducing truancy. [69389]

Jim Knight: Local Authorities' Education Welfare Services work with schools and families to help parents discharge their responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, if they are of compulsory school age and registered at a school. They will arrange home visits where appropriate and work with families to resolve attendance issues.

Education Welfare Services are making a significant contribution to improving levels of school attendance. Overall absence from schools has fallen in each of the last four years and, in 2004-05, is at the lowest level since records began.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils were recorded as having at least one incidence of truancy in 2005-06. [68642]

Jim Knight: The Department does not hold data on pupils recorded as truant, it also does not yet hold the 2005/06 data. However, the figures for the number of pupils missing at least one half day due to unauthorised absence (of which truancy forms a part) in maintained mainstream schools in 2004/05 was 1,358,206, this accounts for 20.6 per cent. of the 6,602,061 pupils in maintained mainstream schools.

University Degrees

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate he has made of the proportion of jobs in the UK which will require a university degree in *(a)* 2015, *(b)* 2020 and *(b)* 2025. [65391]

Bill Rammell: The Institute of Employment Research and Cambridge Econometrics have recently published two sets of UK skill scenario projections, investigating skills profiles up to 2014[1] (commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council and the Sector Skills Development Agency), and separately up to 2020 (commissioned as part of the Leitch Review of Skills[2]).

These analyses suggest that between 2004 and 2014, just over 12 million jobs will need to be filled (through a combination of new employment growth and replacing workers leaving employment). We do not know exactly how many of these will need graduates, although around 6 million are expected to be in 'managerial', 'professional' or 'associate professional' occupations (high-level jobs that are most likely to employ graduates).

The 'baseline' projections[3] up to 2020, broadly using the same approach, suggest that around 18 million jobs will need to be filled, with around 9 million expected to be in these high-level occupations.

The research needs to be viewed as showing possible trends in the skills needs of the future workforce. The work makes assumptions about how past trends in occupational change will continue; about future macro-economic performance; and how business decision-making will react to changing skill profiles.

More detail is available in the individual reports. No projections up to 2025 have been conducted.

[1]Wilson et al (2006) Working Futures 2004-2014, IER/CE. (www.ssda.org.uk/ssda/Default.aspx?page=28).

[2]Wilson et al (2005) Alternative skills scenarios to 2020 for the UK economy, IER/CE, (www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/leitch_review/review_leitch_index.cfm).

[3]The 'baseline' projections assume the historical rate of skills acquisition will remain relatively stable.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the Answer of 6 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1183W, on Afghanistan, under what circumstances the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) will provide support to the Government of Afghanistan's counter-narcotics operations; what support will be provided; and whether any particular types of support from ISAF have been ruled out. [69575]

Des Browne: ISAF forces may provide support to Government of Afghanistan-led counter-narcotic efforts in a number of ways set out in an annex to NATO's operational plan for the mission in Afghanistan. These include training of Afghan counter-narcotics personnel and the provision of intelligence. ISAF forces are not permitted to take direct, pre-planned action against the drugs trade, including eradication of opium poppy.

Counselling

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the number of servicemen and women who have visited an armed forces counsellor in each of the last 12 months. [69292]

Mr. Watson: The Ministry of Defence does not employ armed forces counsellors. Welfare support is provided by a variety of organisations—service, civilian and voluntary—in recognition of the uniqueness of service life. It would not be practicable to identify the number of individual visits to these organisations over the last 12 months but there is no doubt that they provide valued and well-used services.

Defence Cuts

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the military *(a)* bases, *(b)* facilities and *(c)* installations where (i) closures and (ii) manning reductions are planned, broken down by parliamentary constituency; and if he will identify the constituency. [68499]

Mr. Watson: This information is not all held centrally or in the form requested. I will write to the hon. Member as soon as the facts have been assembled and collated and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* EU foreign nationals and *(b)* non-EU foreign nationals have been employed in his Department in each of the last five years; what vetting procedures are in place for each category of staff; and whether these include liaison with foreign law enforcement agencies. [68019]

Mr. Watson: Data regarding how many EU foreign nationals that have been employed in the Department in each of the last five years is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

In line with the statutory prohibition in the Aliens Restriction (Amendment) Act 1919, the Ministry of Defence is required to provide an annual return on the number of non-UK/EU/Commonwealth citizens (aliens) employed in the Department. The MOD employed non-UK/EU/Commonwealth citizens (aliens) for the period 2001-02 to 2004-05 as follows:

Non-UK/EU/Commonwealth citizens employed in the MOD

	Number
2001-02	21
2002-03	34
2003-04	31
2004-05	30
2005-06	[1]

[1] Awaiting data

The need for an individual to undergo national security vetting, and the level of vetting that is appropriate will depend on the particular post they are going to fill. All applicants undergo the same clearance process regardless of their nationality.

The range of checks that are required to be carried out are set out in the then Prime Minister's statement of 15 December 1994, *Official Report*, columns 764-66.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many officials from his Department are seconded to private companies, broken down by *(a)* grade and *(b)* private company; and what costs have been incurred by his Department as a result of the secondments. [69290]

Mr. Watson: There are currently 297 officials seconded from the Ministry of Defence. Records are not kept centrally on whether the secondments are to private companies (charities or other organisations)

and this information could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Nor am I able to provide figures as to the costs involved as this information is also not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Disposal Contractors

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* barristers' chambers and *(b)* (i) Ministry of Defence and (ii) Treasury legal staff have been employed by the Government during the case of arbitration referred to on 9 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1177W. [67840]

Mr. Ingram: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Fire Brigade Strike

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence under what conditions the Army provides back-up in the event of a fire brigade strike. [69480]

Mr. Watson: These conditions are outlined at paragraphs 3.26 and 3.27 of the Fire and Rescue Service Statutory National Framework 2006-08, laid before Parliament earlier this year and published on 6 April 2006. The Government's White Paper, 'Our Fire and Rescue Service', published in 2003, stated that "it would be wrong for any party to proceed on the basis that the Armed Forces will be available in the event of industrial action" (Paragraph 7.23).

Military Deployment (Afghanistan)

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what criteria will determine whether forces in Afghanistan will be subject to the provisions of *(a)* the law of armed conflict and *(b)* human rights legislation when fighting insurgents in the course of their current deployment. [69301]

Des Browne: UK forces deployed as part of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) will operate at all times within the framework of applicable international and domestic law, including the Law of Armed Conflict.

RAF Hythe

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make representations to his United States counterparts to maintain the US Army Field Support Battalion at RAF Hythe *(a)* until existing work at the shipyard has been completed and *(b)* permanently. [68539]

Mr. Ingram: It was a US Government decision to withdraw the US army operations from RAF Hythe by 30 September 2006. Representations were made to the US ambassador in advance of the decision being made.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of the United States army's presence in the United Kingdom is stationed at RAF Hythe. [68540]

Mr. Ingram: There are two United States army personnel stationed at RAF Hythe and this represents less than 1 per cent. of the total number of United States army personnel in the United Kingdom. In addition to the two US army personnel at RAF Hythe the US army also employs around 200 civilians at the facility.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Corporate Hospitality

David Simpson: To ask the Leader of the House on how many occasions he has accepted corporate hospitality in the last 12 months. [67525]

Mr. Straw: I have accepted corporate hospitality on two occasions in the last 12 months. Details are given in the Register of Members' Interests (Session 2005-06), published on 24 March 2006.

Deputy Prime Minister

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Leader of the House whether the Deputy Prime Minister will answer oral parliamentary questions. [70734]

Mr. Straw: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 10 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 245W to the hon. Member for Mid-Worcestershire (Peter Luff).

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Leader of the House what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his office staying overnight in (i) mainland Great Britain, (ii) Northern Ireland, (iii) the Republic of Ireland and (iv) other countries in each of the last three years. [69643]

Mr. Straw: The information is set out in the following table. No special advisers or civil servants from the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons made overnight trips to Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland.

£

	Great Britain		*Other countries*	
	Special advisers	*Civil servants*	*Special advisers*	*Civil servants*
2003-04	0	0	0	0
2004-05	0	0	1,122	1,122
2005-06	75	0	506	505

Portland PR

Helen Goodman: To ask the Leader of the House what meetings officials in his Office have had with representatives of the public relations company Portland PR; what contracts Portland PR has with his Office and agencies for which he has responsibility; and what the nature of the contract is in each case. [70137]

Mr. Straw: None.

Two special advisers working for my right hon. Friend the Member for Ashfield (Mr. Hoon), when Leader of the House of Commons, attended a summer garden party on 13 July 2005 hosted by Portland PR.

Staff Development

David Simpson: To ask the Leader of the House what the total cost was of *(a)* staff away days and *(b)* staff team building exercises in his Office in each of the last three years. [69150]

Nigel Griffiths: No staff away days or team building events have been held by the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons within the last three years.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Activity Levels

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how activity levels amongst the general population have changed in the last 10 years. [69921]

Mr. Caborn: According to the Health Survey for England (2004) the percentage of the population achieving the recommended levels of physical activity has increased for both men and women, from 32 per cent. in 1997 to 35 per cent. in 2004 for men, and 21 per cent. to 24 per cent. for women. This is based on undertaking a minimum of 30 minutes of at least moderate intensity activity at least five times a week.

The new national Taking Part survey will provide robust measurement of the Department's public service agreement target on increasing participation in sport.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on how many occasions Ministers of State in her Department stayed overnight in *(a)* five star, *(b)* four star and *(c)* three star hotels on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [69120]

Mr. Caborn: The detailed information requested could not be provided without disproportionate cost.

All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the ministerial code and travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of both Houses.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 11 May 2006

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

1911 Census

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will place in the Library a copy of the Registrar General's Analysis of tentative proposals made by National Archives to release 1911 Census records in advance of 2012, dated 18 February 2004, together with the associated correspondence with her Department about the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [69254]

Bridget Prentice: I have today placed in both Libraries copies of correspondence between my Department and the Office for National Statistics on this matter.

Since 1966 successive Governments have consistently maintained this position, and from 1981 onwards there has been an explicit assurance on census forms that they will remain closed to the public for 100 years. It remains government policy to make census returns publicly available after a period of 100 years.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the Registrar General's conclusion, dated 18 February 2004, regarding the effect of the release of the 1911 Census before 2012 on public trust in statistical confidentiality; and if she will make a statement. [69255]

Bridget Prentice: I have today placed in both Libraries copies of correspondence between my Department and the Office for National Statistics to which the hon. Member refers. No formal assessment was made in response to the letter of 18 February 2004. The Government's view is that a closure period of 100 years strikes the right balance between the access interests of family historians and the right of citizens to have the personal information about themselves in their census returns kept confidential. Maintaining the security and confidentiality of the information that citizens supply about themselves in their census returns is of paramount importance. It remains government policy to make census returns publicly available after a period of 100 years.

Census Closure Rule

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of *(a)* the Registrar General's proposal, dated 18 February 2004, to enshrine a 100-year census closure rule in primary legislation and *(b)* the implications for that proposal of the principles of the Freedom of Information Act 2000; and if she will make a statement. [69256]

Bridget Prentice: There are no current plans to enshrine a 100-year census closure rule in primary legislation.

Children's Services

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many nursery and creche places are provided for people working in her Department; what charges are made for the provision of such services; and what other facilities are provided for children of employees of her Department. [67359]

Bridget Prentice: My Department has 37 bought-in nursery places and during the past year provided 74 holiday playscheme places. The Department offers a 25 per cent. subsidy towards nursery places and a 50 per cent. subsidy towards playscheme places. The total cost was £43,712.05 during the last financial year. £34,253.88 was spent on subsidised nursery places at a cost of £1,200.00 per child; and a total of £9,458.17 for subsidised playscheme places at a cost of £127.00 per place. The Department has participated actively in an inter-departmental working party in collaboration with the Daycare Trust to establish the Civil Service Childcare Toolkit.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what opportunitites exist for people to work beyond retirement age in her Department. [69030]

Bridget Prentice: My Department has a retirement policy which explicitly states that if a member of staff below senior civil service level wishes to work beyond the normal retirement age of 65 we will normally agree to such a request subject to the normal standards of health, efficiency, conduct, performance and attendance being met. Individuals may not work beyond the age of 70 except in exceptional circumstances. The normal retirement age in the senior civil service is 60. However, the Department retains members of the senior civil service if it is judged to be in the public interest to do so and it is satisfied as to the fitness and efficiency of the individual to carry out his or her duties. This flexibility allows the Department to meet its business needs, retaining valuable knowledge and skills, while giving staff as much choice as possible about when they retire.

Election Registers

John Mann: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many General Election marked registers were not available *(a)* six months and *(b)* nine months after the 2005 general election. [69822]

Bridget Prentice: The only marked register that was unavailable in either the six months or nine months following the 2005 General election was Woking, which was missing in its entirety.

Electoral Registration

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what percentage of those eligible to vote were registered to vote in each local authority in *(a)* England, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* Scotland and *(d)* Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [64195]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 11 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions regarding (1) the size of the electorate and the registration rate in each local authority in (i) England, (ii) Wales, (iii) Scotland and (iv) Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years; (2) the percentage of those eligible to vote who were registered to vote in each local authority in (a) England, (b) Wales, (c) Scotland and (d) Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years and (3) the total electorate for (a) the Vale of Clwyd and (b) Denbighshire in each of the last 10 years. (68582, 64195 and 65905)

Firstly, please allow me to explain why it has taken a little while to reply to your questions. I understand from the House of Commons Library that you are most interested in Parliamentary electorate by local authority. This is not a standard output so it has taken some time to collate the data and ensure it is on an equivalent basis. This is further complicated by different data being available for England & Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. Electoral data are held locally by the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS), the Electoral Office Northern Ireland (EONI) and for England & Wales the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Regarding the question on total electorate for Denbighshire and the Vale of Clwyd, we do not normally publish data on total electorate (rather we publish local/European electorate and separately Parliamentary electorate data). For years up to and including 2001, data are not held electronically in a form that enables us to calculate 'total electorate'. Therefore, in order to obtain the data you requested we have referred to the annual paper returns from Denbighshire to collate the necessary data.

Historical UK Electorate by LA

Electoral data are available on the number of people registered to vote in Parliamentary elections and also on the number of people registered to vote in local/European elections. Annual population data are only available on a "usual residence" basis: the mid-year population estimates. Since population data are available by age, the mid-year population aged 18 and over can be calculated. Thus it is possible to calculate an estimate of the 'registration rate' using "the percentage of the usually resident population, aged 18 and over who are registered to vote" as either Parliamentary or local/European electors).

It is not possible to 'split' estimates of the usual resident population in order to give estimates of the population entitled to vote. We do not hold data (e.g. populations of non-EU citizens) that enable us to produce such a 'split'.

The attached tables (one for each year), therefore, provide information, for each local authority in the UK, on (i) the annual 'usual resident' mid-year population; (ii) the size of the (a) Parliamentary electorate and (b) local/European electorate; and (iii) the percentage of the "estimated usually resident population" aged 18 and over who are registered to vote as (a) Parliamentary electors and (b) local/European electors. These are labelled as 'registration rates' on the tables and this term is used in the remainder of this reply. These data provide the closest available approximation to the information you requested. It is not possible to calculate the percentage of the eligible population who are registered to vote: the resident population aged 18 and over is not the same as the number of people eligible to vote.

This 'registration rate' is not a published National Statistic: there are a number of issues that mean care needs to be taken when interpreting the data. In particular care needs to be taken when considering local authorities where the usually resident population differs radically from the population eligible to vote. An example of such a local authority is Forest Heath. There are a large number of United States Air Force personnel, contractors, and dependants in Forest Heath who, as American citizens, are not eligible to vote. These people are however included in the population estimates as they are usually resident. Therefore, the estimated 'registration rate' calculated for Forest Heath is considerably reduced. However, the Office for National Statistics (ONS), in order to aid comparisons of the resident population of voting age and the number of people who are registered to vote, does calculate 'registration rates' on occasion in the manner outlined above.

The attached tables give comparisons between the number of registered electors and annual mid-year population for the ten years up to mid-2004 (the latest available population estimates for the UK) for all local authorities in the UK. Each table shows a comparison against Parliamentary electorate (where available) and against local/European electorate. The availability of Parliamentary electorate by LA differs by country as this is a non-standard output. Data availability also differs from year to year. Recent improvements to the way the data are held for England and Wales mean these data can now be calculated for more recent years. For England and Wales data on Parliamentary electorate by LA, for years prior to 2002, could only be calculated by reference to individual paper LA annual returns and would involve disproportionate cost. For Scotland, 2004 data on Parliamentary electors by LA will be available shortly and we will provide you with an update of these tables when they become available. For Northern Ireland data on Parliamentary electors by LA are not currently available.

In order to give an estimate of the number of electors at the mid-year point, 30 June, a weighted average is taken of the two closest sets of electoral data. This gives the best possible comparison with the population estimates. Footnotes to the tables indicate the formulae used to calculate these weighted comparisons.

Attainers have been excluded from the electorate data to give the best possible comparison. Therefore, the data may differ to that published elsewhere.

We have also updated the data where there are known (small) errors in or updates to previously published data. This means that the attached data provide the best possible comparison.

The local/European electorate gives a better comparison than parliamentary electorate to the usually resident population as EU citizens are included and UK citizens resident abroad are excluded from the local/European electorate. However, a number of other difficulties remain when comparing these sources. For example not everyone who is usually resident is entitled to vote (foreign citizens from outside of the EU and Commonwealth, prisoners, etc. are not eligible) and people who have more than one address may register in more than one place (e.g. students may register at parental and term-time addresses). These factors may have a differential impact from place to place.

There is also inevitably some double counting of the registered electorate (both parliamentary and local/European) as electoral registration officers vary in how quickly they remove people from the registers after they have moved away from an area or after they have died. This is the main reason some areas show apparent rates in excess of one hundred per cent.

In order to aid comparison two further tables are attached that show the estimated 'registration rates' for all ten years. Table A shows these rates for Parliamentary electors and Table B for local/European electors. However, any comparison of these data across years should be made carefully as electoral legislation and other changes (such as EU expansion) can change the size of the electorate.

A copy of the tables will be placed in the House of Commons Library.

The tables provide as comprehensive as possible comparisons between historic local authority population and electorate numbers. I understand from the House of Commons Library that you are also interested in the percentage of residents who are registered to vote on a Parliamentary constituency basis. Official Report number 82 column 1719, 12 December 2005, provides the best possible consistent UK comparison for Parliamentary constituencies. For England and Wales we hope to investigate the possibility of producing population estimates by Parliamentary constituency in the future using Small Area Population Estimates. For Northern Ireland, population estimates by Parliamentary constituency are already available from the Northern Ireland Statistical and Research Agency (NISRA). You may also be interested in the Electoral Commission study "Understanding electoral registration": http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/templates/search/document.cfm/13545.

Total Electorate for Denbighshire and Vale of Clwyd

The table below provides the requested 'total electorate' information for Denbighshire and the Vale of Clwyd, for the past 9 years. The total electorate figures shown here are those who are registered to vote as either Parliamentary electors, or local/European electors., or both.

Data for 1996 are not readily available. The data are derived from data as reported by Denbighshire, and for years up to and including 2001, have been collated from the original paper returns.

Total electorate for Vale of Clwyd and Denbighshire 1997 to 2005

	Total electorate[1]	
Year[2]	*Vale of Clwyd*	*Denbighshire*
1997	52,966	70,770
1998	52,418	70,198
1999	51,402	69,011
2000	50,696	67,933
2001	51,237	68,556
2002	51,409	68,936
2003	50,627	68,060
2004	52,356	70,193
2005	53,251	71,316

[1] Total number registered to vote as parliamentary or local electors, combined.
[2] Data for years up to and including 2000 relate to 16 February, data for 2001 and subsequent years relate to 1 December.
Source:
Office for National Statistics

Electoral System

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the outcome of the pilots for postal voting. [67091]

Bridget Prentice: Although it is too early to make a full assessment, initial indications suggest that the pilots of administrative changes to the postal voting process at the May 2006 local elections have been conducted successfully. The Electoral Commission will formally evaluate the pilots and report by 3 August 2006.

Legal Services Commission

Julie Morgan: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many matters were started under Legal Services Commission contracts in civil law, in each of the financial years 2000-01 to 2004-05, broken down by category of law; and what the projected total is in each category for 2005-06. [68382]

Vera Baird: The following table shows the number of matters started as reported by solicitor firms and not for profit suppliers, including community legal service direct, for each financial year since 2000-01. The number of matters started differ slightly from what has previously been published in the Legal Services Commission's (LSC) annual reports as matters started during the year are still reported after the publication of the annual report, and the annual report does not include new matters started through community legal service direct.

Number of matters started as reported to the LSC by solicitors' firms and not for profit suppliers

Category of law	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06 (projected total)*
Actions against the police	5,414	5,341	5,455	4,474	4,584	4,540
Community care	2,037	2,117	2,711	3,098	3,459	4,051
Consumer	11,772	9,150	7,327	5,015	3,939	3,845
Debt-solicitor/nor-for-profit contracts	50,137	48,635	52,802	55,708	59,327	72,463
Debt-community legal service direct	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	13,589	29,508
Education-solicitor/nor-for-profit contracts	3,007	3,327	3,452	2,984	2,663	2,614
Education- community legal service direct	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	2,312	4,631
Employment-solicitor/not-for-profit contracts	12,076	10,977	11,719	10,522	9,658	11,389
Employment-community legal service direct	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	2,311	11,562
Housing-solicitor/not-for-profit contracts	87,718	86,307	88,014	81,606	84,220	96,985
Housing-community legal service direct	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	1,902	12,397
Family	309,975	320,373	339,043	302,764	277,125	281,684
Mental health	23,242	26,118	28,637	29,063	31,003	34,081
Miscellaneous-solicitor/not-for-profit contracts	34,675	28,359	22,731	14,949	9,896	9,251
Miscellaneous-community legal service direct	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	394	1,480
Public law	1,429	1,429	1,811	1,614	1,649	1,797
Welfare benefits-solicitor/not-for-profit contracts	86,420	78,479	78,992	76,439	73,891	83,975

Number of matters started as reported to the LSC by solicitors' firms and not for profit suppliers

Category of law	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06 (projected total)*
Welfare benefits-community legal service direct	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	6,000	14,047
Personal injury	10,357	7,237	5,787	4,827	3,155	2,836
Clinical negligence	4,570	4,892	4,585	4,076	3,693	3,519
Other methods of delivery	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	21,855
Total	642,829	632,741	653,066	597,139	594,770	708,510

Matters started in the immigration and asylum category are not reported as part of civil law. However, the matters are still started as part of the general civil contract. The matters started in this category are in the following table.

	2000-01	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06 (projected total)*
Immigration and Asylum	137,940	140,605	156,227	121,918	95,038	90,635

Political Parties (Members Liabilities)

Chris Huhne: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the Government's policy is towards the liabilities of individual members of registered political parties in circumstances of *(a)* liquidation, *(b)* bankruptcy and *(c)* administration of such a party. [66675]

Mr. Straw: I have been asked to reply. The requirements for the registration and administration of political parties are set out in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA).

There are no specific rules regarding liquidation, bankruptcy or placing in administration of registered political parties in the Act. Whether individual members have liabilities, and the insolvency procedures applicable to a political party, are not matters governed by electoral law. Rather such matters will depend on how the particular political party has been set up, and its legal status in the general law: for example, some parties may be registered companies, and therefore would be subject to the specific requirements of companies' legislation.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE

Publications

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission how many publications were produced by the Electoral Commission during 2005; and what the total cost was. [69263]

Peter Viggers: I am informed by the Electoral Commission that during 2005 it produced 48 publications at a cost of £340,136. These included both statutory reports and publications providing training and support for those involved in the running of elections, political parties, agents and candidates.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Brighton and Hove Albion

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the dates of contacts between *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in his Department and representatives of (i) Brighton and Hove council and (ii) Brighton and Hove Albion football club since 25 October 2005; and whether in each case the contact was by (A) telephone, fax or e-mail, (B) written correspondence and (C) meeting. [65222]

Angela E. Smith *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* I have been asked to reply.

Given the hon. Gentleman's interest in the Palmer planning decision, I have restricted my answer to contact regarding that matter.

I am unable to provide details of telephone calls, faxes or emails as these records are not held centrally.

The letter setting out the Secretary of State's decision regarding the applications at Palmer was issued to all main parties on 27 October 2005.

No Ministers or officials in the Department for Communities and Local Government have had any meetings or written correspondence relevant to the planning decision with either the Council or the Football Club since the decision was issued.

Fire and Rescue Services

Ms Barlow: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact on response times of the move to individual integrated risk management plans for the fire and rescue services in England. [69603]

Angela E. Smith: I have been asked to reply.

No assessment has been made. It is for individual Fire and Rescue Authorities to determine appropriate fire cover and the level of service in its area on the basis of local risk assessment and management.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance she has issued on the fitting of front-line fire service vehicles with satellite navigation systems; and what percentage of such vehicles in each fire service region is fitted with such devices. [68912]

Angela E. Smith: I have been asked to reply.

No guidance on the fitting of front-line fire and rescue service vehicles with satellite navigation systems has been issued to date.

Details of satellite navigation systems fitted into fire and rescue service vehicles are not collected centrally.

Home Information Packs

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what pilots have been undertaken prior to the introduction of home information packs. [63181]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

A pilot scheme was established in Bristol on 10 December 1999 and ran until July 2000. Some of the findings of that pilot will be updated through research to establish the baseline for home information packs. The first phase of this research is due to begin shortly with completion by September 2006. In addition, I refer my hon. Friend to the statement in the press notice issued on 7 April which gives details of a dry-run prior to introducing home information packs on 1 June 2007.

Neighbourhood Renewal

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has for neighbourhood renewal projects in Milton Keynes. [68141]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply

The Department does not have any plans to extend neighbourhood renewal programmes to Milton Keynes.

Neighbourhood Renewal funding is being allocated to the most deprived localities and neighbourhoods to help narrow the gap between these and the rest of the Country.

Milton Keynes does not meet these criteria.

As a growth area, Milton Keynes is already in receipt of targeted funding to improve the quality of life of residents and create sustainable communities.

Street Wardens (Peterborough)

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he plans to provide funding from 2006-07 for the street wardens scheme in Peterborough; and if he will make a statement. [61256]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

There are no plans to further fund street warden schemes. The direct Office of the Deputy Prime Minister funding which ended in March 2005 was awarded on a short-term, pump priming basis, as was stated at the instigation of the funding.

Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Authority

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether the forthcoming White Paper on Local Government will clarify whether an executive mayor could replace the indirectly appointed Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Authority. [69220]

Mr. Woolas *[holding answer 10 May 2006]:* We expect that the Local Government White Paper will clarify any proposals for directly elected mayors for city-regions or former metropolitan areas.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Claims

Gordon Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the time taken to rate a claim for *(a)* jobseekers' allowance and *(b)* income support was in Alloa in (i) May 2004 and (ii) May 2005. [69303]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking what the time to rate a claim for Jobseeker's Allowance and Income Support was in Alloa in May 2004 and May 2005. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Our measure of the time taken to process a claim is the Actual Average Clearance Time. For 2005/06, the Jobcentre Plus Key Management Indicator level for processing claims for Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance were 12 working days.

Jobcentre Plus does not record information separately for Alloa. However, it is included with the information for the Stirling area. The Actual Average Clearance Times for the Stirling area are in the table.

	Jobseeker's Allowance Clearance Time (Days)	*Income Support Clearance Time (Days)*
May 2004	8.9	12.5
May 2005	8.4	10.9

I hope this is helpful.

Child Poverty

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures the UK Government are assessing to target help to children in the UK that live below 27 per cent. of median income. [67281]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available.

Specific information regarding low income for Wales, Scotland and the English regions of Great Britain is available in the latest publication of "Households Below Average Income 1994-95 to 2004-05".

Poverty is about more than low income. It is also about health, housing and the quality of the environment. Households who report the lowest incomes may not have the lowest living standards. Therefore households in the lowest range of income distribution should not automatically be considered to have the lowest living standards.

Our current approach in "Opportunity for All" is to present a range of low income thresholds (50, 60 and 70 per cent. of median income). This gives an idea of the depth of poverty and it is simple to interpret. Indeed, the incorporation of two different relative low income thresholds into our new child poverty measure (60 and 70 per cent. of median income), together with the absolute tier, further ensures that different depths of poverty will be looked at separately.

All publications listed are available in the Library.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people came on to the Child Support Agency system in each of the last 12 months. [66831]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is the matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the right. hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people came on to the Child Support Agency system in each of the last 12 months.

Following clarification received from your office, a table showing the change in the Agency's caseload over the last 12 months, as well as the Agency's intake of potential applications, is presented in the attached table.

Further information on the Agency's caseload and intake is available in the Child Support Agency's Quarterly Summary Statistics (QSS), published on 27th April 2006. A copy of this document is available in the House of Commons Library. Specifically in the QSS:

Table 1 shows the Agency's caseload, and a breakdown thereof.

Table 2.1 shows the number of potential applications received each month by the Agency.

I hope you find this useful.

The Agency's caseload, and the change in the Agency's caseload relative to the previous month, for April 2005 to March 2006

	Caseload	*Change in caseload relative to previous month*	*Monthly intake of potential applications*
April 2005	1,426,000	10,000	25,000
May 2005	1,427,000	1,000	25,000
June 2005	1,432,000	5,000	25,000
July 2005	1,440,000	8,000	25,000
August 2005	1,447,000	6,000	23,000
September 2005	1,449,000	2,000	24,000
October 2005	1,456,000	7,000	29,000
November 2005	1,464,000	8,000	30,000
December 2005	1,475,000	11,000	23,000
January 2006	1,486,000	10,000	30,000
February 2006	1,503,000	18,000	34,000
March 2006	1,519,000	16,000	35,000

Notes:
1. The Agency's caseload consists of all open pre-calculation/assessment cases, and cases with a maintenance liability (including those with both a nil and positive maintenance liability).
2. The size of the Agency's caseload will be affected by the Agency's intake and the number of cases that are closed within any given time period.
3. It is not possible to quantify the extent to which the Agency's clerical new-scheme caseload is or is not included in the above numbers.
4. Volumes are rounded to the nearest thousand. Components may therefore not sum, due to rounding.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the Child Support Agency (CSA) quarterly statistical summary, published on 27 April, what assessment he has made of the reasons for the reduction in the old scheme CSA caseload by 42,000 cases between March 2005 and March 2006. [67633]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is the matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the right hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 11 May 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Child Support Agency (CSA) quarterly statistical summary published on 27th April what assessment he has made of the reasons for the reduction in the old scheme CSA caseload by 42,000 cases between March 2005 and March 2006.

As noted in Table 1 of the Agency's Quarterly Summary Statistics (QSS), the old scheme caseload reduced from 965,000 in March 2005 to 923,000 in March 2006. There are three reasons for this fall:

i. Some cases will have been closed or withdrawn either at the request of the parent with care or because the youngest child in a case has reached an age at which he or she no longer qualifies for child support, and any outstanding arrears on that case have been paid by the non-resident parent.

ii. Some cases will have had relevant links to new schema cases and been reactively converted onto the new scheme during the period in question.

iii. The old scheme no longer has any intake-any new applications received by the Agency from 3rd March 2003 onwards are treated as new scheme applications.

The above means that the old scheme caseload can be expected to reduce steadily over time. It should be noted that the Agency's new scheme caseload increased by 144,000 over the same period, from 452,000 to 596,000.

Natascha Engel: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when a decision will be made to move existing Child Support Agency cases from the old scheme to the new scheme. [68450]

Mr. Plaskitt: We have always said that we could not consider transferring the bulk of the old scheme caseload onto the new scheme until the new scheme was working well.

We have asked Sir David Henshaw to consider this issue as part of his redesign of the child support scheme. Sir David Henshaw has been asked to deliver his findings to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Hutton) before the summer recess.

Departmental Leave

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many days have been lost to sickness absence in her Department in each of the last three years. [64495]

Mrs. McGuire: The information available is contained in the following table. The figures show the total working days lost to sickness absence, as well as an average of working days lost per staff year. The information has been drawn from internal DWP records based on data from the Department's payroll systems.

Year ended	*Working days lost*	*Average*
February 2004	1,713,573	12.6
February 2005	1,632,678	12.5
February 2006	1,249,179	10.3

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what opportunities exist for people to work beyond retirement age in his Department. [68994]

Mrs. McGuire: DWP operates the civil service-wide arrangement for senior civil servants, with retirement at age 60. The head of the Department and Agency chief executives have the flexibility to retain SCS staff beyond 60 if they judge it to be in the public interest and are satisfied about the fitness and efficiency of the individual to carry out their duties. We have one SCS member of staff working beyond age 60 out of a total of 247 SCS members.

DWP policy provides the opportunity for staff in grades below the senior civil service to request to work beyond our retirement age of 65. We have 220 people out of a total of 116,965 working over age 65.

There are no special arrangements to identify work opportunities for people over 65. They are treated the same as all other employees.

We have successfully operated the arrangements for staff below SCS since October 2003, which is three years ahead of the implementation in October this year of the DTI Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006. The regulations will prohibit age discrimination in employment and vocational training.

We have reviewed the effectiveness of this policy and from 1 October 2006 we will have no mandatory retirement age at all for staff below SCS.

By removing the retirement age of 65, we are giving people more choice about managing their working lives and planning for retirement. DWP positively encourages older workers, and recognise the benefits of experienced and committed staff.

This change to our retirement policy is another positive measure in the Department's progress in championing diversity and further demonstrates our commitment to ending discrimination.

Departmental Relocation

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which buildings and sites used by his Department and related agencies *(a)* have ceased to be used in the last year and *(b)* will be closed under current plans for relocation. [31763]

Mrs. McGuire: The information has been placed in the Library.

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list *(a)* the websites operated by his Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65209]

Mr. Timms: Table A lists those websites operated by Department for Work and Pensions where we are responsible for the content.

Table A

Website name	*Website address*
Department for Work and Pensions	www.dwp.gov.uk
Jobcentre Plus	www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk
The Pension Service	www.thepensionservice.gov.uk
Child Support Agency	www.csa.gov.uk
Directgov Disabled People and Carers Sections	www.direct.gov.uk/disability
Directgov Over 50s Section	www.direct.gov.uk/over50s
Age Positive	www.agepositive.gov.uk
Employment Zones	www.employmentzones.gov.uk
Benefit Fraud Inspectorate	www.bfi.gov.uk
Office for Disability Issues	www.officefordisability.gov.uk
European Social Fund	www.esf.gov.uk

Table B lists those websites operated by the Department for Work and Pensions but where we are not responsible for the content.

Table B

Website name	*Website address*
Disability Employment Advisory Committee	www.deac.org.uk
Disability Living Allowance Advisory Board	www.dlaab.org.uk
Employer Task Force	www.employertaskforce.org.uk
Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force	www.emetaskforce.gov.uk
Independent Case Examiner	www.ind-case-exam.org.uk
Industrial Injuries Advisory Council	www.iiac.org.uk
National Employment Panel	www.nationalemploymentpanel.gov.uk
Pensions At Work	www.pensionsatwork.org
Pensions Commission	www.pensionscommission.org.uk
Social Security Advisory Committee	www.ssac.org.uk

Table C details the reports placed by the Department on the internet, that is all sites listed in tables A and B, in March 2006.

Table C	*Date added*	*Paper copies?*
Reports added to the Child Support Agency www.csa.gov.uk		
Business Plan	30 March 06	Yes
Reports added to the Department for Work and Pensions www.dwp.gov.uk		
New Deal for Disabled People Evaluation: Survey of Eligible Population, Wave Three. Research Report No. 324	7 March 2006	Yes
Review of Action Teams for Jobs. Research Report 328	7 March 2006	Yes
DWP Decision Making Standards Committee -Annual Report 2004-05	8 March 2006	Yes
Survey of employers' policies, practices and preferences relating to age. Research Report no. 325	9 March 2006	Yes
The employment rates of disabled people	9 March 2006	Yes
Households Below Average Income (HBAI) 1994-95-2004-05	9 March 2006	Yes
Tackling poverty - a progress report	9 March 2006	Yes
Revaluation of earnings factor order 2006	10 March 2006	Yes
Occupations Pension Schemes: Review of Certain Contracting Out Terms	15 March 2006	Yes
A review of the JSA sanctions regime: Summary Research Findings. Report No. 313	16 March 2006	Yes
Making random assignment happen: Evidence from the UK Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA) demonstration. Research Report No. 330	16 March 2006	Yes
Sanctions: Qualitative summary report on lone parent customers. Working Paper No. 27	16 March 2006	Yes
Pensioners' Income Series	16 March 2006	Yes
Housing Benefit Quarterly Performance Statistics (Data for third quarter 2005-06)	16 March 2006	Yes
Housing Benefit Quarterly Fraud Performance Statistics (Data for third quarter 2005-06)	16 March 2006	Yes
Family Resources Survey	17 March 2006	Yes
Opportunity For All Indicators 11, 24, 37 and 39 updated	17 March 2006	No
Debt Management Customer Charter	20 March 2006	Yes
An investigation of CSA Maintenance Direct Payments: Qualitative study. Research Report No. 327	21 March 2006	Yes
Survey of Annuity Pricing'	28 March 2006	Yes
The Pension Service Customer Survey 2005. Research Report No. 331	23 March 2006	Yes
Latest Jobcentre Plus print products added to the HTML online catalogue	28 March 2006	Yes
The Occupational Pension Schemes (Exemption) Regulations 2006: Government Response	29 March 2006	Yes
The Occupational Pension Schemes (Winding up Procedure) Regulations 2006	29 March 2006	Yes
Disability Discrimination Act 2005 Disability Discrimination (Premises) Regulations 2006 Regulatory Impact Assessment	29 March 2006	Yes
The Disability Discrimination (Premises) Regulations 2005	29 March 2006	Yes
The Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Consultation by employers and miscellaneous amendment) Regulations 2006, and	29 March 2006	Yes
The Occupational Pension Schemes (Consultation by employers) (Modification for multi-employer schemes) Regulation 2006	29 March 2006	Yes

Table C	Date added	Paper copies?
Disability and Carers Service launch Business Plan	30 March 2006	Yes
Employers' Pension Provision Survey 2005. Research Report No. 329	30 March 2006	Yes
Experience of the Job Retention and Rehabilitation Pilot. Research Report No. 339	30 March 2006	Yes
Impacts of the Job Retention and Rehabilitation Pilot. Research Report No. 342	30 March 2006	Yes

Disability Living Allowance

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 20 October 2006, *Official Report*, column 1198W, on disability living allowance, what proportion of people in West Lancashire awarded disability living allowance on the basis of behavioural disorder, including enuresis and hyperactivity, were children. [64083]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of disability living allowance is a matter for the Chief Executive of the Disability and Carers Service, Mr. Terry Moran. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Terry Moran, dated 11 May 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 20th October 2006 Official Report column 1198W on disability living allowance what proportion of people in West Lancashire awarded disability living allowance on the basis of behavioural disorder including enuresis and hyperactivity were children.

The Minister for Disabled People, Anne McGuire MP, promised you a substantive reply from the Chief Executive of the Disability and Carers Service.

As at November 2005, there were 5,840 Disability Living Allowance claimants living in the Lancashire West Parliamentary Constituency of which 140 claimants have their main disabling condition recorded as "behavioural disorder including enuresis and hyperactivity". Of these, 100 claimants (73.8%) are aged under 16.

DEFINITIONS AND CONVENTIONS:"-" Nil or Negligible;"." Not applicable; Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest ten. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

SOURCE: DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study for totals.

Notes:

1 Totals shows the number of people in receipt of an allowance, and excludes people with entitlement where the payment has been suspended, for example if they are in hospital.

2. Parliamentary Constituencies have been allocated using the ONS postcode directory.

3. Some claimants have more than one disabling condition, only the main disabling condition is recorded on the IFD datasets.

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what discussions his Department has had with charities and campaign groups on the Disability Living Allowance application form; and whether recommendations were made relating to the form following such meetings. [66158]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of Disability Living Allowance is a matter for the Chief Executive of the Disability and Carers Service, Mr. Terry Moran. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Terry Moran:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions his Department has had with charities and campaign groups on the Disability Living Allowance application form; and whether recommendations were made relating to the form following such meetings.

The Minister for Disabled People, Anne McGuire MP, promised you a substantive reply from the Chief Executive of the Disability and Carers Service.

The establishment of DCS as an Agency on 1 November 2004 marked an increased focus on understanding the needs of its customers through early and proactive consultation with customer representative organisations. As changes have been made to some of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) claim forms over the last year, DCS has undertaken specific consultation activity with the DCS Advisory Forum and where appropriate the wider lobby. The DCS Advisory Forum is the Disability and Carers Service's (DCS) main mechanism for consulting with the Voluntary and Community Sector. The forum was originally established in 1998 to provide advice and guidance to officials of DCS and the Department on the impact of change initiatives on disabled customers.

We are currently reviewing the DLA National claim form. This will be issued to the DCS Advisory Forum in May. Full consideration will be given to any comments received and full responses to those comments will be provided.

In July 2005, we consulted with the DCS Advisory Forum on the proposed DLA Adult Claim form to be used within the Customer Case Management (CCM) test taking place at Manchester and Bootle Disability Benefit Centres (DBCs). At special events in July and September 2005, we also consulted with a high number of local voluntary and community organisations within the Manchester and Bootle DBC catchment areas.

In January 2006, we returned to the DCS Advisory Forum to consult with them on the proposed second version of the CCM claim form.

As a result of this consultation activity, a number of suggestions were submitted, many of which we have been able to incorporate. This has led to improvements being made to the form which will make it easier for customers to understand and answer the questions; provides customers with the option to describe the help they need and the difficulties they have at the end of each question; the layout, format and wording have also been improved and makes the form visibly clearer and easy to read.

When a suggestion has been made but not acted upon, for example where the suggestion would unfairly advantage one group of disabled people at the expense of other groups, reasons were given to the Forum to explain why the suggestion was not taken up.

On 20 March 2006, the provision for customers to make e-claims via the internet for a range of DWP benefits was introduced, including DLA and AA. DCS took the lead on consulting on behalf of the Department with Interactive Demonstration and Preview events of the DWP e-Services taking place in Manchester and Birmingham in November 2005. These events provided customer representative groups with early sight of the DLA, Attendance Allowance, State Pension UK, Jobcentre Plus, and Child Support maintenance application e-forms. The DCS Advisory Forum, Jobcentre Plus Key Stakeholders and the Pension Service Partnerships Against Poverty Group were invited to attend these events, with representation from wider customer representative organisations also attending on the day. As a result of the comments received at these events, improvements to the DLA e-claim form are to be made. Steps are now being taken to include the provision for customer representatives to include their details, an option to provide Textphone details and increasing the size of text boxes.

Our consultation approach via the formal DCS Advisory Forum, the wider lobby where appropriate, and via customer feedback channels allows for continuous dialogue and suggestions from our customers or their representatives as to how our claim forms can be improved.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Disabled People

Tom Levitt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on his Department's progress in fulfilling its statutory obligation as a public body of promoting the rights of disabled people. [66008]

Mrs. McGuire: The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 placed new duties on public authorities to promote equality for disabled people, 'the Disability Equality Duty'. This Department (DWP) has taken the following steps to meet the Disability Equality Duty:

DWP is host to the Office for Disability Issues (ODI), which was launched on 1 December 2005 to take forward the Government's strategy for improving the life chances of disabled people. One element of this work will be to overset the effective implementation of the Disability Equality Duty. The ODI is working in partnership with the Disability Rights Commission to support and encourage Departments to commit to meaningful actions that will improve their policies and services and realise the potential of their diverse workforces.

The Department is already working towards the publication of its disability equality schemes by 4 December 2006. The process was formally launched in April 2006 and will mean both central units and agencies involving disabled people in developing action plans for tackling problem areas and identifying positive actions to address these. We have also already begun planning for the Secretary of State's report due in 2008.

DWP is currently revising its existing guidance on accessible communications with a view to introducing a new standard for information accessibility. This set of standards will form part of the disability equality scheme referred to earlier.

We have commissioned public access audits of all its premises used by the public during 2003. A total of 1,735 buildings were surveyed, and a programme of public access improvement works commissioned on 1,032 sites which are scheduled for completion in June 2006. The existing public access provisions are subject to annual review and any future additional requirement is built into the annual maintenance work programmes.

The Department wants staff to understand and embrace diversity and an important part of achieving this has been the development of a diversity toolkit which makes all our diversity and equality policy and information easily accessible in one place on an internal website. The toolkit also is now being used by around 70 other organisations.

The Department is keen to ensure we meet the workplace needs of disabled staff and potential staff and recently DWP has run two pilot exercises on a revised process for delivering reasonable workplace adjustments for staff. The development of the new process was partly in response to the length of time it took to assess and put reasonable adjustments into place, and partly to ensure that the recommended adjustment was the most suitable for that individual. A third pilot is due to start shortly. This will be followed by a formal evaluation exercise. On completion of the first two pilots, and subject to the evaluation, we will commence planning for national implementation across the Department and agencies.

DWP encourages all business units to consider the potential impact of policy and services on all equality groups, ahead of future legislation. For example, at least three impact assessments have been completed to date by the Disability and Carers Service, taking into account disability, with a number of additional assessments in the process of being completed.

The Department has been working in partnership with the Employers' Forum on Disability in order to address the needs of its disabled customers. In particular, it has contributed, along with other public and private organisations, to the interactive "Disability Confident" training resource pack which uses both video and DVD format. This addresses the key principles of dealing with disabled people in general, and particularly communications issues relating to those with specific impairments. This earned a special commendation in the prestigious 'World of Learning Awards'.

Both the Minister for Disabled People and senior officials participate in an annual series of meetings with disabled customers and those with disability interests to explain current and planned policy, and to gain a better knowledge of people's views and concerns.

DWP consults with staff on disability issues through a National Disability Staff Network Group. The Department has recently reviewed all of the staff network groups with the intention of raising their profile and enabling them to contribute to successful diversity outcomes for the Department. Representatives from all of the groups have met with the recently appointed Permanent Secretary twice and he has committed to meet with them on a quarterly basis.

DWP also analyses, and acts upon, staff perceptions on diversity issues in the annual staff attitude survey; and meets regularly with trade unions side to consider disability along with other diversity issues. In addition, staff can raise diversity issues at regular staff forum events held around the country and via a site on the DWP intranet.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment she has made of the reasons for the change in the number of people claiming incapacity benefit for mental and behavioural disorders for the period 1995 to 2005; and if she will make a statement. [63302]

Mrs. McGuire: The department has undertaken substantial in-house analysis to determine both the trends and the reasons for the change in the number of those claiming incapacity benefit for mental and behavioural disorders.

The rise in the number of people with mental and behavioural disorders claiming incapacity benefits mirrors a rise in the overall number of individuals in the population with mental health problems.

Claimants with mental and behavioural disorders as a primary diagnosis now make up an increasing proportion of the overall caseload accounting for almost 40 per cent. of the total caseload, compared with 25 per cent. in the mid 1990s; although growth in the proportion of the caseload with mental and behavioural disorders has been slowing in recent quarters. This is both because they make up an increasing proportion of inflows and because they have lower off-flow rates than other groups. It follows that, people with mental health conditions are, on average, much more likely to become long-term claimants.

Pension Credit

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the current application processing time is for pension credit. [67878]

Mr. Timms: The Pension Service's internal target for processing applications for pension credit is 10 working days. The average time taken during March 2006 was 9.01 working days. The year to date figure is 8.79 working days.

Recruitment

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on recruitment, search and selection agencies in each of the last five years. [68334]

Mrs. McGuire: This information is not collated within this Department and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Staff Development

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total cost was of *(a)* staff away days and *(b)* staff team building exercises in his Department in each of the last three years. [68993]

Mrs. McGuire: Full information on the total cost of staff training away days and team building exercises organised by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is not collated and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Transactional Processes

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he has taken to modernise transactional processes within *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the agencies for which he has responsibility in the last three years. [51988]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department and its agencies are in the course of extensive modernisation, which is being delivered through a number of substantial business change projects.

The information is in the following table.

Project	*Business area*	*Description*	*Expected completion date*
Payment modernisation	Jobcentre Plus Pension Service Disability and Carers Service	Provides for the payment of benefits and pensions directly into customer bank accounts.	Complete
Centralisation of benefits processing	Jobcentre Plus Disability and Carers Service	Rationalises the number of benefit processing centres across the country.	December 2008
Benefits processing replacement	Jobcentre Plus Disability and Carers Service	Modernised benefit processing, effective fraud management and improved service to employers. Facility for benefits to be claimed on-line.	TBA
Customer management system	Jobcentre Plus Disability and Carers Service	IT system that enables information supplied by working age customers to be gathered electronically, improving efficiency and customer service.	Complete
Customer information system	Pension Service	Database of key citizen information to be shared across DWP and other Government Departments.	July 2007
Pensions transformation programme	Pension Service	Modernised business processes, IT and telephony to deliver a significantly improved customer focused service.	Staged delivery. Final wave expected 2010.
Pensions forecasting project	Pension Service	Gives customers automated on-line pension forecasts	Complete
DCS transformation programme	Disability and Carers Service	Modernised business processes and IT.	TBA
Child support reforms	Child Support Agency	Redesign of the Child Support System. Stabilise and improve the performance of the Agency in the short term.	TBA
Central payments system	Corporate and Shared Services	New payment processing IT functionality to support payments for new entitlement management and financial scheduling systems.	September 2009

Unemployment (Brentford and Isleworth)

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what action he has taken to reduce unemployment in Brentford and Isleworth constituency since 2001 among *(a)* young people, *(b)* disabled people, *(c)* lone parents and *(d)* the long-term unemployed. [62120]

Margaret Hodge: Since 2001, nearly 1,200 lone parents, young people and long term unemployed adults have been helped into work through the New Deal in Brentford and Isleworth. People with health conditions and disabilities will also have been helped into work through New Deal for Disabled People but these figures are not available at parliamentary constituency level.

Lone parents in Brentford and Isleworth can also get additional support to help them into work through the Work Search Premium and In-Work Credit. The Lone Parent Work Search Premium was introduced in October 2004 and eligible lone parents can receive an additional £20 per week if they agree to undertake intensive work search activities. Eligible parents in Brentford and Isleworth who obtain employment of more than 16 hours a week can also be paid £40 per week for the first year of the job through the In-Work Credit, which was also introduced in October 2004.

Over the next two years, we will be extending our Pathways to Work pilots to every part of Britain. The pilots have already shown significant success in helping people off incapacity benefit and into employment.

Information on the numbers of people helped into work through New Deal for Young People, New Deal for Lone Parents and New Deal 25 plus, which is specifically aimed at helping long term unemployed adults into work, is in the following table.

New Deal in Brentford and Isleworth

	Individuals into work:	
	Since January 2001	*Since the start of the programme*
New Deal for Young People	430	770
New Deal for Lone Parents	490	660
New Deal 25 plus	240	360

Note:
1. Figures are to the end of August 2005 and are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:
Department for Work and Pensions Information Directorate

HOME DEPARTMENT

Assets Recovery Agency

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the Answer to Question 64418, what progress the Assets Recovery Agency has made in meeting its targets; and if he will list completed cases, broken down by *(a)* regional recovery team and *(b)* value of realised receipts. [67625]

Mr. Coaker: Information on the Assets Recovery Agency's progress on completed cases and the value of realised receipts is shown in Tables 1 and 2. It is not possible to break down the Agency's figures further by region. The Agency is currently finalising its Annual Report 2005-06 which will set out progress in meeting its targets. The Report will be sent to my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary who will lay it before Parliament. Information on the current performance of police forces, including Regional Asset Recovery Teams, in obtaining orders for the recovery of criminal assets is set out in Table 3. The regional teams are not part of the Assets Recovery Agency; they are funded separately by the Home Office.

Assets Recovery Agency: number of completed civil recovery/tax cases Table 1

	Total	*England and Wales*	*Northern Ireland*
2003-04	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
2004-05	12	10	2
2005-06[2]	23	20	3

[1] There were no completed cases in 2003-04 as this was the first full operational year of the Agency.
[2] 2005-06 performance figures are to end March 2006. Final year-end performance figures are yet to be finalised.

Assets Recovery Agency: value of realised assets received from civil recovery/tax cases Table 2

£

	Total	*England and Wales*	*Northern Ireland*
2003-04	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
2004-05	4,142,285.32	3,688,998.65	453,286.67
2005-06[2]	4,338,513.01	3,567,952.56	770,560.45

[1] There were no realised assets from completed cases in 2003-04 as this was the first full operational year of the Agency.
[2] 2005-06 performance figures are to end March 2006. Final year-end performance figures are yet to be finalised; therefore are subject to change.

Value to cash forfeitures and confiscation orders obtained for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 December 2005[1] Table 3

£

Force	*Total*	*Regional Asset Recovery Teams contributions*	*Asset Recovery Agency contributions*	*Revised totals*
Avon and Somerset Constabulary	817,220.47	53,353.00	84,000.00	954,573.47
Bedfordshire Police	238,146.76	—	—	238,146.76
British Transport Police	100,480.00	—	—	100,480.00
Cambridgeshire Constabulary	204,313.66	—	—	204,313/66
Cheshire Constabulary	793,780.02	—	—	793,780.02
City of London Police	1,178,371.26	307,802.28	—	1,486,173.54
Cleveland Police	187,331.34	99,162.00	—	286,493.34
Cumbria Constabulary	131,332.04	—	—	131,332.04

Value to cash forfeitures and confiscation orders obtained for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 December 2005[1] Table 3

£

Force	Total	Regional Asset Recovery Teams contributions	Asset Recovery Agency contributions	Revised totals
Derbyshire Constabulary	313,305.11	—	—	313,305.11
Devon and Cornwall Constabulary	855,578.42	—	17,000.00	872,578.42
Dorset Police	953,272.47	—	—	953,272.47
Durham Constabulary	288,533.06	650,000.00	—	938,533.06
Dyfed-Powys Police	87,083.45	109,871.00	—	176,954.45
Essex Police	543,273.28	—	—	543,273.28
Gloucestershire Constabulary	277,488.02	—	—	277,486.02
Greater Manchester Police	4,380,658.06	77,975.00	1,500.00	4,460,133.06
Gwent Police	176,142.99	12,945.07	—	189,088.06
Hampshire Constabulary	676,090.49	—	—	676,090.40
Hertfordshire Constabulary	488,030.39	—	—	488,030.39
Humberside Police	109,819.90	1,805.00	—	111,624.90
Kent Police	1,150,761.50	—	—	1,150,761.50
Lancashire Constabulary	912,178.47	2,626,603.86	448,307.43	3,987,089.76
Leicestershire Constabulary	862,768.41	—	—	862.768.41
Lincolnshire Police	575,529.15	—	—	575,529.15
Merseyside Police	2,280,592.87	926,619.79	—	3,187,212.66
Metropolitan Police Service	15,724,615.70	2,023,620.24	1,796,000.00	19,544,235.94
NCS	13,928,665.28	—	—	13,928,665.28
Norfolk Constabulary	3,335,048.98	—	—	3,335.048.98
North Wales Police	598.373.97	—	—	598,373.97
North Yorkshire Police	279,915.49	—	—	279,915.49
Northamptoashire Police	514,869.23	41,640.00	—	556,509.23
Northumbria Police	271,638.42	—	209,000.00	480,638.42
Nottinghamshire Police	448,822.33	—	—	448,822.33
Police Services of Northern Ireland	302,370.92	—	160,000.00	462,370.92
South Wales Police	306,501.28	4,757,638.85	—	5,064,140.13
South Yorkshire Police	997,344.15	143,298,32	—	1,140,642.47
Staffordshire Police	576,800.64	159,238.22	—	736,038.86
Suffolk Constabulary	579,204.82	—	—	579,204.82
Surrey Police	470,913.79	—	—	470,913.79
Sussex Police	1,982,343.00	—	—	1,982,343.00
Thames Valley Police	630,896.12	—	—	630,896.12
Warwickshire Police	24,567.10	219,125.00	—	243,692.10
West Mercia Constabulary	1,175,363.25	17,500.00	—	1,192,863.25
West Midlands Police	3,004,222.92	216,757.63	35,000.00	3,255,980.55
West Yorkshire Police	2,985,974.50	365,705.48	—	3,351,679.98
Wiltshire Constabulary	418,691.24	—	—	418,691.24
Total	67,099,242.72	12,810,660.74	2,750,807.43	82,660,710.89

[1] Excludes orders obtained by HM Revenue and Customs and other agencies.

Conviction Rates

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many convictions for public order offences there were in Doncaster North in *(a)* 1984, *(b)* 1994, *(c)* 2004 and *(d)* the most recent period for which figures are available. [68404]

Mr. Coaker: The following table shows the number of defendants convicted at all courts in Doncaster for public order offences in 1984, 1994 and 2004. 2004 is the most recent period for which data is currently available. It is not possible to identify convictions in Doncaster north as the data are not collected at that level of detail. Data for 2005 will be available in the autumn.

Number of defendants convicted for public order offences in courts in Doncaster petty sessional area, 1984,1994 and 2004[1]

Offence description	1984	1994	2004
Rioting	—	—	—
Violent disorder	—	6	1
Affray	—	28	65

Note:
[1]These data are provided on the principal offence basis

Criminal Records Bureau

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions since March 2004 applicant details supplied by the Criminal Records Bureau to the police led to conviction details being matched mistakenly with an applicant. [38194]

Joan Ryan: There have been 1472 occasions since March 2004 where disclosure applicant details were matched by the Criminal Records Bureau to a person with the same or similar details who has a criminal record and, where the details had been challenged by the applicant, their dispute was subsequently upheld.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost to his Department was of Criminal Records Bureau applications in 2005-06. [69441]

Joan Ryan: Interim financial results for the 2005-06 Financial Year indicate the amount funded by the Home Office to be £1.78 million.

Economic Migrants (Wirral, West)

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many economic migrants there are in Wirral, West. [62351]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 11 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question regarding how many economic migrants there are in Wirral, West. (62351)

We are not able to provide estimates of the number of economic migrants in Wirral West, as this information is not collected.

Electronic Tagging (Providers)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the firms which provide electronic tagging of offenders for his Department. [69365]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Since 1 April 2005 electronic monitoring services in England and Wales have been provided by two companies, Group Four Securicor and Serco.

Foreign Prisoners

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether there is an official in the prison service who is responsible for foreign national prisoners; and if he will make a statement; [67471]

(2) whether there is a unit in his Department with responsibility for liaison between the prison service and the Immigration and Nationality Directorate; and if he will make a statement. [67576]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Different aspects of policy in relation to foreign national prisoners are the responsibility of a number of different policy units. However, the lead for policy on the management of foreign national prisoners in custody rests with the offender policy and rights unit of the national offender management service.

Internet Watch Foundation

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he made of the Internet Watch Foundation's annual report 2005; and if he will make a statement. [66691]

Mr. Coaker: The Government welcome the 2005 annual report of the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), published in March 2006, and congratulates the IWF and their partners on their achievements. The IWF report an increase in the number of reports made to their hotline, from 17,255 in 2004 to 23,658 in 2005.

This resulted in 6,128 reports being made to law enforcement agencies and other national hotlines around the world. The report also highlights the fact that only 0.4 per cent. of potentially illegal child abuse content identified by the IWF in 2005 was hosted in the UK. This represents a major improvement from 18 per cent. in 1997, and demonstrates the commitment of the IWF, the UK industry, and others, to work collaboratively to remove potentially illegal child abuse content wherever in the world it originates. The IWF report that there were no instances of either criminally obscene content or criminally racist content hosted in the UK during 2005.

The Government also pay tribute to the IWF for supplying a list of websites to ISPs, mobile operators, search providers and filtering companies so they can play their part in protecting UK internet users from being inadvertently exposed to potentially illegal child abuse content by various blocking techniques. The fact that the IWF's core funders have grown in number to over 60 is evidence of their strengthening reputation. The IWF is seen as a highly successful model of cooperation and one which other countries seek to learn from and replicate.

Motoring Offences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the reply 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, c. 318W, on motoring offences, what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the reasons that females were convicted of offences at a higher rate than males; and if he will make a statement. [69608]

Mr. Coaker: The following tables which appeared in the reply to the hon. Member was subject to a processing error by the official reporters in which columns were transposed. The tables have been re-submitted.

Table A: Convictions at South East Essex PSA[1] by sex, 1996-2004.

Number of offences

	1996		1997		1998		1999		2000	
Offence	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Brakes defective[2]	14	2	8	1	9	—	3	—	2	—
Lighting offences[3]	156	11	133	17	146	18	78	17	112	27

	2001		2002		2003		2004	
Offence	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Brakes defective[2]	—	—	2	—	2	—	4	—
Lighting offences[3]	94	11	61	6	32	2	28	3

Notes:
[1]Data for Southend are not available but data are given for the S.E. Essex P.S.A. which covers Southend.
[2]The lighting defect data are not available broken down to the level of detail requested. Offence under the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regs. 16 & 18 and Sch. 3; Road Traffic Act 1988 s. 41A as added the Road Traffic Act 1991 s.8.
[3]Offence under the Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations 1989; the Road Vehicle (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 1971 Reg. 19.

Table B: Convictions at magistrates' courts, by sex, Essex police force area, 1996-2004.

Number of offences

	1996		1997		1998		1999		2000	
Offence	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Brakes defective[1]	55	3	42	2	56	5	29	4	21	2
Lighting offences[2]	463	45	390	32	453	53	323	50	331	51

	2001		2002		2003		2004	
Offence	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Brakes defective[1]	24	2	19	2	18	—	10	—
Lighting offences[2]	252	38	231	28	131	16	121	8

[1]Offence under the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regs. 1986 Regs. 16 & 18 and Sch. 3; Road Traffic Act 1988 s. 41A as added by the Road [2]Offence under the Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations 1989; the Road Vehicle (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 1971 Reg. 19

Table C: Convictions at magistrates' courts, by sex, England and Wales, 1996-2004.

Number of offences

	1996		1997		1998		1999		2000	
Offence	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Brakes defective[1]	3,823	191	3,424	201	3,157	201	2,364	155	2,020	134
Lighting offences[2]	18,404	1,548	17,425	1,621	16,977	1,676	15,638	1,610	13,019	1,423

	2001		2002		2003		2004	
Offence	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Brakes defective[1]	1,610	99	1,376	89	1,239	75	1,070	62
Lighting offences[2]	10,314	1,162	10,076	1,165	9,444	1,121	8,722	953

[1]Offence under the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regs. 1986 Regs. 16 & 18 and Sch. 3; Road Traffic Act 1988 s. 41A as added by the Road Traffic Act 1991 s. 8
[2]Offence under the Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations 1989; the Road Vehicle (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 1971 Reg. 19

National Identity Register

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the sole address permitted on the National Identity Register will be an individual's private residential address. [68646]

Joan Ryan *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* An individual on registration will be required to provide his principal residential address but the Identity Cards Act 2006 also allows the registering of other addresses at which he has a place of residence, including addresses overseas. The extent to which secondary addresses may or must be registered, as with other details of the registration process, will be determined in secondary legislation.

This will have to be approved by Parliament under the affirmative resolution procedure and full guidance will be provided to individuals registering. It is intended that all addresses registered will be residential addresses, not business or contact addresses, except potentially in exceptional cases such as persons with no fixed abode, who may only have a contact address. Section 42(10) of the Act allows regulations to be made defining these special cases.

People Trafficking

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to make it a criminal offence to pay for sex with a person who has been illegally trafficked. [68385]

Mr. Coaker: We consider that the Sexual Offences Act 2003, with its emphasis on consent freely entered into, is sufficient to prosecute men who knowingly have sex with women against their will, including women who have been illegally trafficked. The Act provides at section 74 that

"a person consents if he agrees by choice, and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice".

If the trafficked woman is engaging in prostitution under duress then we find it difficult to see how she would be considered to be freely consenting. There are also evidential assumptions at section 75 of the Act which, if proven, will mean that the complainant is taken not to have consented and these include the use and threat of violence and unlawful detention of the victim. Furthermore, creating a further offence of paying for sex with a trafficked woman may give the appearance that it is a lesser offence than rape; it is not.

If the woman does not freely consent to sex and if the defendant does not reasonably believe that she consents, then regardless of her occupation, it is rape.

Pornography

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his Department's working definition of pornography is. [66145]

Mr. Coaker *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* There is no statutory definition of 'pornography' in UK legislation. Under the Obscene Publications Act 1959 it is a criminal offence to publish any article which is considered to be 'obscene': that is, an article, if its effect when taken as a whole, is such as to tend to 'deprave and corrupt' persons who are likely, having regard to all relevant circumstances, to read see or hear the matter contained or embodied in it.

In the Government's recent Consultation Paper on the Possession of Extreme Pornographic Material, material which is explicit and has been solely, or primarily produced for the purpose of sexual arousal is considered to be 'pornographic'. By explicit we mean material in which the activity can be clearly seen and is not hidden, disguised or implied. In terms of regulation, we consider the harm that any type of material (whether pornography, violence, portrayal of drugs use, etc.) is likely to cause to the vulnerable, particularly children.

Prisons

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many existing governor grade officials in the prison service have had their status *(a)* upgraded and *(b)* downgraded; what proportion of these have been on a (i) temporary and (ii) permanent basis; and if he will make a statement. [69417]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Over the past year, 72 operational managers were permanently upgraded and three were permanently downgraded. Over the same period 91 operational managers were temporarily upgraded and 54 reverted back to a lower grade after a period of temporary promotion.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) for what reasons the compulsory transfer may take place of prison governors to alternative establishments; [69326]

(2) at what level of management in the prison service the decision compulsorily to transfer prison governor grade staff to alternative establishments is taken; and if he will make a statement. [69327]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Directed moves can happen for a varied number of reasons. These include for effective succession, to facilitate secondment, for disciplinary or performance reasons, career development, for certain personal and domestic circumstances, to fill new posts and to help support establishment performance tests or improvement plans.

Directed moves of all operational managers and senior operational managers are approved at the following levels of prison service management. Decisions about the appointment and transfer of senior operational managers (senior prison governors pay bands A to D) are made at director level. Decisions about the appointment and transfer of other prison governors (more junior prison governors pay bands F and E) are usually made at area manager level (senior civil servant).

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisons in England and Wales use hutted accommodation for inmates; and how many inmates are housed in *(a)* dormitories and *(b)* single rooms in each such prison. [68959]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Seven prisons hold prisoners in hutted accommodation. The huts form part of the accommodation available for prisoners at these establishments. These prisons are: Drake Hall, Ford, Haverigg, North Sea Camp, Ranby, Spring Hill and Sudbury. The number of prisoners held in dormitories and single cells/rooms accommodation at these prisons is not recorded centrally.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which prisons have *(a)* a special educational needs co-ordinator and *(b)* learning support assistants. [66550]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I refer the hon. Member for North-West Norfolk to the combined answer of 2 May 2006 from my hon. Friend the Member for Slough (Fiona MacTaggart) to questions 65461 and 65462, *Official Report*, column 1425W, from the hon. Member for Warrington, North (Helen Jones).

Sex Offences (South Wales)

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many sexual offences of *(a)* rape, *(b)* sexual assault, *(c)* indecent assault, *(d)* gross indecency and *(e)* unlawful sex were reported to South Wales police in 2004-05; and if he will make a statement. [55999]

Mr. Coaker: The available information relates to those offences recorded by the police and is in the table. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 came into effect in May 2004. At that time, some existing offences were repealed or re-defined and new offences were created. For completeness all the appropriate offences are provided in the table. Detailed information on the changes to sexual offences is contained in the recorded crime offence list which can be found in Appendix two of 'Crime in England and Wales 2004-05', Home Office Statistical Bulletin 11/05. Appendix two can be accessed via the following link:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb1105append.pdf

Selected recorded sexual offences for South Wales in 2004-05

		2004-05
17	Indecent assault on a male[1]	1
17A	Sexual Assault on a Male aged 13 and over[2]	18
17B	Sexual Assault on a Male Child under 13[2]	21
18	Gross indecency between males[1]	0
19A	Rape of a Female[1]	23
19B	Rape of a Male[1]	5
19C	Rape of a Female aged 16 and over[2]	77
19D	Rape of a Female child under 16[2]	46
19E	Rape of a Female child under 13[2]	19
19F	Rape of a Male aged 16 and over[2]	0
19G	Rape of a Male child under 16[2]	10
19H	Rape of a Male child under 13[2]	5
20	Indecent assault on a female[1]	34
20A	Sexual Assault on a Female aged 13 and over[2]	259
20B	Sexual Assault on a Female child under 13[2]	86
21	Sexual Activity involving a Child under 13[3]	24
22	Unlawful sexual intercourse with a girl under 16[1]	6
22A	Causing Sexual Activity without Consent[2]	6
22B	Sexual Activity involving child under 16[2]	25
23	Familial Sexual Offences[3]	19
70	Sexual Activity etc with a person with a Mental Disorder[2]	2
74	Gross indecency with a child[1]	4

Notes:
As a result of the introduction of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 in May 2004
[1]Offences in effect to the end of April 2004 only
[2]Offences in effect from May 2004 onwards
[3]Re-used offence codes form May 2004 onwards.

Sexual Assault Referral Centres

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* location, *(b)* staffing profile and *(c)* cost for the most recent year for which figures are available is of each Sexual Assault Referral Centre; what assessment he has made of the work of such centres; and if he will make a statement. [69321]

Mr. Coaker: The information requested is set out in the National Services Guidelines for Developing Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) published by the Home Office and Department of Health in October 2005 and available at www.homeoffice.gov.uk. SARCs were positively evaluated in Home Office Research Study 285, "Sexual Assault Referral Centres: Developing Good Practice and Maximising Potentials", published in 2004. They are centres of expertise, providing an enhanced medical, forensic and therapeutic response to victims of sexual assault. The Home Office has supported the development of SARCs over the last two years through the Victims Fund, and further funding will be available to assist new SARCs in 2006-07.

Tagging Orders

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders have been prosecuted for breaking the terms of tagging curfews in each of the last five years. [69366]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The readily available information, which relates to the number of persons breaching curfew orders (with and without electronic monitoring) is published in Table 4.13 of 'Sentencing Statistics, England and Wales', 2004 (page 92). This publication can be found in the Library and also on the Home Office website, as follows:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb1505.pdf.

Uninsured Drivers

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average fine for uninsured drivers was in each year since 1997. [58870]

Mr. Coaker: Available information, taken from the Court Proceedings Database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform, from 1997 to 2004 (latest available), is in the following table. 2005 data will be available early in 2007.

Average fines imposed at all courts for the offence of using a vehicle uninsured against third party risks[1] England and Wales, 1997-2004

	Average fine (£)
1997	224
1998	214
1999	212
2000	203
2001	150
2002	155
2003	160
2004	169

[1] Offence under the Road Traffic Act 1988 s. 143 (2).
Notes:
Coverage and recording practice affecting the statistics:
1. It is known that for some police force areas, the reporting of court proceedings in particular those relating to summary motoring offences, may be less than complete.
2. Since 1990, due to the delays in implementing new counting procedures, corrective action on non-keying errors was reduced resulting in deterioration in the quality of data on summary motoring proceedings.

Young Offenders

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people are detained in young offenders institutions. [67641]

Mr. Sutcliffe: On 28 February 2006 there were 8,252 young adults aged 18-20 (including some 21 year olds who have not yet been reclassified as adults) and 2,726

juveniles aged 15-17 held in prison accommodation in England and Wales. 6,186 young adults were sentenced to detention under YOI rules. There were a further 1,970 young aduits aged 18-20 held on remand under prison rules, and 96 young adults held as civil prisoners. There were 2,122 sentenced juveniles held under YOI rules. There were a further 599 remand juveniles held under prison rules, and five juveniles aged 15-17 held as civil prisoners. This information is as recorded on the Prison IT system, and excludes those held outside of the prison estate in secure training centres and local authority secure children's homes.

Youth Justice and Criminal Justice Act

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the research commissioned by his Department on section 41 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Justice Act will be published. [68558]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* RDS-OCJR are proposing to publish the research it commissioned on section 41 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Justice Act on 25 May 2006.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Colombia

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the answer of 16 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 75W, on Colombia, in what ways *(a)* the UK has re-aligned its project assistance and *(b)* the EU has re-aligned Commission project assistance to match the UN recommendations on Colombia. [69426]

Mr. Hoon: The UK's project assistance priorities have been aligned with the spirit of the UN human rights recommendations in Colombia since the latter were first published in 2003. We also take into account UK Project Programme Priorities, other donors' activities in Colombia and areas where the UK can add particular value through experience or expertise. In Colombia, current priorities for UK project assistance include the protection of child rights, improvements in the rule of law, protection and promotion of freedom of expression and human rights defenders, security sector reform and conflict resolution. We aim to support sustainable institutional reform, as well as the most vulnerable communities in Colombia. The Department for International Development also supports non-governmental organisations' projects in Colombia on sustainable economic development for vulnerable communities, health and education, environment, strengthening civil society and projects to help reduce poverty and inequality.

The EU has long provided the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) office in Colombia with both political and financial support. The EU budget is currently supporting three projects that directly help respond to the needs highlighted in their recommendations, covering capacity building of state and municipal institutions responsible for human rights. Each year the EC delegation in Colombia review the UNHCHR's office's fresh recommendations in order to be able to adapt EU co-operation projects in general, especially in the human rights field.

EU Presidency

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations her Department has made to *(a)* the EU Commission and *(b)* the Government of Finland in their capacity as the next EU presidency on the future of the UK's veto on police and judicial affairs. [69832]

Mr. Hoon: Under the current EU treaty framework, co-operation on police and judicial matters is agreed by unanimity. That could only change to majority voting if all member states, including the UK, agree. We are aware of unofficial proposals to apply majority voting to some areas of police and judicial co-operation, but there is no formal proposal under discussion. As such, the Government have not made formal representations to the EU Commission or to the incoming EU presidency.

Iran (Military Technology Sales)

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information she has received about the role of Belarus in exporting Russian military technology to Iran, with particular reference to S-300SP surface-to-air missiles. [69302]

Mr. Hoon: We are aware of and concerned by media reports alleging Belarus has re-exported to Iran arms bought from Russia. The established policy of the EU is not to sell arms to Iran.

Israel

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment she has made of Israel's compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty. [69931]

Mr. Hoon: Israel is not a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and is therefore not required to be in compliance with it. However, Israel has a site-specific safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) which gives the IAEA access to certain nuclear sites for monitoring.

Latin America

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations she has received concerning the level of UK diplomatic representation in Latin America; and if she will make a statement on future plans for such representation. [69222]

Mr. Hoon: In the last two years, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has received a number of representations from members of the public, hon. Members and noble Lords concerning the level of UK diplomatic representation in Latin America. These representations have focused particularly on the closure of the British embassies in Honduras (2003), El Salvador (2003), Nicaragua (2004) and Paraguay (2005).

On 28 March 2006, my right hon. Friend the then Foreign Secretary (Mr. Straw) launched the White Paper "Active Diplomacy for a Changing World: The UK's International Priorities". This updates the December 2003 White Paper "UK International Priorities: a strategy for the FCO", and sets out the Government's international priorities for the next 10 years and the FCO's strategy for delivering them. In the new White Paper we make clear that the network must change and adapt to new opportunities, risks and priorities and that opening, closing and restructuring posts is essential to maintaining our global flexibility. The new White Paper can be found on the FCO website at: http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/fullintpriorities 2006.pdf.

We therefore continue to monitor our overseas network to ensure that our resources are deployed in line with our priorities and that we provide the best possible value for money to the taxpayer.

Mikola Kalinin

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment of the human rights conditions in Belarus she has undertaken since the recent attack on Mikola Kalinin. [69473]

Mr. Hoon: The human rights situation in Belarus remains of concern. Following the flawed Presidential elections on 19 March the Belarusian regime has moved to crack-down on the opposition and to stifle any dissent. Demonstrations have been broken up and the main opposition leaders and their key supporters have been arrested or detained. The independent press remains muzzled or has been driven underground. Non-governmental organisations are subject to harassment and their funding severely curtailed. The attack on Mikola Kalinin, an activist on Roma rights, is an example of the atmosphere of intimidation that exists for those seeking to support the fundamental freedom and right of civil society to express its concerns.

We deplore this situation and the unjustified actions taken to prevent demonstrators, human rights campaigners and opposition leaders from exercising their right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression. We support calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all those arrested for taking part in demonstrations and of those political prisoners arrested before the election. My right hon. Friend the then Minister for Europe (Douglas Alexander) did so in Vilnius on 4 May when he met the wives of the arrested opposition candidates, Milinkevich and Kazulin.

Morocco

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the aims and objectives are of UK relations with Morocco. [69933]

Mr. Hoon: My right hon. Friend the Member for Blackburn (Mr. Straw) the then Foreign Secretary visited Morocco on 13 February when he met King Mohammed VI and announced the creation of a bilateral Ministerial Dialogue Forum to take forward relations. We aim to strengthen the relationship, support the Moroccan government's plans for economic and human development, and strengthen our co-operation in areas of mutual interest and concern, including tackling the threat from international terrorism and managing the challenge presented by regional migration.

Nuclear Weapons

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. [69932]

Mr. Hoon: The UK believes the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the framework for nuclear disarmament. As relevant today as it was in 1965, the NPT offers the best hope of achieving a world free from nuclear weapons. That is why the UK has consistently worked to sustain the objectives and strengthen all three pillars of the treaty.

Palestinian Authority

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions her Department has had on the possible resumption of EU aid payments to the Palestinian Authority; and if she will make a statement. [69830]

Mr. Hoon: We regularly have discussions with EU and Quartet partners (US, EU, UN and Russia) about assistance to the Palestinian people. We discussed funding issues at an informal meeting of international donors on 27 April in London, which all the Quartet members attended.

We fully support the position of the Quartet and the EU on direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority (PA). On 30 March the Quartet noted with concern that the new Palestinian Government's programme did not meet the principles which the Quartet set out on 30 January—a commitment to non-violence, recognition of Israel and acceptance of previous agreements including the roadmap. The 10 April General Affairs External Relations Council (GAERC) conclusions stated that

"the EU is reviewing its assistance to the Palestinians against the new government's commitment to the aforementioned principles. The Council recalled that the absence of such commitment will inevitably have an effect on direct assistance to that government. The EU will continue to provide necessary assistance to meet the basic needs of the Palestinian population".

On 9 May the Quartet

"expressed its willingness to endorse a temporary international mechanism that is limited in scope and duration, operates with full transparency and accountability, and ensures direct delivery of assistance to the Palestinian people".

We fully support this, having presented similar proposals at the informal meeting of international donors at Canada House on 27 April. The EU has been tasked with developing this mechanism. We will work closely with EU Partners to achieve this. We expect further discussion at the GAERC on 15 May. This mechanism is one of a range of things that the UK is doing to support the Palestinian people. On 9 May the Quartet also noted its willingness to work towards the restoration of international assistance to the PA Government once they have committed to the three Quartet principles.

On 25 April the Department for International Development announced a £15 million payment to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency.

Prisoners (British Citizens)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British subjects are serving prison sentences in other EU countries. [69600]

Mr. Hoon: On 31 March 2006, British consular officials were aware of 739 British nationals detained in EU countries. The breakdown by country is shown as follows. These figures include detainees on remand, as well as those serving sentences. We do not maintain separate statistics on the numbers serving sentences.

	Number
Austria	5
Belgium	31
Cyprus	19
Czech Republic	1
Denmark	5
Estonia	0
Finland	0
France	96
Germany	152
Greece	11
Hungary	1
Ireland	79
Italy	18
Latvia	0
Lithuania	0
Luxembourg	4
Malta	5
Netherlands	37
Poland	1
Portugal	23
Slovakia	0
Slovenia	0
Spain	233
Sweden	18

Russia

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the Russian government on racism and racial violence. [69960]

Mr. Hoon: Ministers and staff at our Embassy in Moscow regularly raise human rights issues with the Russian government in the course of their continuous contacts. We also work closely with non-governmental organisations in Russia on this issue. Our Ambassador in Moscow most recently raised our concerns about racially motivated crimes in Russia with members of the Russian Presidential Administration in April 2006. Racism was also an important issue discussed at the EU/Russia Human Rights consultation in March 2006. The EU and Russian delegations taking part also undertook a study tour of the European Centre on Racism and Xenophobia prior to the human rights consultations.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the government of Russia on the use of torture in Chechnya. [69998]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the answer my right hon. Friend the then Minister for Europe (Douglas Alexander) gave him on 27 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 312W. Following this answer, my predecessor had further discussions on the human rights situation in Chechnya with his Russian counterpart during his visit to Moscow in March 2006.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Alcohol-Related Conditions

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 461W, on alcohol-related conditions, how many people were admitted to each acute hospital in Northern Ireland where the primary or secondary diagnosis was an alcohol-related condition in each of the last three years for which data are available. [69243]

Paul Goggins: The number of individuals admitted is not available. However, the number of admissions[1] to acute hospital in Northern Ireland where the primary or secondary diagnosis was for an alcohol-related condition for each of the last three financial years is available and is presented in the following table.

[1] Discharges and deaths are used as an approximation to admissions. It is possible that any individual could be admitted to hospital more than once in any year and will thus be counted more than once as an admission.

For this answer an acute hospital has been identified as one where services in the acute programme of care are provided.

Hospital	Financial year 2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Belfast City	884	720	781
Musgrave Park	<5	7	<5
Belvoir Park	8	20	12
Forster Green	<5	<5	0
Ards	<5	<5	11
Ulster	466	553	717
Bangor	<5	6	<5
Royal Victoria	1,068	1,149	1,121
RBHSC	12	5	7
Mater	594	587	549
Lagan Valley	158	153	166
Downe	256	228	232
Robinson Memorial	0	<5	0
Dalriada	<5	<5	<5
Causeway	289	283	315
Moyle	<5	<5	<5
Whiteabbey	179	202	196
Mid Ulster	253	216	280
Antrim	463	549	580
Braid Valley	0	<5	<5
South Tyrone	0	0	<5
Lurgan	7	<5	5
Craigavon	549	597	639
Daisy Hill	314	313	383
Altnagelvin	671	599	730
Erne	67	66	55
Tyrone County	184	192	223
NI Total	6,439	6,458	7,012

Source:
Hospital Inpatient System

Ballybeen

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much he expects Ballybeen to receive from the recently announced funding for deprived Loyalist and Unionist areas; and what impact he expects the funding to have. [69662]

Mr. Hanson: On 4 April, I brought forward the Renewing Communities Action Plan, a copy of which is available in the Library. Officials are currently working to implement the measures announced in the action plan, and I would anticipate that the residents of the Ballybeen area will benefit from a range of measures in the action plan.

The Government remain committed to tackling disadvantage and the Renewing Communities Action Plan is an indication of this commitment.

Blue Badge Scheme

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in Northern Ireland were found to be abusing the blue badge scheme in 2005. [67583]

Paul Goggins: According to Police Service of Northern Ireland records, 14 fixed penalty notices (FPNs) were issued for 'wrongful use of a disabled person's badge' during 2005 while 2107 FPNs were issued for the offence of 'parking in a disabled person's parking space'.

Boundary Commission

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the expected timetable is of the Parliamentary Boundary Commission review of Northern Ireland's constituencies. [69267]

Mr. Hanson: Independent Assistant Commissioners appointed by the Secretary of State conducted three public local inquiries in September 2005 into the Commission's published Provisional Recommendations for Parliamentary constituencies. The Commission places importance on the reports of the assistant Commissioners and their recommendations and intend to make an announcement shortly having taken into account those recommendations and all the evidence available to them. The Commission is required to complete their review and submit a report with recommendations to the Secretary of State by June 2007.

Civil Service (Disciplinary Procedures)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many staff in the Northern Ireland Civil Service *(a)* have received a written warning, *(b)* have received a final written warning, *(c)* have reached the trigger points of a written warning but have not received a written warning and *(d)* have reached the trigger points of a final written warning but have not received a final written warning since the introduction of the Trigger Points Prompting Consideration of Warnings for Sickness Absence on 31 March 2004. [66686]

Mr. Hanson: The following table sets out the numbers of non-industrial and industrial staff who have received written and final written warnings in the two years since 31 March 2004.

Staff receiving a written warning and a final written warning

	Written warning	Final written warning
Non-industrial staff	1,759	207
Industrial staff	244	79

Full information on the number of staff who have reached the trigger points but not received a written warning is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost. The number of non-industrial staff who reached a trigger point during the year 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005 and did not receive a warning is 5,996.

It should be noted that when trigger points are reached, the absentee does not automatically receive a written warning. Trigger points are a mechanism used as a prompt for Departments to give consideration to the case. The Department will consider a range of

factors—which is not exhaustive—that may be relevant to whether a warning should issue including:

nature of the illness;

frequency/pattern of absences;

prior attendance record;

any previous warnings and their proximity;

whether the officer is within their probation period;

circumstances relevant to the Disability Discrimination Act;

pregnancy related absences occurring during the "protected period"; and

any mitigating circumstances presented by the line manager or officer concerned.

Where appropriate, when considering the issue of a warning, the Department will also consult with the welfare officer and the occupational health service.

There are no specific trigger points for the consideration of a final written warning. Where there has been no significant or sustained improvement following the issue of a written warning, the Department will consider the case holistically, taking account of the factors as listed above.

Class Sizes

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average class size was in each *(a)* grammar school and *(b)* other secondary school in Northern Ireland in each of the past 10 years. [67816]

Maria Eagle: The requested information in respect of grammar and other secondary schools was not collected at the time, and any attempt to do so retrospectively would be problematic and could be done only at disproportionate cost.

Community Differentials

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he has taken to ensure a consistent approach to social considerations between the Procurement Board and the Strategic Investment Board. [66388]

Mr. Hanson: The Procurement Board has approved guidance for Northern Ireland Departments on the integration of social considerations into the procurement process. The Strategic Investment Board Limited operates within that guidance in providing advice and guidance to Departments on strategic projects. The Procurement Board has also established a working group to develop further guidance on integrating social policy considerations into Public-Private Partnership procurement and SIB Limited is represented on this group.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the 20 most deprived wards in Northern Ireland are; and what percentage of the population of each are of *(a)* Catholic and *(b)* Protestant background. [66393]

Mr. Hanson: The "Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2005" report details levels of deprivation in 890 Super Output Areas covering Northern Ireland. The 20 most deprived Super Output Areas in Northern Ireland along with information on community background levels of each area from the 2001 Census are given in the following table.

20 most deprived super output areas

Ranking	*Local government district*	*Super output area*	*Community background (2001 Census)*	
			Percentage Catholic	*Percentage Protestant and other Christian*
Most deprived				
1	Belfast	Whiterock 2	99	1
2	Belfast	Shankill 2	3	94
3	Belfast	Falls 2	97	3
4	Belfast	Crumlin 2	5	92
5	Belfast	Whiterock 3	99	0
6	Belfast	Falls 3	98	2
7	Belfast	Shankill 1	3	95
8	Belfast	New Lodge 2	99	1
9	Belfast	New Lodge 1	95	4
10	Belfast	Ballymacarrett 3	3	94
11	Derry	Creggan Central 1	99	1
12	Belfast	Upper Springfield 3	97	3
13	Belfast	Ardoyne 3	98	1
14	Belfast	Falls 1	96	3
15	Belfast	New Lodge 3	98	2
16	Derry	Brandywell	99	1
17	Belfast	Duncairn 1	6	90
18	Belfast	Woodvale 3	4	94
19	Belfast	Crumlin 1	2	96
20	Belfast	Ardoyne 2	96	3

Conference Organisation Review

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland who is conducting the recently announced review of the organisation of conferences requiring input from senior Northern Ireland civil servants; what the terms of reference for the review are; what stage the review has reached; and what discussions the review team have had with senior civil servants as part of the review. [67505]

Mr. Hanson: I am not aware of any recently announced review of the organisation of conferences requiring input from senior Northern Ireland civil servants.

Departmental Entertainment

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was spent on entertainment by his Department in 2004-05; and how much of that sum is accounted for by *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation. [69667]

Mr. Hain: The information requested by the hon. Lady is not available in the format requested. The information requested is captured under "hospitality", which includes food, alcohol and other related costs. The amount spent on hospitality by the Northern Ireland Office, excluding its Agencies and NDPBs, in 2004-05 was £258,436.

All expenditure of official hospitality is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on principles set out in Government Accounting. The level of hospitality must be defined, and a broad outline of cost and numbers attending must be provided on all occasions before authorisation. Expenditure should be kept as low as possible, compatible with the occasion and the standing of guests.

A necessary pre-condition for any entertainment or hospitality to be financed from NIO funds is that it will be in the direct interests of the Northern Ireland Office. While one cannot always guarantee that the benefit will be achieved, that must be both the intention and the reasonable expectation.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many days sick leave were taken *(a)* in total and *(b)* as a result of stress in (i) each Department in Northern Ireland and (ii) the Northern Ireland office in each of the last three years, broken down by grade. [68006]

Mr. Hanson: Information reflecting the total number of days sickness absence and those attributable to psychiatric/psychological illnesses for non-industrial grades will be placed in the Library.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in *(a)* each Northern Ireland department and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Office have been disciplined for using work telephones to access premium rate numbers in each of the last five years. [68008]

Mr. Hanson: Only one officer in the core Northern Ireland Civil Service Departments and the NIO has been disciplined in the last five years for accessing premium rate numbers using a work telephone to access a premium rate number.

The officer is an employee of DARD and was disciplined in 2001.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in *(a)* each Department in Northern Ireland and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Office have been (i) disciplined and (ii) dismissed for inappropriate use of the internet while at work in each of the last five years. [68009]

Mr. Hanson: The number of staff in the core NICS Departments and the Northern Ireland Office who have been disciplined for inappropriate use of the internet while at work during the period 2001 to date is set out in the following table:

Department	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*
DARD	0	6	6	3	7	0
DCAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
DE	0	2	1	0	0	0
DEL	0	0	0	0	4	0
DETI	0	2	1	1	0	1
DFP	0	1	3	0	0	0
DHSSPS	0	0	0	0	1	0
DOE	0	0	0	0	0	0
DRD	0	2	6	0	0	0
DSD	1	0	0	0	0	0
NIO[1]	—	—	—	0	0	0
OFMDFM	0	0	0	0	0	0

[1] NIO staff did not have access to the internet until 2004

One officer in the NICS Core Departments and NIO has been dismissed for inappropriate use of the internet while at work during the period 2001 to date. This officer, who was an employee of DARD, was dismissed in 2004.

DXA Scanning

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average waiting time was in Northern Ireland in March *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2004, *(c)* 2005 and *(d)* 2006 for a bone density (DXA) scan. [69270]

Paul Goggins: The following table shows the average waiting time for a bone density (DXA) scan in all Trusts which provide this service in Northern Ireland.

Average waiting time for a bone density (DXA) scan

HSS Trust	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*
Belfast City[1]	9-11 months	12-14 months	2-3 months	2-3 months
Altnagelvin	Less than 2 weeks			
Green Park	GP referral—5 months, hospital consultant referral—2 months			

Average waiting time for a bone density (DXA) scan

HSS Trust	2003	2004	2005	2006
Sperrin Lakeland		3-4 months for non urgent, <1 week for urgent		
Craigavon Area	Not available	Not available	Not available	25 weeks

[1] Waiting time at 31 March
Source:
Health and Social Service Trusts

In addition to the above, the Royal Belfast hospital for Sick Children (RBHSC) provide bone density (DXA) scans. There is no waiting time for these scans as patients are given an appointment or seen on the day.

Essential Car Users (Health Service)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what categories of Health Service employees have qualified as essential car users in each year since 2000; and what mileage allowance was payable to each category of essential car user in each year. [69280]

Paul Goggins: Community Nurses, Midwives, Health Visitors, Social Workers, Chief Executives, Senior Executives and Senior Managers working in the Health and Personal Social Services are classified as essential car users. In determining the level of mileage allowance there are four options available to an HPSS employer: a leased car; a regular user allowance; standard mileage rate, or public transport rate depending on certain conditions being met. The mileage rates payable under each category have been in force since April 2000 and are as set out below:

Regular user allowances.

Regular user allowances are paid to employees who are designated by their employer as an essential car user, but it is uneconomic or not possible to offer a leased car, and where in the course of their employment they are required to travel either:

i. An average of more than 3,500 miles a year or

ii. An average of at least 1,250 miles a year and uses their car on average three days a week or spend 50% of their time on travel or

iii. An average of at least 1,000 miles a year and use their car on average four days a week.

The current rates payable for a regular user are in the following table:

Engine capacity	Up to 1000cc	1001cc to 1500cc	Over 1500cc
Lump sum	£508	£626	£760
Up to 9000 miles	27p	33.5p	40p
Thereafter	16.2p	18.3p	20.5p

Standard rates.

Standard mileage rates are paid to employees who use their own vehicle for official business but do not satisfy the criterion for a regular user. The current rates payable for standard mileage are as in the following table:

Engine Capacity	Up to 1000cc	1001cc to 1500cc	Over 1500cc
Up to 3,500 miles	34p	43p	53p
Thereafter	16.2p	18.3p	20.5p

Public transport mileage rate.

Public transport mileage is payable at 23p per mile where the employer deems that standard or regular user rates do not apply.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans the Government have to change the mileage allowance payable to each category of essential car users in the health service; and if he will make a statement. [69281]

Paul Goggins: The Executive of the NHS staff council will undertake a review of all mileage rates payable to NHS staff as part of their work programme for the 2006-07 year. The outcome of this review will be applicable to health and personal social services staff in Northern Ireland.

EU Funding

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much EU income was secured in each of the last 10 financial years for projects emanating from Northern Ireland. [68064]

Mr. Hanson: Details of EU income by structural fund are shown in the following table:

EU structural fund income

£ million

	European regional development fund (ERDF)	European social fund (ESF)	European agricultural guidance and fisheries fund (EAGGF)	Financial instrument for fisheries guidance (FIFG)
2005-06	133.065	24.884	28.284	0.445
2004-05	30.439	42.900	15.981	4.783
2003-04	127.184	2.844	1.754	3.734
2002-03	74.088	39.958	0.000	0.000
2001-02	95.112	43.203	5.449	1.282
2000-01	98.898	78.723	0.768	0.511
1999-2000	33.277	61.628	38.892	3.993
1998-99	115.803	15.121	12.585	2.151
1997-98	61.114	68.819	22.159	4.681
1996-97	188.573	81.060	28.333	0.711

Notes:
1. The question has been interpreted as referring to structural funds and the answer refers to these only.
2. Amounts for 2005-06 financial year are estimated and subject to confirmation.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much EU money was *(a)* allocated and *(b)* expended in respect of each source of EU funding in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 financial years. [68065]

Mr. Hanson: Details of each of the EU Structural Fund financial allocations and expenditure are shown in the following Tables A and B showing details by Structural Fund .

The question has been interpreted as referring to Structural Funds and the answer refers to these only.

The allocation amounts to Northern Ireland are made by the Commission in Euro by calendar year. These have been converted to financial years assuming an even spend over the four quarters and to Sterling at a notional rate of 1.55 = £1.00

Allocations for the Interreg III cross-border programme have been omitted, as these allocations are not made separately by jurisdiction.

Amounts for 2005-06 financial year are estimated outturn and subject to confirmation.

Table A: EU Structural Fund Allocations

	Fund	*Allocated (£ million) (£1= 1.55)*
2005-06	ERDF	37.154
	ESF	34.692
	EAGGF	10.114
	FIFG	3.483
2004-05	ERDF	78.190
	ESF	41.398
	EAGGF	12.910
	FIFG	3.511
2003-04	ERDF	94.206
	ESF	41.896
	EAGGF	13.243
	FIFG	3.517
2002-03	ERDF	95.125
	ESF	44.669
	EAGGF	12.976
	FIFG	3.467
2001-02	ERDF	98.743
	ESF	45.304
	EAGGF	12.556
	FIFG	1.758
2000-01	ERDF	113.598
	ESF	44.657
	EAGGF	9.519
	FIFG	0.709
1999-2000	ERDF	254.547
	ESF	113.220
	EAGGF	26.309
	FIFG	6.119
1998-99	ERDF	131.762
	ESF	89.014
	EAGGF	24.644
	FIFG	3.552
1997-98	ERDF	85.105
	ESF	67.303
	EAGGF	23.494
	FIFG	1.906
1996-97	ERDF	84.773
	ESF	50.434
	EAGGF	18.493
	FIFG	1.860

Notes:
European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
European Social Fund (ESF)
European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF)
Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG)
Source:
Northern Ireland Programme financial tables documents for 1994-99 and 2000-06

Table B: EU Structural Fund Expenditure

	Fund	*Expended (£ million)*
2005-06	ERDF	100.075
	ESF	63.908
	EAGGF	19.682
	FIFG	2.373
2004-05	ERDF	108.570
	ESF	72.012
	EAGGF	13.570
	FIFG	1.829
2003-04	ERDF	104.365
	ESF	63.056
	EAGGF	1.776
	FIFG	3.667
2002-03	ERDF	53.333
	ESF	28.303
	EAGGF	4.088
	FIFG	3.703
2001-02	ERDF	93.441
	ESF	39.841
	EAGGF	3.544
	FIFG	0.853
2000-01	ERDF	94.202
	ESF	83.863
	EAGGF	12.737
	FIFG	2.319
1999-2000	ERDF	136.901
	ESF	102.039
	EAGGF	13.520
	FIFG	2.287
1998-99	ERDF	93.155
	ESF	74.227
	EAGGF	10.865
	FIFG	3.516
1997-98	ERDF	109.566
	ESF	48.706
	EAGGF	31.792
	FIFG	1.457
1996-97	ERDF	93.678
	ESF	40.791

Table B: EU Structural Fund Expenditure

Fund	Expended (£ million)
EAGGF	29.972
FIFG	2.341

Notes:
European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
European Social Fund (ESF)
European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF)
Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG)
Source:
Northern Ireland Main Estimates publication

Film and Television Commission

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the recent comments of the Northern Ireland Film and Television Commission on the quantity of drama based in Northern Ireland produced by the BBC. [69264]

Maria Eagle: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and I both consider that we need to have more film and television drama produced in Northern Ireland and are directly involved in initiatives with the commission and a range of broadcasters that aim to increase the opportunities for actors, writers, directors and recording crew in the region.

Flags

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many flags have been taken down since the protocol on flags was agreed between the Police Service of Northern Ireland and departments; and if he will list the flags concerned, broken down by type. [66407]

Paul Goggins: The number of flags removed is shown in the tables. The protocol requires that numbers of flags are recorded as per the categories shown. The type of flag is not recorded.

DCU	*Number of flags removed further to consultation/ negotiation*	*Where consultation/ negotiation has not led to agreed outcome*	*Where PSNI independently and unilaterally have determined the display of a flag is such to justify enforcement without consultation/negotiation*
Urban region			
Antrim	10	0	3
North Down	101	0	31
Carrickfergus	7	0	6
Castlereagh	56	0	0
East Belfast	34	28	0
Larne	See note below	See note below	0
Lisburn	See note below	See note below	39
Newtownabbey	30	5	0
Ards	3	0	0
North Belfast	4	0	0
South Belfast	68	14	0
West Belfast	0	26	0
Total	313	73	79

DCU	*Number of flags removed further to consultation/ negotiation*	*Where consultation/ negotiation has not led to agreed outcome*	*Where PSNI independently and unilaterally have determined the display of a flag is such to justify enforcement without consultation/negotiation*
Rural region			
Armagh	1	0	0
Ballymena	26	0	0
Ballymoney	26	0	0
Banbridge	40	15	0
Coleraine	42	0	0
Cookstown	3	0	0
Craigavon	550	2	0
Down	14	0	1
Dungannon	5	0	0
Fermanagh	5	0	0
Foyle	39	0	0
Limavady	72	0	13
Magherafelt	60	3	1
Moyle	4	3	0
Newry	0	24	0

DCU Rural region	Number of flags removed further to consultation/ negotiation	Where consultation/ negotiation has not led to agreed outcome	Where PSNI independently and unilaterally have determined the display of a flag is such to justify enforcement without consultation/negotiation
Omagh	2	0	0
Strabane	4	0	0
Total	893	47	15

Notes:
1. Figures are not available in the form requested for Larne and Lisburn DCUs.
2. Larne DCU had 300 paramilitary flags erected during 2004, but only 13 in 2005. The number of flags removed in relation to the protocol has not been quantified.
3. In Lisburn DCU residents groups, individual residents or other groups removed a number of flags voluntarily. The number of flags was not quantified.

Foreign Prisoners

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what consultation has taken place between his Department and the Home Office in relation to the deportation and removal of foreign national prisoners announced on 3 May. [69296]

Paul Goggins: Officials from the Northern Ireland Prison Service have been in regular contact with senior management in the Immigration and Nationality Directorate since the announcements in relation to the deportation and removal of foreign national prisoners in England and Wales on 26 April.

Two senior IND officials visited Belfast.on 5 May for detailed discussions with the Northern Ireland Prison Service. Instructions have been issued to Northern Ireland Prison Service governors requiring them to ensure that the IND is appropriately notified by the Prison Service in relation to unconvicted remand and sentenced prisoners who declare themselves to be foreign nationals (excluding Irish nationals).

House Values

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate how many homes in Northern Ireland have been valued at over £1 million. [67060]

Mr. Hanson: The Valuation and Lands Agency is completing a revaluation of all domestic properties in Northern Ireland. Valuations for this purpose are subject to certain statutory assumptions. The valuation date for this revaluation is 1 January 2005 and the number of houses valued at over £1 million, as at that date, is 145.

The Agency is now carrying out a quality assurance "value review" process that may result in change to some property value assessments. The total number of properties in this category may therefore change slightly, up or down.

Independent Monitoring Commission

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 485W, on the Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC)' whether when meeting the IMC he discussed its definition of criminality. [69240]

Paul Goggins: At meetings with the Commissioners of the Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC), the Secretary of State has discussed a range of matters connected with its remit as defined in the agreement that established the IMC. It is not Government policy to disclose the nature or details of such discussions.

Infection Control

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funding was allocated by the Department for Health, Social Services and Public Safety for the implementation of the action plan for the prevention and control of health care-associated infections in Northern Ireland between 2006 and 2009 in each *(a)* health board area and *(b)* health trust; and if he will make a statement. [69522]

Paul Goggins: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is allocating 400,000 to health and social services board on a capitation basis in 2006-07 for elements of its action plan "Changing the Culture", such as mandatory staff training and a hand hygiene campaign. The eastern health and social services board will receive £160,000, the northern health and social services board £97,000, the southern health and social services board £74,000, and the western health and social services board £69,000. A further sum of £150,000 will be made available in each of the next three years to health trusts for regional surveillance co-ordination and enhanced infection control arrangements etc. Allocations will be determined later this year on the advice of the new regional infection prevention and control steering group. Boards and trusts are also being required to reprioritise resources to ensure the action plan's full implementation.

Ministerial Cars (Fuel Costs)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the fuel costs were for ministerial cars used by his Department in each of the last five years. [67127]

Paul Goggins: For the last financial year 2005-06, the total fuel cost for ministerial vehicles in Northern Ireland was £10,159.16. Figures for the previous years would require a manual trawl of records and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Ministerial Residences

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the running costs were of each Government-owned residence used by Northern Ireland Ministers in each of the last five years. [69659]

Mr. Hain: Hillsborough Castle is a government owned residence, and when in Northern Ireland I reside there. The facilities at the Castle are also used to provide official hospitality and overnight accommodation for members of the Royal Family, visiting dignitaries and diplomats. Other activities at the Castle include departmental meetings, the annual garden party, and citizenship ceremonies. In addition to its use by the Northern Ireland Office and other Government Departments, charities and local community groups can request to use the facilities, generally for fund raising purposes, and the Castle and grounds are open at certain times of the year for guided tours.

The total cost of running Hillsborough Castle in each of the last five years was:

	£
2005-06	1,726,173.74
2004-05	1,426,105.94
2003-04	1,334,167.48
2002-03	1,451,707.46
2001-02	1,205,796.11

These costs include the maintenance of the listed building and grounds; the security of the castle and its grounds, and that of Ministers, officials and visitors while present at the castle. It also includes the cost of hosting the events listed above, as well as catering, hospitality and administration.

Party funding

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list leaders of political parties in Northern Ireland to whom he has written seeking their views on the funding of political parties; on what date those letters were sent; and what responses have been received. [68780]

Mr. Hanson: The Secretary of State wrote to the following leaders of the political parties in Northern Ireland on 30 March to seek their views on the Lord Chancellor's proposals to regulate the reporting of loans to political parties:

Sir Reg Empey, MLA, Ulster Unionist Party
Mark Durkan, MP, MLA, SDLP
Gerry Adams, MP, MLA, Sinn Fein
David Ford, MLA, Alliance Party
Dr. Ian Paisley, MP, MLA, Democratic Unionist Party
Robert McCartney, MLA, UKUP
David Ervine, MLA, Progressive Unionist Party.

Sinn Fein are the only party, to date, who have replied.

Police

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost was of *(a)* training and *(b)* recruiting police constables in Northern Ireland in the last year for which figures are available. [69462]

Paul Goggins: In respect of *(a)* the cost of training police constables in Northern Ireland:

I am advised there were 10 training courses in the financial year 2005-06, with a total cost of £3,311,081.15. Each course had 44 students with a course duration of 105 days. The cost per student in that year was £7,525.18.

In respect of *(b)* recruiting police constables in Northern Ireland:

I am advised that the recruiting costs for year 2005-06 are still being processed; therefore an accurate figure cannot be presented at this time.

The total recruitment cost for the financial year 2004-05 was £5,071,988. This figure represents regular police trainee recruitment.

Road Safety

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many police vehicles in Northern Ireland were involved in road traffic accidents in each of the last three years. [69225]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is provided in the following table.

Police road traffic collisions

	2003	*2004*	*2005*
Major collisions	469	391	329
Minor collisions	289	341	203
Slight contact	0	83	366
Total collisions	758	815	898

Note:
Collisions include those caused by police and members of the public.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were killed as a result of road traffic accidents in Northern Ireland in *(a)* 1995 and *(b)* 2005. [68426]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is contained in the following table:

Numbers of deaths caused by road traffic accidents

Road user type	*1995*	*2005*
Pedestrians	47	28
Drivers of motor vehicles	48	66
Motorcyclists	8	14
Pedal cyclists	4	4
Passengers	36	22
Pillion passengers	1	1
Total	144	135

Child Protection

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people resident in Northern Ireland are on the Register of Sex Offenders; and in how many of those cases the police do not know the offender's current residential address. [67658]

Mr. Hanson: On 28 April 2006, 644 people in Northern Ireland were subject to the notification requirements of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and in 17 of these cases the police do not have a current residential address. This represents a compliance rate of over 97 per cent.

In line with the Police Service of Northern Ireland's zero tolerance policy on breaches of the notification requirements of the Sexual Offences Act, all offenders who do not comply are pursued and reported to the Public Prosecution Service with a view to prosecution.

Single Parents

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many single parents in each constituency in Northern Ireland are claiming state benefits; and how much was paid to them in the last period for which figures are available. [69651]

Mr. Hanson: The following table shows the number of lone parents of working age claiming at least one key benefit by parliamentary constituency. The information is taken at May 2005.

Parliamentary constituency	*Number of lone parents*	*Total weekly benefit paid (£)*
Belfast East	1,880	223,548.00
Belfast North	4,160	552,699.80
Belfast South	1,900	260,874.60
Belfast West	5,600	787,460.00
East Antrim	1,420	174,080.20
East Londonderry	1,800	189,378.20
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	1,560	171,528.20
Foyle	4,620	600,684.80
Lagan Valley	1,420	190,311.40
Mid Ulster	1,880	225,399.00
Newry And Armagh	2,260	330,262.80
North Antrim	1,740	197,001.60
North Down	940	90,792.40
South Antrim	1,680	193,186.40
South Down	1,900	251,842.40
Strangford	1,480	140,660.40
Upper Bann	2,460	280,297.40
West Tyrone	2,380	287,715.80
Unknown	280	40,216.80
Total	41,360	5,187,940

Notes:
1. Key benefits are jobseeker's allowance, incapacity benefit, severe disablement allowance, disability living allowance and income support. Pension credit for males aged 60 to 64.
2. Partner and dependent details were not available for all benefits.

In addition to the benefits mentioned above, single parents can also receive tax credits and child benefit. Although not social security benefits, they offer financial support to in-work families or families with children. Figures at a parliamentary constituency level are not available but as of April 2006 34,500 in-work single parents in Northern Ireland were receiving tax credit.

A breakdown of lone parents receiving child benefit is unavailable.

Student Finances

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether changes are proposed in the eligibility criteria for *(a)* student funding support and *(b)* student loans for graduate students wishing to undertake a further degree course; and if he will make a statement. [69685]

Maria Eagle: Government's student finance priority is to help undergraduate students, particularly the less well off, to achieve a primary degree.

Consequently, graduate students undertaking a further degree course are not eligible for fee support and maintenance grants and there are no proposed changes to these eligibility criteria.

In the case of student loans for maintenance, from academic year 2006-07 under revised previous study rules, these will be available only to graduate students who do not have an honours degree, except for certain designated courses, for example medicine, dentistry and social work, and on a basis that takes account of time spent on previous study.

Travellers' Camps

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to tackle unauthorised travellers' camps on commercial and private lands. [69665]

Mr. Hanson: The Unauthorised Encampments (Northern Ireland) Order 2005, which was made at Privy Council on 19 July 2005, gives the police greater powers to deal with unauthorised encampments. However the order cannot be fully effective until sufficient sites for Travellers are available. Responsibility for providing such sites falls to the Housing Executive and I am pressing it to ensure the necessary sites are available as soon as possible. I anticipate that five sites will be operational by the summer by which time I will review the situation with a view to enabling the necessary provisions. I believe this represents a fair and balanced approach.

Wind Turbines

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what representations he has received from health trusts in Northern Ireland wishing to provide electricity generated by wind turbines on their sites. [69192]

Paul Goggins: Government are fully committed to sustainable development in Northern Ireland as demonstrated by the Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland launched on 9 May by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. The strategy places a statutory duty on all Northern Ireland Government Departments and district councils to act in a matter which contributes to sustainable development.

In addition, health and social services trusts are already required to consider options for sustainable energy including wind turbine generation, as part of the business case process, for new capital developments. Currently, wind turbine electricity generation is being considered for the Downe and South West hospital developments.

The United Hospitals Health and Social Services Trust has installed and is successfully operating a wind turbine electricity generator on the Antrim hospital site.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much Antrim hospital has saved in electricity costs as a result of the wind turbine in operation at the site. [69193]

Paul Goggins: The Antrim hospital of the United Hospitals health and social services trust has reduced its payments to the supply authority by a total of £62,437.26, excluding VAT, for the period February 2005 to April 2006 inclusive, as a result of the investment in the wind turbine.

HEALTH

Abortion/Assisted Suicide

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when her Department's policy on *(a)* abortion and *(b)* assisted suicide was devised; which organisations and individuals were consulted; and if she will make a statement. [66862]

Caroline Flint: Parliament has decided that abortions may lawfully be carried out in the circumstances specified in the Abortion Act 1967, as amended by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990.

The Department most recently set out its policy on sexual health, including abortion, in the "National Strategy for Sexual Health and HIV" in 2001, and associated documents, which are available from the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk. In addition, recommended quality standards for the provision of abortion services are included in "Recommended Standards for Sexual Health Services", published in March 2005. The strategy was subject to a public consultation exercise.

Assisting a person in committing suicide is unlawful under the Suicide Act 1961 and is subject to a penalty of up to 14 years imprisonment. The Government have no plans to change this legislation. Any proposals to change the law would be dealt with as a matter of conscience.

Animal-based Insulin

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will reply to Question 53473, on animal-based insulin, tabled by the hon. Member for St. Albans for answer on 27 February. [60859]

Andy Burnham: A reply was given on 23 March.

BCG Vaccinations

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Answer of 25 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1069-70W, on BCG vaccinations, by what criteria the annual allocation to primary care trusts in relation to the funding of the Bacille Calmette Guerin vaccination against tuberculosis is made; what allocation was given to Wandsworth primary care trust in *(a)* 2005-06 and *(b)* 2006-07; and if she will make a statement. [68106]

Andy Burnham: The funding for Bacille Camette Guerin (BCG) vaccination is included in the unified primary care trust (PCT) revenue allocations that cover the full range of services commissioned by PCTs. It is for PCTs to decide how their allocations can be used in the most effective way.

Binge Drinking

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions she has had with the Portman group on appropriate actions to reduce the incidence of binge drinking; and if she will make a statement. [67326]

Caroline Flint: The Government are working with alcohol producers at a national level to increase corporate social responsibility, which includes the promotion of sensible drinking and actions to reduce the incidence of binge drinking.

The industry launched its social responsibility standards in November 2005 and the Government have been working with the Portman Group and other industry stakeholders on the implementation of these standards.

In addition, the Government have been working with the Portman Group and other stakeholders to establish a national producers' fund, as set out in the alcohol harm reduction strategy. This is a fund from the alcohol industry to pay for new schemes to tackle alcohol related harm including the incidence of binge drinking.

Branded Drug Supplies

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact on patient care and treatment of the adequacy of the supply of branded drugs in England. [67169]

Andy Burnham: No overall assessment has been made. However, the Department works closely with the pharmaceutical industry to resolve medicine supply problems, to help ensure that patients continue to receive the medicines they need.

Care Homes

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many *(a)* nursing and *(b)* residential homes there were in (i) England and (ii) Beverley and Holderness in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement; [66522]

(2) how many long-term beds there were in *(a)* residential and *(b)* nursing homes in (i) England and (ii) Beverley and Holderness in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [66526]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Table one shows the number of care homes and places in England and the area of East Riding, as at 31 March for the years 1997 to 2001. Data for Beverley and Holderness constituency are not available.

Table 1: Number of care homes and places in England and the East Riding area at 31 March 1997 to 2001

	England			East Riding area		
	Residential	*Nursing*	*Total*	*Residential*[1,4]	*Nursing*[2,3]	*Total*
Homes						
1997	22,900	5,900	28,900	360	50	410
1998	22,800	6,200	29,000	350	60	400
1999	22,600	6,100	28,700	370	60	420
2000	22,400	5,900	28,300	350	50	400
2001	21,800	5,700	27,500	340	50	390
Places						
1997	338,100	196,300	534,400	6,200	1,900	8,000
1998	347,900	205,600	553,500	6,100	2,100	8,200
1999	344,000	202,200	546,200	6,600	1,900	8,400
2000	345,900	193,300	539,200	6,400	1,800	8,200
2001	341,200	186,800	528,000	6,500	1,600	8,100

[1] Residential data is for Kingston upon Hull and East Riding unitary authorities.
[2] Nursing data is for East Riding and Hull health authority.
[3] Nursing data includes places in general nursing homes, mental nursing homes and private hospitals and clinics.
[4] Data on the number of residential care homes excludes dual registered homes as they are included under nursing homes.
Note:
Data over 1,000 is rounded to nearest 100. Data under 1,000 is rounded to nearest 10.

Information for 2002 is not available. The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) produces data on the number of care homes and places registered as at 31 March each year, beginning with 2003. There are some definitional differences between these data and those for years up to 2001.

I understand from the chair of CSCI that the number of nursing and residential homes and registered places in England for 2003 onwards is as shown in table two.

Table 2: Number of care homes in England 2003 to 2006

As at:	*Nursing*	*Personal care*	*Non-medical*	*Total*
31 March 2003	4,291	15,562	7	19,860
31 March 2004	4,118	15,307	12	19,437
31 March 2005	4,083	14,976	14	19,073
21 March 2006[1]	4,049	14,701	16	18,766
Maximum number of registered places for England 2003 to 2006				
31 March 2003	178,406	251,706	112	430,224
31 March 2004	174,492	268,818	200	443,510
31 March 2005	174,709	265,167	204	440,080
21 March 2006[1]	175,764	263,974	300	440,038

[1] Final figures for the number of care homes and places in England at 31 March 2006 will appear in CSCI's annual report, due to be published on the 21 July 2006.

The CSCI does not collect information on care homes by constituency. The number of nursing and residential homes and registered places in the East Riding of Yorkshire Local Authority, which includes Beverley and Holderness constituency, for 2003 onwards is shown in table three.

Table 3: Number of care homes for East Riding of Yorkshire local authority, 2003 to 2006

As at:	*Nursing*	*Personal care*	*Non-medical*	*Total*
31 March 2003	21	191	0	212

Table 3: Number of care homes for East Riding of Yorkshire local authority, 2003 to 2006

As at:	Nursing	Personal care	Non-medical	Total
31 March 2004	17	171	0	188
31 March 2005	14	163	0	177
21 March 2006[1]	15	152	1	168
Maximum number of registered places for East Riding of Yorkshire local authority, 2003-2006				
31 March 2003	851	3,413	0	4264
31 March 2004	785	3,285	0	4070
31 March 2005	696	3,178	0	3874
21 March 2006[1]	779	3,029	31	3839

[1] Final figures for the number of care homes and places in England at 31 March 2006 will appear in CSCI's annual report, due to be published on the 21 July 2006.

The CSCI does not record information on long-term beds in the format requested.

Childhood Obesity

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions she has had with *(a)* the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and *(b)* Sport England about programmes to reduce the levels of childhood obesity; and what the outcome was. [69920]

Caroline Flint: Meetings between the Department and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to discuss programmes to reduce the levels of childhood obesity have taken place in November 2005 and March 2006. The aim of these meeting were to create a shared understanding of the relationship between key factors influencing levels of obesity and their elative importance and to build on this evidence to identify effective interventions.

No recent meetings have taken place with Sport England.

Children's Health Services

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many specialist paediatric diabetes nurses there are in London, broken down by borough. [67879]

Andy Burnham: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Colonoscopy

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many colonoscopy procedures were carried out per head of the population in each *(a)* Government office region and *(b)* strategic health authority area in each of the last three years. [68703]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 9 May 2006]:* The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Consultants/Scanners

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* consultant oncologists, *(b)* diagnostic radiographers and *(c)* MRI scanners there are per 100,000 people in (i) England, (ii) the North East and (iii) the Tees Valley. [59929]

Andy Burnham: The number of oncologists and qualified diagnostic radiographers are shown in table one.

Table 1: National health service hospital and community health services: qualified diagnostic radiographer staff and medical consultants in the oncology specialties in England, the North East Government Office Region (GOR) and County Durham and Tees Valley strategic health authority (SHA) area by organisation as at 30 September 2004.

	Medical oncology 2004	Clinical oncology 2004	Qualified diagnostic radiographer 2004
England	201	392	12,147
North East GOR	10	22	695
County Durham and Tees Valley SHA	—	8	301

Source:
The Information Centre for health and social care, medical and dental workforce census 2004. The Information Centre for health and social care, non-medical workforce census 2004. The number of magnetic resonance imaging scanners, by strategic health authority, is shown in table two

MRI scanners per strategic health authority population—April 2006

Strategic health authority	StHA population (million)	Number of MRI scanners installed at April 2006	Current number of MRI scanners per million population
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	2.145169	11	5
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	1.597683	11	7
Birmingham and the Black Country	2.253138	16	7
Cheshire and Merseyside	2.342986	14	6

MRI scanners per strategic health authority population—April 2006

Strategic health authority	*StHA population (million)*	*Number of MRI scanners installed at April 2006*	*Current number of MRI scanners per million population*
County Durham and Tees Valley	1.130914	8	7
Cumbria and Lancashire	1.900164	8	4
Essex	1.612591	7	4
Greater Manchester	2.481716	14	6
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	1.749121	9	5
Kent and Medway	1.574485	7	4
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	1.550145	6	4
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	2.137891	12	6
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	1.605873	6	4
North Central London	1.179126	15	13
North East London	1.498252	8	5
North West London	1.728835	10	6
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	1.381721	8	6
Shropshire and Staffordshire	1.482565	8	5
Somerset and Dorset	1.183546	7	6
South East London	1.490338	12	8
South West London	1.279614	10	8
South West Peninsula	1.561977	7	4
South Yorkshire	1.26501	8	6
West Midlands South	1.521798	8	5
Surrey and Sussex	2.548772	11	4
Thames Valley	2.075848	13	6
Trent	2.610709	11	4
West Yorkshire	2.078323	11	5
Total	48.96831	276	[1]5.8

[1] Average.

Continuing Care Costs

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what protection she plans to put in place for those who may lose their entitlement to NHS funded continuing care under the new National Framework; [67941]

(2) when she expects to publish the National Framework for Continuing Care. [67942]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We expect public consultation on the national framework for NHS Continuing Healthcare to begin in the near future and will last for three months. It would be inappropriate to give any target date for publication of the final national framework until the consultation has been completed.

The national framework will not change the existing legal basis for the provision of NHS Continuing Healthcare. Fully funded NHS Continuing Healthcare will continue to be provided for all those individuals whose primary need is a health need. This is based on an assessment of need and if individuals' needs have not changed there is no reason to expect them to lose their entitlement to NHS Continuing Healthcare. However, it would be inappropriate to give a guarantee that every individual would continue to receive NHS Continuing Healthcare after re-assessment if their needs have changed.

Dentistry

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps are being taken to commission new dental services in the Eastbourne area. [65497]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Since 2003-04, the Department has invested an additional £250 million in national health service dentistry and supported the NHS in recruiting the equivalent of an extra 1,459 dentists to improve patient access. The Government are also funding an additional 170 training places per year from 2005.

From April 2006, the NHS implemented major reforms to dentistry to build upon this success. New contracts for dentists have abolished the traditional fee per item remuneration system and support new ways of working with a greater focus on preventative care. Evidence from personal dental services pilot schemes is that these new ways of working free up significant capacity that dentists can then use in part to see a greater range of patients.

Dentists' current NHS earnings will be protected for at least three years and there will be a 5 per cent, reduction in the courses of treatment that general dental services practitioners are expected to carry out each year.

From April 2006, primary care trusts (PCTs), including Eastbourne Downs PCT, will also have devolved responsibility and ring-fenced budgets for commissioning primary dental services. This means that, if a dentist leaves the NHS or reduces their NHS commitment, the resources stay with the PCT to be re-invested in local dental services.

Eastbourne Downs PCT has commissioned replacement NHS capacity in Eastbourne valued at £450,000.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that NHS dental treatment is available to all *(a)* children and *(b)* residents of Eastbourne and Willingdon. [65498]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Since 2003-04, the Department has invested an additional £250 million in national health service dentistry and supported the NHS in recruiting the equivalent of an extra 1,459 dentists to improve patient access. The Government are also funding an additional 170 training places per year from 2005.

From April 2006, primary care trusts (PCTs), including Eastbourne Downs PCT, have devolved responsibility and ring-fenced budgets for commissioning primary dental services. This means that if a dentist leaves the NHS or reduces their NHS commitment, the resources stay with the PCT to be re-invested in local dental services.

Eastbourne Downs PCT has commissioned replacement NHS capacity in Eastbourne valued at £450,000. The PCT has retained NHS treatment in for children in all but two of the practices that have rejected the NHS contract.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists have *(a)* signed and *(b)* refused to sign the new contract for NHS dentistry in the primary care trusts which serve Portsmouth; and if she will make a statement. [66418]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of dentists who have signed the new contract and the number who have not signed is not available centrally. We do however have some provisional information that covers contracts. A contract may be for more than one dentist so cannot be broken down further to individual dentist level.

Provisional management estimates show that in the Portsmouth city primary care trust area:

Contracts signed		*Contracts still in discussion*		*Contracts rejected*			*Contracts signed*		
A: Number	B: Approximate unites of dental activity (UDA) value	C: Number	D: Approximate UDA value	E: Number	F: Approximate UDA value	% UDAs	G: Number signed without dispute	H: Number signed in dispute	% Disputes
30	283,111	0	0	4	26,273	8.5	14	16	53

Note:
The information provided is not validated. It represents a snapshot of the position in early April.

A contract may be for either a practice or an individual dentist.

Primary care trusts (PCT) are working with dentists to resolve as many disputes as possible locally.

The majority of NHS dentists in Portsmouth have accepted the new NHS contract and as a consequence the loss is relatively minimal. However, the PCT will be using the funding available to purchase additional units of dental activity from other interested dentists in the short term to seek to maintain levels of dentistry.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on NHS dentistry in the Barnet primary care trust area in 1997; how much has been allocated for 2006-07; and if she will make a statement. [64706]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The main element of national health service dental services are the primary dental care services previously provided by dentists working within the general dental service (GDS) or personal dental service (PDS) pilots.

The latest available data shows that the net and gross expenditure on these services within the area of the Barnet primary care trust (PCT) in 1997-98 were £5.701 million and £7.207 million respectively[1,2]. The difference between net and gross expenditure is the contribution to costs from dental charges collected directly from patients.

A net funding allocation for 2006-07 of £11.55 million has been awarded to Barnet PCT for local commissioning of equivalent NHS primary dental services. The associated indicative gross budget, taking into account expected patient charge income, is £13.787 million. PCTs may direct additional funding to dentistry from their general NHS resources if they judge this to be a necessary and appropriate local priority.

Expenditure figures for 1997-98 do not capture certain elements of the cost of primary dental care services which are reflected in the 2006-07 dental allocations.

[1] 1997-98 expenditure figures are drawn from The Information Centre for health and social care and the Business Services Authority. Gross GDS payments include adult fees (including item of service and continuing care payments), child fees (including item of service and capitation payments), commitment payments and point of treatment check payment training (in 2001 only), seniority payments, maternity/paternity/adoptive leave payments, long term sick leave payments, continuing professional development allowances including travel hours, reimbursement of business rates, vocational training grants and clinical audit payments.

The following costs are excluded from this data:

employer's superannuation costs, vocational trainee salaries and National Insurance contribution costs, clinical audit convenors, clinical audit secretarial support costs and travel expenses, and costs associated with any salaried general dental practitioners and emergency dental services.

[2] Payments are assigned to areas on the basis of practice postcode data.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people newly qualified as dentists in each of the last five years; and how much the training cost *(a)* per dentist and *(b)* in total in each year. [68936]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of graduates from dentistry courses leading to professional registration, in England, is held centrally only from 2002 which is shown in the table.

Dentistry graduates

	Number
2002-03	553
2003-04	579
2004-05	605

Note:
HESA do not collect data on dentistry students at Eastman Dental Hospital and Defence Dental Agency Training Establishment.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record.

We estimate that in 2005-06 the average cost of training a dentist was £160,000 over the five-year course or £32,000 per year. On this basis, the total cost of training the 3,500 students in dental schools in England in 2005-06 was £112 million. Comparable information is not available centrally for earlier years, but we estimate that these costs have moved broadly in line with inflation over the last five years.

Departmental Management Structure

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will publish the conclusions of the review of her Department's top management structure. [69836]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The conclusions of the review of the Department's top management structure were presented and circulated to staff in January. The presentation, staff bulletin and a supplementary question and answer pack have been available on request from the Department. Copies have now been placed in the Library.

Disability Equipment (Internet)

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what regulations are in place to ensure appropriate risk assessments are carried out on disability equipment sold on the internet. [68026]

Andy Burnham: New disability equipment such as mobility aids, environmental controls, communication aids, posture management, pressure management and moving and handling systems which are classed as medical devices and have been placed on the European market since June 1998 are required to meet the Medical Devices Directive 93/42/EEC. This directive is brought into United Kingdom law under the Medical Device Regulations 2002 (amended 2003). Such medical devices must carry the CE mark indicating conformity to the directive.

Before applying the CE mark the manufacturer must ensure that all risks are removed or minimised and any residual risks constitute acceptable risks when weighed against the benefit to the user and are compatible with a high level of protection of safety. If it is not possible to reduce these risks by means of inherently safe design or construction whilst providing benefit to the user then the manufacturer must inform users of the residual risks by means of labelling on the device and/or warnings contained in the user information.

On behalf of the Secretary of State for Health, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) acts as the competent authority for the UK Medical Device Regulations. The MHRA has a specialist unit covering all aspects of assistive technology which includes disability equipment. Proactive and reactive investigations involving medical devices including assistive technology are carried out. Where appropriate the MHRA also works with or refers cases to other regulatory bodies in the United Kingdom such as Trading Standards and also liaises as necessary with other competent authorities within Europe and also with the United States of America, Canada, and Australia.

The requirement for all medical devices placed on the market in the United Kingdom to carry an appropriate CE marking applies equally to products advertised on the internet, regardless of their country of origin. However, the regulation of the sale of medical devices available on the internet is more problematic than with sales from more conventional outlets. The MHRA advises the public to be wary when purchasing any medicinal or healthcare product from an unknown source, such as the internet, as it is not possible to guarantee the efficacy or safety of such items.

Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy

Mr. Burrowes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the answer of 6 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1203W, on Duchenne muscular dystrophy, what assessment has been made of the progress of research into Duchenne muscular dystrophy; and what actions have followed from the research. [67892]

Andy Burnham: The £1.6 million, four-year programme (2005 to 2008) of research towards a phase one clinical trial for duchenne muscular dystrophy that the Department has been supporting is administered through the company LGC Ltd. Progress is assessed through quarterly reports, and site visits by LGC Ltd. The programme started in January 2005, and the most recent site visit, in February 2006, found the research to be progressing well, with the first-year objectives completed, and the phase one clinical trial predicted to take place towards the end of 2008.

European Health Insurance Card

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the answer of 18 April, *Official Report*, columns 388-9W, on the European health insurance card, how many information leaflets were distributed; and what the total cost was of the awareness campaign. [65757]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The publicity campaign took place over two years at a total cost of £2.4million. The following leaflets were produced:

- 13.6 million copies of the standard the Department's booklet, 'Health Advice for Travellers' containing advice about the European health insurance card (EHIC) arrangements.
- 30 million leaflets specifically about changes related to the introduction of the EHIC.

Free Diagnostic Testing

Derek Conway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the NHS hospitals in London offering free diagnostic testing to GP practices; and what the estimated financial value is of this offer. [67382]

Andy Burnham: The information requested is not collected centrally.

It is for local national health service organisations in conjunction with the primary care trusts and strategic health authorities to plan and develop services according to the needs of their local communities.

Herceptin

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the prescription of Herceptin to patients with early stage breast cancer. [67960]

Andy Burnham: The position on the prescription and provision of Herceptin for HER2 positive early stage breast cancer, ahead of a decision on licensing or National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance, remains as set out in the NHS chief executive's bulletin: Issue 294, 4-10 November 2005. This is that:

It is down to individual clinicians to decide whether to prescribe Herceptin for a woman who has tested HER2 positive after discussions with the woman about potential risks and taking into account her medical history.

Primary care trusts (PCTs) should not refuse to fund Herceptin solely on the grounds of its cost.

PCTs should not rule out treatments on principle but consider individual circumstances.

This policy does not in any way replace either the licensing process or the NICE appraisal process.

Independent Treatment Centres

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients have been treated by Barlborough Independent Treatment Centre since its inception; and how many of these patients lived in Bassetlaw. [69825]

Ms Rosie Winterton: At the end of March this year 3,678 patients had been treated at the Barlborough NHS Treatment Centre. Information on the number who lived in Bassetlaw is not held centrally.

Isolation Wards

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of the availability of isolation facilities in NHS hospitals. [67550]

Andy Burnham: Full information on the availability of isolation facilities is not available but Departmental guidance is that new buildings should ideally contain at least 50 per cent. of their beds in single rooms. NHS Estates published guidance in February 2005 to assist local planning for isolation facilities and the Department is considering the need for guidance on ventilated isolation facilities.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will make a statement on the role of the national myalgic encephalomyelitis observatory; [70195]

(2) what funding has been provided by *(a)* central Government and *(b)* statutory bodies for the development and support of the national myalgic encephalomyelitis observatory. [70196]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Action on myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME) has received over £500,000 funding from the Big Lottery Fund to establish a national ME/chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) research observatory. No funding has been provided by central Government or statutory bodies to support this research observatory.

This research observatory will gather comprehensive data on a range of important clinical and social factors which affect those living with ME/CFS.

The three-year project, which involves teams from the University of East Anglia, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and the Hull-York Medical School, aims to increase the availability of information about the disease and reduce the stigmatisation which can arise from a lack of understanding of this distressing disease.

MHRA

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many changes to labelling applications were considered by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency in *(a)* 2003-04 and *(b)* 2004-05; and what the longest time taken to process an application was in each year; [67300]

(2) what representations she has received on the business impact of the time taken by the MHRA to process product licence and labelling applications; and if she will make a statement. [67264]

Andy Burnham: The table indicates the number of applications received by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) in respect of proposed changes to medicines labelling and/or patient information leaflets during the years cited. It also sets

out the percentage of applicants notified of the outcome of the submission within 30, 60 and 90 calendar days of receipt of a valid submission. The longest time taken to progress an individual case in the years cited was 128 and 156 calendar days respectively.

	2003-04	2004-05
Applications received	1,537	1,785
Percentage of cases where outcome notified within 30 days	36	42
Percentage of cases where outcome notified within 60 days	57	56
Percentage of cases where outcome notified within 90 days	99	99

The MHRA is in regular discussion with industry associations and individual companies about the processes in place to assess applications and the time scales involved. I am aware that its performance regarding licence and variation approval times during the past months has been affected by a combination of adverse factors including increases in work load, difficulties in recruiting professional assessment staff, especially medically qualified staff, and transitional implementation problems during the introduction of a new information management system. The MHRA is taking a number of steps to improve service levels. These include organisational restructuring, additional recruitment, re-training of staff, voluntary schemes for extended working hours, and information system performance enhancements. The MHRA's new information management system will provide the potential for greater efficiency within the MHRA and also provide a number of additional benefits to the industry, such as the ability to make electronic applications, and track progress of outstanding applications.

The MHRA is committed to developing regulation which is proportionate, accountable, consistent, transparent and targeted and is currently considering how unnecessary regulatory burdens, primarily in relation to over the counter (OTC) medicines, could be eased. To take this important initiative forward, the MHRA is leading the better regulation of OTC medicines initiative. As part of this process, industry has been asked to quantify the business impact of the time taken to respond to applications for a change to product information and this will inform proposals for change.

Mental Health Services

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children were admitted to adult acute mental wards in 2005-06. [69353]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information is not available in the form requested.

In the period from 1 April to 31 December 2005 in England, there were 1,818 hospital occupied bed days spent by patients aged under 16 on admission on adult psychiatric wards. The equivalent figure for patients aged 16 or 17 on admission was 25,045.

Ministerial Statement

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the evidential basis was for the statement she made on BBC Radio 5 Live that the national health service had had its best year ever; and if she will make a statement. [66863]

Andy Burnham: Over the past year, the national health service has continued to deliver improved services. Hospital waiting lists are lower than ever, over half a million down from their peak, and there is now a maximum wait of six months for an inpatient appointment, from over 18 months in 2000, and 13 weeks for an outpatient consultation—it was over a year in 2000.

Patients are also treated more promptly within the hospital—more than 98 per cent. of patients are now seen and treated within four hours of arrival in accidents and emergency.

The NHS is delivering cancer services more quickly, to more people than ever before, and over 99 per cent. of people with suspected cancer are seen by a specialist within two weeks of being referred urgently by their general practitioner (GP)—this figure was 63 per cent. in 1997. In addition, over 96 per cent. of patients receive treatment within one month of being diagnosed with cancer.

Patients now have more choice and involvement in their own care—hospital appointments are booked for the convenience of the patient and, since 1 January 2006, eligible patients needing planned hospital care are being offered a choice of at least four providers, where this is clinically appropriate, at the point of GP referral to consultant-led first outpatient appointments.

Multiple Sclerosis

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to change his proposals for increasing inspection fees for charitable multiple sclerosis treatment centres offering oxygen therapies following the review by the Healthcare Commission; and if he will make a statement. [69395]

Andy Burnham: The Healthcare Commission recently consulted on its proposals for a revised fees scheme for registered private and voluntary healthcare establishments, including those providing hyperbaric oxygen therapy. Their proposals are being considered and the commission will publish their revised scale of fees in the near future.

NHS Finance

Derek Conway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average NHS expenditure per head was in the hospitals located in *(a)* Bexley care trust's area of responsibility and *(b)* London in the most recent period for which figures are available. [67381]

Andy Burnham: In 2004-05 primary care trust expenditure per head by unweighted head of population for Bexley care trust was £1,133.12. Average for all London primary care trusts was £1,320.37.

NHS Hospitals

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* name, *(b)* address and *(c)* post code is of each NHS hospital in England; and which of these are run by foundation trusts. [70030]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This information is not centrally available.

Names, addresses and post codes for individual hospitals can be found on the following website: www.nhs.uk/England/Hospitals/Default.cmsx

NHS IT

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish the McKinsey Report on an NHS IT scheme. [66735]

Caroline Flint: A report completed for the Department by McKinsey and Company which considers the scope and uses of the new national health service information technology systems, and in particular their application to clinical research in the United Kingdom, was published in December 2005 and can be found on the following website:

www.ukcrc.org/publications/reports.aspx.

NHS Logistics Procurement

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he plans to get parliamentary approval for the outsourcing of NHS logistics procurement and supply chain services. [67973]

Andy Burnham: There are no plans to do so.

The plan to outsource the NHS Logistics Authority was set out in "Reconfiguring the Department of Health's Arm's Length Bodies" in July 2004 and an advertisement was placed in the Official Journal of the European Union in August 2004.

I have received representations from Members of Parliament with a local interest to which I have responded. These have included meetings and debating the matter in Westminster Hall in July last year.

NHS Reorganisation

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) pursuant to the statement of the Minister of State of 7 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 806-07 on NHS reorganisation, what progress has been made in developing the detail of a commissioning proposal; what the timetable is for its development and implementation; who is responsible for its development; and if she will make a statement on the steps being taken to ensure equal access to a choice of providers for patients from the Isle of Wight; [64809]

(2) when she will provide a substantive response to Question 64809, tabled by the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight on 18 April, on NHS reorganisation. [70140]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* As part of the programme of work set out in "Health Reform in England: update and next steps" (December 2005), the Department is developing a new system of commissioning health services, which will operate as a partnership between general practitioner (GP) practices, primary care trusts (PCTs) and local authorities.

The commissioning policy framework will be published in the summer of 2006. This work is being led by the Department's policy and strategy directorate, with the support and advice of an external reference group drawn from a wide range of stakeholder and partner organisations.

PCTs are responsible for commissioning the choices offered at referral in consultation with patient groups. The Isle of Wight PCT has commissioned services from seven providers, four of which can be reached within approximately one hour 30 minutes travelling time. Some patients will need assistance with travel to hospital. PCTs are responsible for ensuring that there is provision of ambulance services, which could include patient transport services, to such extent as they consider necessary to meet all reasonable requirements. It is, therefore, for the local NHS to decide who provides patient transport services for eligible patients in their area. In addition, patients on a low income may be entitled to reimbursement of their travel costs under the hospital travel cost scheme. This applies to any of the hospitals on their PCT's choice menu.

"Our Health, Our Care, Our Say" set the direction for designing services which will provide patients with access to care as close to their home as possible. This may involve the use of community hospitals and through increasing provision of secondary care services in a primary care setting, for example by GPs with a special interest.

Operations

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations were performed in each health trust in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [64981]

Andy Burnham: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Personal Care

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1301W, on elderly care costs, whether she has requested the figures for the estimated savings on Department for Work and Pensions disability benefits that would result from making free personal care available. [70750]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: A note setting out how the costs and possible offsetting savings in disability benefits were estimated is available in the Library.

Pharmacies

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she plans to permit a pharmacist to act as the responsible pharmacist for more than one community pharmacy. [67342]

Andy Burnham: Clause 29 of the Health Bill inserts two new sections, sections 72A and 72B, into the Medicines Act 1969 in relation to the responsible pharmacist. The Government believe that the general rule should be one responsible pharmacist, one pharmacy, if the responsible pharmacist is to discharge his or her responsibilities for the safe and effective running of the pharmacy. For the vast majority of pharmacies, we expect each to have its own responsible pharmacist. However, we also believe that there should be provision to consider any exception to this rule, where circumstances justify such an exception. Section 72A(2) provides for a pharmacist to be responsible for more than one pharmacy at any one time only in circumstances to be specified in regulations and where there is compliance with certain conditions set out in the regulations. Our intention is to consult, in due course, with all interested parties on what these circumstances and conditions might be.

Queen Mary's Hospital Trust, Sidcup

Derek Conway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many redundancies she expects at Queen Mary's hospital, Sidcup, broken down by specialty or function. [67383]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not collected centrally.

It is for local national health service organisations in conjunction with the primary care trusts and strategic health authorities to plan and develop services according to the needs of their local communities.

I am informed that Queen Mary's hospital trust has launched a formal consultation on proposals to reduce the work force. This consultation ends on 28 June 2006 following which the trust board will consider all views received at a formal public meeting.

Shipman Inquiry

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health why the Government has not yet implemented all of the recommendations of Dame Janet Smith's inquiries into the case of Harold Shipman; what steps she is taking to implement the remaining recommendations; and if she will make a statement. [68666]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The Government have already published details of the action they are proposing to take forward the recommendations of the Shipman inquiry's fourth report on controlled drugs, and the recommendations in the third report relating to reform of the coroners' system. Good progress has already been made in implementing the action programme on controlled drugs, and draft legislation to implement the action on coronial reform will be presented to Parliament later this year.

The Government are now awaiting the recommendations of a review by the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of certain aspects of medical regulation, including the revalidation of doctors. The CMO is currently finalising his report and will be reporting to ministers in the near future. Once Ministers have considered the CMC's recommendations, the Government will publish a comprehensive action programme responding to the outstanding recommendations of the Shipman Inquiry and to the linked recommendations in the Ayling, Neale and Kerr-Haslem inquiries.

Mr. Goodwill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects the Chief Medical Officer to release his review of the Shipman Report. [67794]

Andy Burnham: The Chief Medical Officer is currently finalising his report and will be reporting to Ministers in the near future.

Small Firms

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what definition his Department uses of a small firm. [59288]

Andy Burnham: The Department does not use any definition of a small firm. In reporting data about businesses placed with small and medium-sized enterprise (SME), we define a SME as a firm employing under 250 people. This is in line with the definition of a SME provided by the Department of Trade and Industry's small business service. The Department does not differentiate between a small firm and a medium-sized firm for procurement purposes.

Treatment Centres

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which clinical procedures are undertaken for NHS patients at the treatment centre at Shepton Mallett; how much is paid to the treatment centre each time each such procedure is undertaken; how much would be paid to an NHS hospital in the area for the same procedure; and if she will make a statement. [68260]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The Shepton Mallett treatment centre provides procedures in orthopaedics, ophthalmology, general surgery and endoscopy. The price per procedure paid to wave one independent sector treatment centres is commercially confidential.

National health service tariff data is available at the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4091529&chk=f%2Bcvh8.

The independent sector treatment centre programme has ensured value for money by running a robust and competitive procurement process, benchmarking procedure prices between contracts and comparing them to those traditionally paid to the NHS.

University Hospital of North Staffordshire

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish the review carried out by *(a)* Ernst and Young and *(b)* the Department's turnaround team into the forecast deficit of the University Hospital of North Staffordshire for the year ending 31 March 2006. [62899]

Andy Burnham: The Shropshire and Staffordshire strategic health authority (SHA) has advised me that Ernst and Young carried out a review of finances across the whole of the SHA, and following that they were retained by University Hospitals of North Staffordshire NHS trust to specifically look at the financial position there. I do not have copies of their review. Publication of the review is a matter for the SHA to consider.

The first stage of turnaround was a baseline assessment, the aim of which was to ensure there is an agreed understanding of the local financial problem and that actions are in hand to address this. The director of finance of the Department published the national assessment in a report on 25 January 2006.

Further work and planning is being done at a local level by the trust and SHA. Publication of these plans is a matter for them to consider.

Ward Closures

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the hospitals where ward closures are planned, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [68508]

Andy Burnham: The Department does not routinely collect and hold centrally operational management information on proposals to close wards or capacity.

This Government have given local authority overview and scrutiny committees the power to review and scrutinise health services from the perspective of their local populations. National health service bodies are under a duty to consult overview and scrutiny committees on any plans to make substantial variation to NHS services. Those committees have the powers to refer any proposal to the Secretary of State if they believe the plans are not in the interests of the health service.

Written Answers to Questions

Friday 12 May 2006

HOME DEPARTMENT

Anti-Semitism

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of the level of anti-Semitism in the UK. [57554]

Meg Munn: I have been asked to reply.

The Association of Chief Police Officers' national community tension team (NCTT) regularly produces a Community Impact Assessment which contains an assessment on the state of community relations, this includes anti-Semitism. This material is not shared with the public, as it contains operational policing information. The NCTT liaises with the community security trust (CST) at the national level on behalf of the police service. Forces with significant Jewish communities liaise closely at the local level. The Home Office's assessment of community relations also draws upon advice from Government Offices who in turn are informed by a wide range of community sources.

Asylum/Immigration

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers were required to report to the police as a condition of their temporary admission on 1 April 2006. [68597]

Mr. McNulty: The information requested is not readily available as it would require the examination of individual case records which could be done only at disproportionate cost.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers there are in Kingston upon Hull North constituency; and how many of them are children. [69771]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* Statistics on the location of asylum seekers in the UK are linked to the available information on the support that the asylum seeker receives. The number of asylum seekers supported by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) are published on a quarterly and annual basis, broken down by local authority. The next publication covering the first quarter of 2006 will be published on the 23rd May 2006, and will be available on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html. Data on asylum seekers supported by NASS broken down by parliamentary constituency are also available from the Library. Separate arrangements exist for unaccompanied asylum seeking children who are supported by local authorities; the local authority receives funding from the Home Office for this purpose. As at the end of March 2006 NASS was reimbursing Kingston upon Hull for providing support to 13 unaccompanied asylum seeking children, this figure is based on management information.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times *(a)* a Minister and *(b)* an official has responded to an hon. Member that a file has been lost in an immigration case in the last 12 months for which figures are available; and what steps are being taken to prevent such files being lost. [69885]

Mr. McNulty: The information is not routinely kept and the cost would be disproportionate to provide the information requested. A range of measures including additional training and targeted exercises to locate files and update records is currently being pursued in order to reduce the number of files that become lost.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps are taken by his Department to ensure that victims of torture who seek refuge in the UK, including those whose asylum applications have failed, have access to medical treatment and counselling. [70017]

Mr. McNulty: Asylum seekers receive NHS treatment free of charge while their claim is being considered. If they are to be dispersed, asylum claimants are advised on access to GP services in their dispersal area. If an asylum claim, including any appeal, is unsuccessful routine access to free NHS treatment will cease, although a course of treatment which has already started can be continued free of charge until the patient leaves the country. Immediately necessary treatment would not be withheld, regardless of whether the patient was chargeable or able to pay. In appropriate cases we will advise claimants of the existence of the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture which is able to provide care, treatment and counselling.

Criminal Justice System

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps her Department has taken to increase the priority given to victims by the criminal justice agencies; and what changes have been made to the criminal justice system *(a)* to take more account of the needs of victims and *(b)* to make the system more efficient and effective. [45205]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government are committed to putting victims at the heart of the criminal justice system. In "Rebuilding Lives: supporting victims of crime" we set out our plans to improve support to victims of crime, by refocusing the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme to provide more financial help to those most seriously injured and immediate, practical help to other victims through delivering Victim Care Units.

The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime will help ensure victims get information about their case, and from April victims can enforce their rights through the

parliamentary ombudsman. We are in the final stages of appointing a new victim's advisory panel (the last panel has just completed its three-year tenure). The panel meets with CJS Ministers quarterly to advise on all aspects of services and support for victims of crime. We have increased the amount of money we spend on victims; Victim Support's funding has increased from under £12 million to £30 million .

We have set up 165 witness care units across England and Wales, giving victims and witnesses a single point of contact to help them through the court process. We have allocated over £3 million this year to improve accommodation facilities at court for witnesses. We have also consulted on proposals to pilot victims advocates in homicide cases. We have also established the prosecutors' pledge which sets out the level of service victims can expect to receive from prosecutors; reinforcing our commitment to victims.

Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the answer of 1 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 813W, on the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund, what assessment he has made of the compatibility of the exclusion of non-religious belief groups from eligibility for grant money under the Faith Communities Capacity Fund with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 relating to official discrimination between religious beliefs and non-religious beliefs; and if he will make a statement. [60296]

Meg Munn: I have been asked to reply.

Non-religious belief groups were eligible for the Faith Communities Capacity Building fund. All voluntary and community sector organisations including secular ones were entitled to apply for funding provided they could satisfy the criteria.

Illegal Residents (Northern Ireland)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of how many people have been *(a)* residing illegally and *(b)* working illegally in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [66457]

Mr. McNulty: Although it is impossible to determine accurately how many people are in the UK illegally, the Home Office published a report which included an estimate of the size of the illegal migrant population in the UK in 2001. A copy of the research and development statistics on-line report 29/05 Sizing the unauthorised (illegal) migrant population in the United Kingdom in 2001 can be found at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/notes/june_summaries.html#rdsolr2905. The method used relies on data from the census undertaken every 10 years, so it is not possible to produce an estimate for other years. Nor is it possible, using this methodology, to estimate the number living in Northern Ireland. No estimate has been made of the number of people who have been working illegally in Northern Ireland.

Migrant Workers

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many migrant worker work permits were granted to farms in Bassetlaw in the last three years, broken down by country of origin. [69738]

Mr. McNulty: Approvals for individuals to work in the UK agricultural sector are granted under the Work Permit Scheme, the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) and the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS). The following tables show the approval information for each of the schemes.

PQ 69738 tables

Work Permit Scheme

	2003	2004	2005
Pakistan	0	1	1

Worker Registration Scheme

	2004	2005
Czech Republic	2	0
Estonia	0	6
Latvia	4	8
Lithuania	2	3
Poland	15	41
Total	23	58

Note:
The Worker Registration Scheme has only operated from 1 May 2004.

Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme

	2004	2005
Belarus	0	2
Bulgaria	8	16
Lithuania	4	0
Russia	10	0
Ukraine	2	17
Total	24	35

Note:
Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme applicants are recruited by Home Office contracted operators and information is only collated for those workers registered on the scheme. Previous to 2004 records were not collected as to which area of the country the workers were deployed to and therefore information is only available for the Bassetlaw area as from that date.

This data is not provided under National Statistics protocols. It has been derived from local management information and is therefore provisional and subject to change.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy when placing material in the Library in response to a parliamentary question to supply a copy of the material to the hon. Member who tabled the question; and if he will make a statement. [64212]

John Reid: Government best practice is that Departments should supply a copy of material placed in the Library in response to a parliamentary question to the hon. Member who tabled it.

Prisoners (Hampshire)

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many UK nationals *(a)* are serving and *(b)* have completed in each of the past five years, prison sentences in Hampshire for (i) murder, (ii) manslaughter, (iii) grievous bodily harm, (iv) rape and (v) sexual offences against children; and how many of those released in each category served half of their sentence or less. [68484]

Mr. Sutcliffe: *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* The information requested on UK nationals being held in prisons in Hampshire by type of offence, as recorded on the central prison IT system, is provided in the attached table. This IT system does not specify sexual offences against children as a separate category, so information is not available for those offences. The information requested on how many prisoners have been discharged from sentences from prisons in Hampshire is not available.

The only way in which an offender would have been released before the half way point would have been on home detention curfew which, for prisoners sentenced under the Criminal Justice Act 1991, is statutory restricted to those sentenced to less than four years and not convicted of a grave offence. Those who are eligible are then subject to risk assessment. So few of these offenders will have been released before the halfway point.

Population of sentenced UK nationals in Hampshire prisons by offence and sentence length, 2002-06

	June 2002				*June 2003*			
	All	*Less than 4 years*	*4 years to less than life*	*Life*	*All*	*Less than 4 years*	*4 years to less than life*	*Life*
All	223	31	20	172	218	31	16	171
Murder	158	0	0	158	157	0	0	157
Manslaughter	7	2	3	2	4	0	1	3
Wounding (inflicting GBH)	36	15	13	8	34	15	12	7
Assault occasioning GBH	13	13	0	0	17	16	1	0
Assault with intent to cause GBH	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Rape	9	1	4	4	6	0	1	5

	June 2004				*June 2005*			
	All	*Less than 4 years*	*4 years to less than life*	*Life*	*All*	*Less than 4 years*	*4 years to less than life*	*Life*
All	187	37	19	131	228	38	19	171
Murder	118	0	0	118	146	0	0	146
Manslaughter	6	2	0	4	4	0	0	4
Wounding (inflicting GBH)	40	22	14	4	38	15	16	7
Assault occasioning GBH	12	12	0	0	21	20	1	0
Assault with intent to cause GBH	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Rape	11	1	5	5	18	3	1	14

	March 2006			
	All	*Less than 4 years*	*4 years to less than life*	*Life*
All	243	42	1	180
Murder	151	0	0	151
Manslaughter	2	1	0	1
Wounding (inflicting GBH)	53	21	18	14
Assault occasioning GBH	20	20	0	0
Assault with intent to cause GBH	0	0	0	0
Rape	17	0	3	14

Prisons

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Health about the merits of giving the Healthcare Commission statutory authority to monitor and evaluate the adequacy of mental health care provision across the prison estate. [65586]

Mr. Sutcliffe: National health service primary care trusts (PCTs) assumed full responsibility for the commissioning of prison health services in the public prisons in England in April 2006. HM Prison Service previously held this commissioning responsibility. The main aim of this transfer is to help ensure that prisoners receive a similar level of service from the national health service as that received by the general public.

As part of this, the statutory authority for the Healthcare Commission to performance manage prison health services, including mental health services, was automatically assumed when responsibility for commissioning prison health services was transferred to the national health service. The Healthcare Commission has responsibility for the assessment and performance of NHS organisations, which includes primary care trusts with responsibility for prison health services.

Probation Service

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the estimates of additional probation staff needed to implement the Criminal Justice Bill 2003 contained in explanatory notes published on 21 November 2002 are still valid. [63083]

Mr. Sutcliffe: On 3 April in answer to the hon. Gentleman's written question number 63078 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 354W, I provided details of substantial increases in probation staffing since 1997 and of further planned increases. Comparison with the estimates that were made three and a half years ago is difficult because the changes introduced through the Criminal Justice Act 2003 are not the only ones to affect deployment of probation resources. We are monitoring the courts' use of the new sentences in the 2003 Act and, thus far, the sentences are being imposed broadly in line with the planning assumptions that informed the explanatory notes.

Sheikha Ahmed

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects Sheikha Ahmed, reference LR1918000565, will be notified of her immigration status. [69475]

Mr. McNulty: Officials from the Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to Mrs. Ahmed informing her of the decision concerning her immigration status on 9 May 2006.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Personal Computers

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how many personal computers are allocated to employees of the House. [69455]

Nick Harvey: The latest estimate of personal computers currently used in the House service, including those allocated to PICT which is a department serving both Houses, is 1850, made in connection with the programme for updating computers to Microsoft XP. Following the creation of PICT in January of this year, a more systematic process for central recording of information on equipment volumes and for keeping it up to date is under way. All House staff who require a desk and access to the network have a desktop personal computer. Not all desktop computers are personally allocated; some are based in work areas used by different staff at different times. There are further computers used for training and development purposes, and a small number of laptops held within individual departments.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Animal Welfare

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list his Department's *(a)* advisory bodies and *(b)* committees concerned with animal health and welfare; and if he will make a statement. [67177]

Jim Fitzpatrick: For information on advisory bodies and committees with which the Department works, but which also cover the work of other Departments I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Environment Food and Rural Affairs on 9 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 125W.

British Nuclear Group

Helen Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discount rate has been used to calculate the nuclear liabilities of British Nuclear Group in preparation for its sale by British Nuclear Fuels Ltd. [64055]

Barry Gardiner: Following the European Commission's decision on state aid as announced on 4 April (press release reference IP/06/428), financial responsibility for the civil nuclear liabilities of BNFL including British Nuclear Group was assumed by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority with effect from 31 March 2006. The sale of BNG was agreed to in the expectation that the State Aid decision would be favourable in allowing for this assumption of financial responsibility. As such, the sale of BNG does not include those nuclear liabilities and no calculations were needed.

Disability Pay Gap

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the pay gap between able-bodied and disabled workers in *(a)* Kingston upon Hull, North and *(b)* the UK in each year between 1997 and 2005; and what steps his Department is taking to reduce that gap. [69763]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Low Pay Commission reported that, in 2004, the pay gap for people with a work-limiting disability was 13 percentage points. This Department is not aware of any further data on the pay

gap between disabled and non-disabled workers in Kingston upon Hull or the UK in the years 1997 to 2005.

The Equal Opportunities Commission's code of practice on equal pay recommends that it is good practice for employers, when comparing the pay between men and women to also look at disability and seek advice from the Disability Rights Commission to ensure that the relevant provisions of the disability legislation are taken into account.

As a result of a strong economy and active labour market policies, the employment gap between disabled and non-disabled people is starting to close. The employment rate for disabled people was 38.1 per cent. in spring 1998, rising to 46.6 per cent. by spring 2005; over the same period, the employment gap fell from 35.1 per cent. to 28 per cent.

The DTI supports the recommendations in my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit report, "Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People", and the aims of the Office for Disability Issues and contributes to implementing recommendations within its area of responsibility.

Energy Saving

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he has taken to encourage manufacturers to place on the market televisions and other such appliances which switch automatically from stand by to off mode after a pre-set time. [68465]

Ian Pearson: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the reply on 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 729W.

Energy Saving Trust

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what funding was allocated by his Department to the Energy Saving Trust in each year since 1997. [66732]

Ian Pearson *[holding answer 27 April 2006]* I have been asked to reply.

Total funding for the Energy Saving Trust by my Department is as follows:

	£ million
1998-99	19
1999-2000	23
2000-01	22
2001-02	24
2002-03	23
2003-04	25
2004-05	28
2005-06	27

Figures for 1997-98 cannot be obtained without disproportionate cost.

Ethanol

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with the government of Brazil about the implications for the UK of its experience of the use of ethanol as a fuel. [68221]

Malcolm Wicks: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not held any direct discussions with the Brazilians on the use of ethanol. However, the Prime Minister discussed the benefits of bioethanol with President Lula during his state visit to the UK in March. Part of the discussion focused on the study scoping a possible Brazil-UK-Africa partnership on bioethanol that is currently being undertaken by E4tech for the Office of Science and Innovation. This project arises from a visit made to Brazil by the UK Government's Chief Scientific Advisor, Sir David King, as part of the preparations for the UK G8 Summit in Gleneagles in July 2005. The final report on the study will be available for discussion at the Brazil-UK science days at the Royal Society on 22 and 23 May. The aim of the project is to try and address two difficult global problems, climate change and African development, through a tri-partite partnership. Work is currently focused around achieving a win on climate change and African development through development of production capacity from sugar cane.

European Energy Charter

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the Government's policy is on the European Energy Charter. [69930]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government see the Energy Charter Treaty as a valuable instrument with important provisions on non-discrimination on energy investment, trade and transit and an energy efficiency protocol. The Government's policy is to help to enhance its effectiveness by encouraging all member countries who have not yet ratified the treaty to do so.

International Energy Agency

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on UK *(a)* policy on and *(b)* contributions to the International Energy Agency. [69934]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 11 May 2006]*: The Government believe the International Energy Agency (IEA) carries out an important role as expert energy adviser to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (the OECD).

The IEA organised the collective release of emergency oil stocks held by member states to address the loss of supplies and to restore confidence to the oil market in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. It is also an international respected centre of technical energy expertise and is involved in the Gleneagles Dialogue on Climate Change, Clean Energy and Sustainable

Development. The G8 asked the IEA to undertake significant work under the Gleneagles Plan of Action.

In 2005 the UK paid an annual subscription of €1,459,674 (£962,833 at today's rates). The UK also made additional voluntary contributions from the Global Opportunities Fund that, in 2005, amounted to £144,695. The UK, as part of the G8, also made a contribution of €1 million to fund the work under the Gleneagles Plan of Action.

Miners' Compensation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and *(b)* vibration white finger claims have been submitted from Bassetlaw constituency, broken down by district electoral ward. [69752]

Malcolm Wicks: The breakdown of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and vibration white finger (VWF) claims requested above is set out as follows:

Postcode	*COPD*	*VWF*
DN10 and 11	4,257	2,364
DN22	996	749
NG20	5,298	3,518
NG22	3,138	2,307
S80	3,280	1,776
S81	2,811	1,489
Total	19,780	12,203

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many bereavement awards have been paid out as part of a miner's industrial disease claim in each year since 1999. [69784]

Malcolm Wicks: In total, 32,681 bereavement awards have been paid out as part of miners' industrial disease claims since 1999. The annual breakdown is as set out as follows:

Number of bereavement awards paid

	Number
1999	1,324
2000	3,186
2001	3,789
2002	5,040
2003	4,634
2004	5,242
2005	7,006
2006[1]	2,460

[1] As at 7 May.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many services claims under the vibration white finger scheme have been *(a)* submitted and *(b)* refused since 1999. [69791]

Malcolm Wicks: As at 7 May, 50,699 vibration white finger services claims had been submitted[1] and 2,866 denied since 1999.

[1] Some of those claims submitted may not have been pursued to settlement, having either been withdrawn or just not progressed.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what *(a)* minimum and *(b)* maximum costs (i) have been claimed from and (ii) paid by his Department for common law (A) chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and (B) vibration white finger claims since 1999. [69800]

Malcolm Wicks: The minimum and maximum costs claimed are not readily available but the sums paid each year since 1999 are set out in the following tables:

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

	Minimum	£ *Maximum*
1999	?	?
2000	1,048	4,600
2001	1,048	76,000
2002	1,076	21,500
2003	2,181	35,500
2004	529	56,539
2005	1,188	26,609
2006	1,452	32,017

Vibration white finger

	Minimum	£ *Maximum*
1999	705	7,603
2000	588	10,927
2001	180	8,001
2002	75	9,070
2003	433	10,875
2004	347	18,088
2005	588	12,500
2006	971	15,058

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which private contractors have signed up to his Department's claims handling agreement for mining diseases. [69804]

Malcolm Wicks: UK Coal, the largest of British Coal's successor companies, has signed up to the respiratory disease claims handling agreement (CHA) as has AGF, the insurers of the small mines owners.

A list of coal mining contractors who are party to the 1999 VWF CHA[1] follows:

A. Monk and Co. Ltd. (now Kvaerner Construction Ltd.)
AM Mining Services Ltd. (dissolved 7 May 2002)
Amalgamated Construction Company Ltd.
Caledonian Mining Company Ltd. (now Calsafe Group Ltd. incorporating Caledonian Building Systems Ltd).
CEMEC
Cementation Mining Ltd.
Cleveland Potash
Davy Mining Ltd.
Derek Crouch Mining Ltd.
G. Elect Services Ltd.
Hollybank Engineering Ltd.
James Williams (Neath) Ltd.
Kvaerner Construction Ltd.
Low Valley Engineering and Shot Blasting Ltd.

Matthew Hall Mining Ltd.
MB Installations and Site Services
Mining Skills Ltd.
National Plant and Transport
OMEC Engineering
Small Mines
Specialist Mining Services Ltd.
T. Bridges and Co. Ltd.
Techplus Mining Ltd.
Thyssen (GB) Ltd.
Trafalgar House Group
UK Coal Mining Limited
West Riding Technology
Coal Investment
Hatfield Colliery
Midland Mining Ltd.
Tower Colliery

[1] Please note that the VWF CHA has since been amended by negotiation with the Claimants Steering Group, which the above Coal Mining Contractors are only in agreement with in part

Offshore Petroleum Licensing

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 91-92WS, on offshore petroleum licensing, what protection is in place in the 24th round of offshore petroleum licensing for Cardigan Bay, as a special area of conservation. [69304]

Malcolm Wicks: There are several types of protection which will be afforded to any special areas of conservation within Cardigan Bay.

Prior to commencing the 24th Licence Round, my officials carried out a strategic environmental assessment in order to predict and evaluate the environmental implications of the round.

We will shortly be conducting an "Appropriate Assessment" (pursuant to the habitats and birds directives) of potential impacts of the 24th Licence Round. An Appropriate Assessment will enable my officials to ascertain whether the proposed plan or project is likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of a relevant site. In carrying out this Appropriate Assessment we will consult the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Should any licences be granted and the operators subsequently apply to undertake activities that are likely to have a significant effect on a relevant site within Cardigan Bay then further Appropriate Assessments will be conducted at the project level. In addition, an environmental impact assessment may also be required as part of the permit application process.

These assessments will be used to determine what type of activity may be licensed or consented and/or what form of mitigation should be applied.

Post Office Card Account

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will compensate those post offices which will be affected by the proposed withdrawal of the Post Office card account. [70250]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Post Office Ltd and the Department for Work and Pensions are currently discussing various options to help mitigate any impact on post offices resulting from the end of the Post Office card account.

Share Certificates

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what his Department's policy is on the removal of share certificates under a programme of dematerialisation; and if he will make a statement. [67757]

Margaret Hodge: The Government have welcomed the work of an industry working group which is looking at options for greater use of paper free holding and transfer of shares. The responses to the company law reform White Paper of March 2005 showed strong support for this initiative, but it is also clear that more information is needed on the costs and benefits of a paper free approach. The Government do not wish to rule out any option at this stage, and have therefore decided to extend the existing power relating to transfer of securities under section 207 of the Companies Act 1989 so that it could be used to require, as well as to permit, the paper free holding and transfer of company shares. In doing so, we wish to ensure that the new arrangements for paperless holding and transfer of securities do not deprive individual shareholders of existing rights which may be important to them.

Sub-Auroral Magnetometer Network

Mr. Goodwill: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of how the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council's changes to the funding of the UK Sub-Auroral Magnetometer Network will affect amateur astronomers. [67752]

Jim Fitzpatrick: To maintain the health of its programme, the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (PPARC) has conducted a rigorous review of its investments. As a result of this review, PPARC has decided to withdraw support from UK Sub-Auroral Magnetometer Network (SAMNET). SAMNET records natural variations in the Earth's magnetic field, PPARC's assessment is that the withdrawal of support will therefore have minimal impact on amateur astronomers.

Telephone Numbers

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many possible telephone numbers had not been issued to subscribers or service providers *(a)* in the UK, *(b)* on the Isle of Wight and

(c) in each London code area (i) immediately before the revisions to the numbering system in (A) 1990, (B) 1995 and (C) 2000 and (ii) at the most recent date for which information is available. [64806]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The matter raised is the responsibility of the Regulator, the Office of Communications (Ofcom) which is accountable to Parliament rather than Ministers. Accordingly, I have asked the chief executive of Ofcom to reply directly to the hon. Member. Copies of the Chief Executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Television Licences

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the value of the business brought to the post office by its sale of television licences. [70413]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The value of the business brought to the post office by the sale of television licences derives from a commercial contract with the BBC, and is therefore an operational matter for the company. I have asked Alan Cook, the Managing Director of Post Office Ltd., to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Thorp Reprocessing Plant

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the likely timescale for reopening the THORP nuclear reprocessing plant; and if he will make a statement. [69376]

Malcolm Wicks: The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority estimates that the thermal oxid reprocessing plant (THORP) is likely to be ready to reopen in the summer. A decision on whether to restart rests with the NDA Board is subject to the Health and Safety Executive's safety requirements being met. The Health and Safety Executive's Nuclear Installations Inspectorate will not allow THORP to restart until it is satisfied that these safety requirements have been met.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Avian Influenza

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what the average infection rate is for the *(a)* H7 and *(b)* H5N1 strains of avian influenza; [69410]

(2) what information he has received on the infection rate in other countries where there has been an outbreak of the H7 strain of avian influenza. [69411]

Mr. Bradshaw: The infection rate within a flock will depend on the stage at which the disease is detected. The rate of spread and local epidemiology within a poultry population will depend on many factors, but once the virus is introduced into a holding its rate of spread within the flock will be most strongly influenced by the virus strain, the host species and the production type.

Recent incidents of low pathogenic H7 avian influenza in Italy have usually resulted in infection rates of 100 per cent., especially where the disease was not detected early and intervention strategies were not put in place. Early detection of low pathogenic viruses is particularly difficult since clinical signs are often very mild or not apparent. In the outbreaks of H7N7 highly pathogenic avian influenza in flocks in the Netherlands in 2003, 100 per cent. of birds became diseased when there was no early detection or intervention. The average infection rates for H7 or H5 avian influenza in flocks of poultry will depend on the influence of all of the factors mentioned above.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the infection rate was in each UK outbreak of the H7 strain of avian influenza in the last 30 years; and if he will make a statement. [69412]

Mr. Bradshaw: The infection rate, as determined by serology, in the three poultry premises recently confirmed with H7N3 was 100 per cent.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what testing methods are used by the UK Government to detect *(a)* the H7 strain of avian influenza, *(b)* the H5N1 strain of avian influenza and *(c)* other strains of avian influenza; what information he has received on the methods used in other countries in each case; and if he will make a statement. [69414]

Mr. Bradshaw: The UK national laboratory at the Veterinary Laboratory Agency (VLA), Weybridge follows standard international protocols (including EU directives) to detect avian influenza viruses.

A combination of screening and confirmatory tests are used. Initially, samples are screened using a rapid, highly sensitive and specific real-time reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction test (RT-PCR) that detects all influenza A viruses. Further tests of this type are used specifically for the detection of H5 and H7 subtypes, in addition to conventional PCR tests that provide information on the pathogenicity of the virus.

In all cases involving suspicion of disease in poultry, or following positive detection in any host, virus isolation in embryonated fowls' eggs is carried out to provide further characterisation. In addition, especially for H5 or H7 viruses, blood samples are analysed for virus-specific antibodies using standard haemagglutination inhibition tests.

As an international reference laboratory—and the EU community reference laboratory for avian influenza—the VLA takes a leading role in developing new technologies for diagnosis, together with the transfer and standardisation of such methodologies to other laboratories. The agency is also responsible for ensuring test harmonisation across all national laboratories and ensuring that common testing methodologies are used.

Carbon Trust

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs why the Carbon Trust is exempt from the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [67866]

Ian Pearson: The Carbon Trust is a private company and is not listed in the schedules of the Freedom of Information Act. It would be Defra's responsibility to answer any request for information held by the Trust on Defra's behalf.

Climate Change

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps he has taken to address the effects on the UK of global warming; and what further steps he plans to take in the next five years. [65392]

Ian Pearson *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* The recently published climate change programme in March 2006, sets out the Government's commitments both at international and domestic level to meet the challenge of climate change. The programme contains a series of measures between now and 2010 both to further reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and bring us closer to our domestic target of reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent. below 1990 levels by 2010. The programme also contains commitments to adapt to that climate change which is already unavoidable.

Further information on the new climate change programme can be found on the DEFRA website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/uk/ukccp/index.htm

Community Energy Programme

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reason the community energy programme has had its funding programme curtailed; and what alternatives have been put in place. [68568]

Ian Pearson: The recent climate change programme review involved a wide-ranging appraisal of the effectiveness of existing climate change policies. We have concluded that other programmes deliver carbon savings in a more cost-effective way, compared with the community energy programme. These include support for biomass community heating through the new heat support scheme, which will include combined heat and power.

Dairy Industry

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment he has made of recent developments in the milk producing and dairy industry. [66107]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department commissioned a report from Professor David Colman and Yaqin Zhaung, 'Changes in England and Wales Dairy Farming since 2002/03: A Resurvey', which was published last year. This showed that more farms had ceased production than had been previously indicated and there was a higher concentration of more profitable and larger herds among those that left. It reconfirmed previous findings which indicated that milk production is likely to fall.

Although the trend of farmers leaving the industry is not new, in terms of the sustainable future of the dairy industry, the apparent trend of some of the more efficient dairy farmers leaving the industry is worrying. We commissioned the report because we wanted some firm evidence of what was happening in the dairy sector. This is part of that evidence base. The Dairy Supply Chain Forum, chaired by my noble Friend, Lord Rooker, is working to understand why these farmers are leaving. While it is likely that profitability will be an important factor, there are also issues such as succession and possibilities for diversification which need to be considered.

The report, 'Changes in England and Wales Dairy Farming since 2002/03: A Resurvey', can be found on the DEFRA website at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodrin/milk/pdf/colman3report.pdf

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent steps his Department has taken to assist the dairy farming sector; and if he will make a statement. [66108]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government are helping the industry to help itself, for example by establishing the Dairy Supply Chain Forum, chaired by my noble Friend, Lord Rooker. The dairy farming sector is well represented on the Forum. We believe that the Dairy Supply Chain Forum has had a positive effect on bringing together all sectors of the dairy industry to discuss the challenges and develop collective solutions.

The Forum has commissioned and published a considerable amount of research which has stimulated debate and helped provide information to help the industry make informed decisions about its future.

The dairy farming sector has also benefited directly from grants under the Agriculture Development Scheme, for example to help fund benchmarking and the creation of a network of dairy best practice groups.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent steps he has taken *(a)* to strengthen the selling systems for milk and *(b)* to improve the dairy industry structure. [66109]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Dairy Supply Chain Forum, chaired by my noble Friend, Lord Rooker, has had constructive discussions regarding the National Farmers Union's 'Vision for the Dairy Industry' and the Milk Development Council's paper, 'Raw Milk Contracts and Relationships'. Ultimately however, decisions on selling systems are private commercial matters in which Government cannot get involved.

Decisions on the future structure of the dairy industry are also for the industry rather than Government. Through the Dairy Supply Chain Forum, a considerable amount of research has been commissioned and published, which has helped provide information to help the industry make informed decisions about the future.

Environment Agency

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether Crown copyright applies to Environment Agency data. [67801]

Ian Pearson: Crown Copyright applies to Crown and Government Departments. As the Environment Agency is a non-departmental public body (NDPB), Crown copyright does not apply to Environment Agency data.

The Office of Public Sector Information lists Crown and non-Crown bodies on its website at http://www.opsi.gov.uk/advice/crown-copyright/uk-crown-bodies.htm.

Environmental Industries

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has made to the EU Commission on EU support for environmental industries. [67896]

Ian Pearson: UK Ministers and officials regularly discuss EU support for environmental industries with the European Commission. Under the UK presidency of the EU, my predecessor, my hon. Friend the Member for Scunthorpe (Mr. Morley), hosted a stakeholder forum on environmental technologies alongside Environment Commissioner Dimas on 1 December 2005 in Brussels. In addition, the UK has played an active role in the implementation of the environmental technologies action plan since its adoption. We continue to promote ways of facilitating the uptake of environmental technologies, including through Community research programmes and financial instruments.

GM Crops

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the recent announcement by the EU Food Safety Authority on the long-term safety of GM crops. [66628]

Ian Pearson: I understand the hon. gentleman to be referring to the press release issued by the European Commission on 12 April. This document did not make any new claims or provide any new evidence relating to the issue of the long term safety of GM crops. Its purpose was instead to give details of certain proposed measures which provide reassurance that Community decisions on genetically modified organisms are based on high quality scientific assessments which deliver a high level of protection for human health and the environment.

The Government believe that Community decisions on GMOs are already taken on the basis of high quality scientific assessments which provide a high level of protection for human health and the environment. However, we support this initiative from the Commission which aims to improve the transparency of the procedures in place.

Leader Plus (Gloucestershire)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what Leader Plus programmes are running in Gloucestershire. [68567]

Ian Pearson: There are no Leader plus Local Action Groups in Gloucestershire.

Recycling

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what *(a)* grants are available and *(b)* assistance is offered by (i) his Department and (ii) its agencies for the promotion of education about recycling; and if he will make a statement. [69205]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The Government are providing funding and support for the promotion of awareness and education about recycling through a number of different programmes.

Each local authority in England is receiving a share of the £105 million Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant (WPEG) this year. This grant allocation is not ring-fenced and local authorities are encouraged to use it to support further improvements in recycling performance, including education initiatives.

The Waste Implementation Programme (WIP)'s local authority support unit provides best practice guidance, practical support and consultancy advice, including public awareness and education programmes.

The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) is taking forward, on behalf of the Government, a waste awareness and education programme. WRAP has a budget of nearly £16 million for this programme this financial year. Nearly £10 million of this budget will be spent on the national "Recycle Now" campaign, which includes television and news media campaigns. The remainder of the budget of around £7 million will be used to support local authority communications campaigns. The campaign also involves work with schools.

Sakhalin II Development

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions he has had about plans for responding to oil spills in winter ice conditions in relation to possible European Bank for Reconstruction and Development funding for Shell's proposed Sakhalin II development. [67173]

Ian Pearson: My predecessor, and Ministerial colleagues from other Departments, have held a number of meetings, both with Shell and representatives from NGOs, relating to the Sakhalin II project. A range of issues, including the environmental impacts of the project, and specifically the question of plans for responding to oil spills in winter ice conditions, have been discussed.

Single Farm Payments

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of farmers waiting to receive payments under the single farm payment scheme in Suffolk. [69820]

Barry Gardiner: 120,367 applications were received for the single payment scheme (SPS). By the end of 4 May 2006 over 58,000 claims (48.5 per cent.) had been paid, a total of £552 million in full payment.

31,000 partial payments have been processed to a value of £730 million. In total, 85 per cent. of the £1,500 million of expected payments for the 2005 scheme years will have been distributed.

31,000 claimants were not included in the partial payments system, 26,000 because their claim amounted to less than €1,000, and 5,000 because of a diverse range of other factors which made their cases particularly complex. Making full payments to this group of 5,000 will now be given the highest priority by the Rural Payments Agency.

The Rural Payments Agency does not have the data available on a regional basis, as the scheme is not administered in this way.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs who signed the letter from his Department to the Commission for Agriculture dated 12 April requesting an extension of the payment window for the single farm payment until October 2006. [67923]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* The letter was signed by the Director General for Sustainable Farming and Food.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many complaints have been received from farmers in Milton Keynes about the single farm payment. [68137]

Barry Gardiner: The Rural Payments Agency does not have data available on a regional or subject basis, as complaints are not administered in this way.

UN Convention on Biological Diversity

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will make a statement on the outcome of the March meeting of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and its implications for the Government's policy on terminator seeds. [67467]

Ian Pearson: At the eighth meeting of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), held in Curitiba, Brazil 20-31 March 2006, Governments decided to reaffirm the decision which had been taken in 2000 that there should be a precautionary approach in field testing and commercial development of Genetic Use Restriction Technologies (GURTs).

This decision states that products incorporating GURTs should not be approved for field testing until appropriate scientific data can justify such testing and for commercial use until appropriate scientific assessments with regard to ecological and socio-economic impacts have been carried out and the conditions for their safe and beneficial use validated. In addition to reaffirming the precautionary approach in the 2000 decision, the 2006 decision calls for the respect of farmers' rights to the preservation of seed and for further research on the ecological, economic, social and cultural impacts of GURTs.

The UK Government have pursued a consistent policy on this issue, supporting both the decision taken by the CBD in 2000 and the reaffirmation of this decision in 2006. As far as we are aware, no crops involving terminator technology are in use anywhere in the world, and none are under active commercial development.

Veal

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will make it his policy to ban the importation of veal which has been reared in crates; and if he will make a statement. [69253]

Mr. Bradshaw: Under both EU and international trade rules it would be illegal to ban the import of veal reared in crates. However, the UK opposes the use of veal crates, and banned them in this country in 1990. From 1 January 2007, veal crates will be banned throughout the EU.

Many producers on the continent have already moved to other production methods and the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark have also banned their use. Finland has banned veal production altogether and Sweden and Greece have no veal industry.

Waste

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will reply to the letter of 23 December 2005, from the hon. Member for North West Leicestershire on the reprocessed fuel oil, the Waste Incineration Directive and the draft Waste Framework Directive. [57532]

Mr. Bradshaw: I apologise for the extremely long delay in replying.

The Government have been in high level discussions with industry and stakeholders on these issues, and a reply will be sent by 26 May 2006.

Water Metering

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of households in each water company area has water meters; and what percentage of all households was metered in *(a)* 1990, *(b)* 2000 and *(c)* the latest year for which figures are available. [67897]

Ian Pearson: Ofwat is the economic regulator of the water and sewerage industry in England and Wales. Each year it records the percentage of household customers with meters on an individual company and industry wide basis. This information is published by Ofwat in its 'Security of supply, leakage and the efficient use of water' report.

Ofwat holds reliable figures on the percentage of metered properties from 1992-93 onwards. Figures for the period 1990-92 are not available. The latest reporting year for which figures are available is 2004-05. Household metering projections

Household metering projections

Measured Household Properties	*1992-1993*	*1999-2000*	*Percentage 2004-05*
Anglian and Hartlepool	4	42	54
Dwr Cymru / Welsh	3	7	19
United Utilities	2	9	17
Northumbrian (North)	1	5	11
Northumbrian (South)	2	23	35
Severn Trent	5	17	24
South West	4	23	46
Southern	10	18	27
Thames	2	16	20
Wessex	5	23	33
Yorkshire and York	3	18	27
Bournemouth and West Hampshire	3	18	37
Bristol	3	14	23
Cambridge	5	42	54
Dee Valley	4	20	34
Folkestone and Dover	3	29	41
Mid Kent	3	18	33
Portsmouth	0	1	5
South East	4	21	29
South Staffordshire	3	9	15
Sutton and East Surrey	1	12	19
Tendring Hundred	5	33	61
Three valleys	3	14	23
Industry	3	17	26

Water Shortages

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment he has made of the effect of *(a)* water shortages and *(b)* hosepipe bans on (i) municipal floral displays, (ii) cricket pitches and (iii) the Britain in Bloom competition. [66240]

Ian Pearson: The Environment Agency has produced a report, 'Drought prospects 2006', explaining the likely consequences of a continuing rainfall deficit and recommending action by water companies and the public. This report is available on request from the Agency (telephone 020 7863 8710) or from its website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Hosepipe bans imposed by water companies affect the watering of private gardens. Some water companies in South East England have applied to the Secretary of State for drought orders to ban the non-essential use of water. If made, such orders could impact on the watering of parks and sports facilities.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how long he expects the hosepipe bans in *(a)* Thames Water and *(b)* Three Valleys Water to continue; and if he will make a statement. [66880]

Ian Pearson: The typical duration of hosepipe bans depends on factors such as the amount of water stored in local aquifers, base river levels and reservoir storage. The present bans in Thames Water and Three Valleys Water are likely to continue throughout the summer, and until there is enough rainfall for water companies to be confident they can meet demand for summer 2007.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment he has made of the amount of water likely to be lost due to leaks in pipes owned by water companies over the next decade; and if he will make a statement. [67008]

Ian Pearson: The Director General of Water Services publishes leakage figures annually in the 'Security of supply, leakage and the efficient use of water' reports. Leakage targets are set by Ofwat, currently up to 2009-10. If all water companies were to meet these targets, total water company leakage would be 3,336 megalitres/day by 2009-10, a reduction of 272 megalitres/day from 2004-05 figures.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Leader of the House what percentage of his private office staff is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled. [69151]

Nigel Griffiths: The office of the Leader of the House of Commons has 12 staff, 67 per cent. are male and 33 per cent. female.

The provision of personal information on disability is optional and is held on individual staff files. Owing to the nature and size of the office, providing this information could result in the identification of individuals.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

First Level 3 Qualifications

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1591W, on first level 3 qualifications, how many 19 to 25-year-olds studying for a first level 3 qualification are paying fees for the course in each region in England. [69569]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 9 May 2006]:* The following table shows the number of 19 to 25-year-olds who were studying for a full level 3 or equivalent qualification[1] in further education in the academic year 2004/05 by region, and the number of those in each region who did not receive any fee remission.

Region of learner	*Level 3 learners*	*Level 3 fee payers*	*Percentage of fee payers*
North East	2,568	807	31
North West	6,572	1,845	28
Yorkshire and Humberside	4,380	1,260	29
East Midlands	3,927	960	24
West Midlands	4,844	1,198	25
East of England	3,652	1,491	41
Greater London	6,431	1,978	31
South East	6,840	2,323	34
South West	4,866	1,970	40
Region unknown	1,056	382	36
Total	45,136	14,214	31

Notes:
1. We estimate that of the 45,000 19 to 25-year-olds in England who were studying for a full level 3 in 2004/05, 22,000 were studying for a first full level 3 qualification.
2. We do not have estimates for "firstness" at a regional level, due to insufficient sample sizes in the research into prior qualifications in FE.
3. The research suggests that, nationally, there is no difference in the proportion receiving fee remission between first and non-first full level 3 learners.
Source:
Individualised Learner Record, 2004/05

[1]Does not include Access to HE qualifications or wholly privately funded study aims.

Free School Meals

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of children in each school in Worcester city *(a)* receive free school meals and *(b)* are eligible for free school meals. [67402]

Jim Knight: The information requested is shown in the table.

Two sets of figures relating to the number and proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are given here. The first includes all pupils in the school, regardless of their age. The second includes full-time pupils aged up to (and including) 15 and part-time pupils aged five to 15 (inclusive). This second coverage is as used in the Pupil Achievement Tracker and Ofsted's PANDA reports and provides consistent school level comparisons.

Maintained primary and secondary schools: school meal arrangements, January 2005, Worcester parliamentary constituency

					All pupils[1]			
URN	*LEA number*	*Estab number*	*School name*	*Number on roll*	*Number of pupils taking free school meals*[2]	*Percentage of pupils taking free school meals*	*Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*	*Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*
116749	885	2161	Worcester, Cherry Orchard Primary School	603	26	4.3	30	5.0
116750	885	2162	Worcester, Cranham Primary School	418	49	11.7	49	11.7
116751	885	2163	Worcester, Dines Green Primary School	204	58	28.4	61	29.9
116752	885	2167	Gorse Hill Community Primary School	319	94	29.5	118	37.0
116753	885	2171	Worcester, Northwick Manor Infants' School	262	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]
116754	885	2172	Worcester, Nunnery Wood Primary School	302	30	9.9	35	11.6
116755	885	2173	Worcester, Perdiswell Primary School	400	12	3.0	13	3.3
116756	885	2176	Worcester, Ronkswood Junior School	275	57	20.7	57	20.7

Maintained primary and secondary schools: school meal arrangements, January 2005, Worcester parliamentary constituency

URN	LEA number	Estab number	School name	Number on roll	All pupils[1] Number of pupils taking free school meals[2]	All pupils[1] Percentage of pupils taking free school meals	Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
116757	885	2177	Worcester, Ronkswood Infants' School	236	40	16.9	42	17.8
116758	885	2178	Worcester, Northwick Manor Junior School	326	7	2.1	7	2.1
116759	885	2179	Worcester, Stanley Road Primary School	256	22	8.6	29	11.3
116760	885	2181	Worcester, Warndon Junior School	290	52	17.9	69	23.8
116761	885	2182	Worcester, Warndon Infants' School	233	39	16.7	45	19.3
116769	885	2200	Worcester, Pitmaston Primary School	611	23	3.8	32	5.3
116770	885	2202	Worcester, Oldbury Park Primary School	396	17	4.3	19	4.8
131274	885	2918	Lyppard Grange Primary School	310	9	2.9	9	2.9
116858	885	3114	Worcester, St. Barnabas C of E Primary School	419	21	5.0	53	12.6
116859	885	3116	Worcester, Red Hill C of E Primary School	300	6	2.0	6	2.0
116921	885	3387	Worcester, Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary	188	3	1.6	4	2.1
116922	885	3388	Worcester, St. Clement's C of E Primary	260	33	12.7	34	13.1
116923	885	3389	Worcester, St. George's C of E Primary School	205	29	14.1	33	16.1
116924	885	3390	Worcester, St. George's Catholic Primary School	205	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]
116925	885	3391	Worcester, St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School	208	12	5.8	12	5.8
134707	885	3394	Fairfield Community Primary School	141	0	0.0	39	27.7
116977	885	4431	Elgar Technology College	957	150	15.7	211	22.0
116978	885	4432	Christopher Whitehead High School	1,153	104	9.0	157	13.6
116979	885	4434	Worcester, Nunnery Wood High School	1,346	[4]	[4]	106	7.9
116993	885	4754	Bishop Perowne C of E High School	1,047	47	4.5	64	6.1
116999	885	5402	Blessed Edward Oldcorne Catholic College	1,048	49	4.7	63	6.0

URN	LEA number	Estab number	School name	Pupil Achievement Tracker[3] Number of pupils	Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
116749	885	2161	Worcester, Cherry Orchard Primary School	603	30	5.0

URN	LEA number	Estab number	School name	Number of pupils	Pupil Achievement Tracker[2] Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Pupil Achievement Tracker[2] Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
116750	885	2162	Worcester, Cranham Primary School	371	49	13.2
116751	885	2163	Worcester, Dines Green Primary School	183	61	33.3
116752	885	2167	Gorse Hill Community Primary School	272	118	43.4
116753	885	2171	Worcester, Northwick Manor Infants' School	261	[4]	[4]
116754	885	2172	Worcester, Nunnery Wood Primary School	301	35	11.6
116755	885	2173	Worcester, Perdiswell Primary School	396	13	3.3
116756	885	2176	Worcester, Ronkswood Junior School	275	57	20.7
116757	885	2177	Worcester, Ronkswood Infants' School	166	35	21.1
116758	885	2178	Worcester, Northwick Manor Junior School	326	7	2.1
116759	885	2179	Worcester, Stanley Road Primary School	215	28	13.0
116760	885	2181	Worcester, Warndon Junior School	290	69	23.8
116761	885	2182	Worcester, Warndon Infants' School	181	45	24.9
116769	885	2200	Worcester, Pitmaston Primary School	601	32	5.3
116770	885	2202	Worcester, Oldbury Park Primary School	396	19	4.8
131274	885	2918	Lyppard Grange Primary School	310	9	2.9
116858	885	3114	Worcester, St. Barnabas C of E Primary School	419	53	12.6
116859	885	3116	Worcester, Red Hill C of E Primary School	300	6	2.0
116921	885	3387	Worcester, Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary	188	4	2.1
116922	885	3388	Worcester, St. Clement's C of E Primary	216	26	12.0
116923	885	3389	Worcester, St. George's C of E Primary School	205	33	16.1
116924	885	3390	Worcester, St. George's Catholic Primary School	205	[4]	[4]
116925	885	3391	Worcester, St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School	208	12	5.8
134707	885	3394	Fairfield Community Primary School	105	35	33.3
116977	885	4431	Elgar Technology College	955	211	22.1
116978	885	4432	Christopher Whitehead High School	1,151	157	13.6
116979	885	4434	Worcester, Nunnery Wood High School	1,346	106	7.9
116993	885	4754	Bishop Perowne C of E High School	1,046	64	6.1
116999	885	5402	Blessed Edward Oldcorne Catholic College	1,048	63	6.0

[1] Includes pupils with sole and dual registration of all ages.
[2] Includes pupils with sole and dual registration who are full-time and aged 0 to 15 (inclusive) and those who are part-time and aged five to 15 (inclusive).
[3] Number of pupils who took a free school meal on the day of the census in January.
[4] Less than three or a rate based on less than three.

Head Teachers

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools do not have a permanent head teacher. [70792]

Jim Knight: Information is not available in the format requested.

Information on the number of full-time temporary filled head teacher posts is available from the annual survey of teachers in service and teacher vacancies held in January each year. Table 9 of Statistical First Release 18/2006 provides a snapshot of temporarily filled head teacher posts as at January for each year available. This publication is available on the Department's website at the following URL: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000653/index.shtml. A copy has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Learning and Skills Council

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the basis was for the calculation of the estimated £40 million savings from the re-organisation of the Learning and Skills Council; whether the calculation was made *(a)* before and *(b)* after a decision had been reached on staff numbers and structures; and how much of the estimated saving was savings on (i) staff costs and (ii) administrative costs. [69884]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* On 16 September 2005 Mark Haysom, the Learning and Skills Council's chief executive, announced proposals for a new structure for the organisation with the aim of making it more effective at identifying and responding to local learning and skills needs, and to achieve a less bureaucratic and more strategic relationship with partners and providers. It means that the LSC will spend less time on transactional processes and more time developing relationships with key partners and stakeholders. This requires fewer staff with a different set of skills. The calculation of savings of up to £40 million, which could be released for the benefit of learners, was based on these priorities and a structure that will require some 1,100 fewer posts. The savings include staffing, property and related costs. Due to the complexities involved in the restructuring the level of savings may change.

School Sport

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much of the £750 million pledged for school sport at the 2000 Labour Party Conference has been spent. [69919]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* All of the New Opportunities for PE and Sport (NOPES) funding is now fully committed, to over 2,000 projects. To date, £341,370,187 has been drawn down by local authorities.

School Statistics

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of children are educated in private schools in each local authority area. [68793]

Jim Knight: The information requested is shown in the table.

Independent schools: number and percentage of pupils January 2006 (provisional)[1]—by local authority

		Number of pupils in independent schools	Percentage of pupils in independent schools[2]
	England[3]	563,780	6.9
	North East[3]	12,980	3.1
841	Darlington	706	4.3
840	Durham	2,066	2.6
390	Gateshead	727	2.4
805	Hartlepool	0	0.0
806	Middlesbrough	26	0.1
391	Newcastle upon Tyne	4,772	11.3
392	North Tyneside	1,019	3.2
929	Northumberland	604	1.2
807	Redcar and Cleveland	0	0.0
393	South Tyneside	0	0.0
808	Stockton-on-Tees	1,822	5.7
394	Sunderland	1,236	2.7
	North West[3]	56,160	4.9
889	Blackburn with Darwen	2,817	10.0
890	Blackpool	1,140	5.2
350	Bolton	3,140	6.4
351	Bury	4,203	13.0
875	Cheshire	8,376	7.5
909	Cumbria	3,378	4.2
876	Halton	11	0.1
340	Knowsley	21	0.1
888	Lancashire	6,802	3.8
341	Liverpool	2,378	3.2
352	Manchester	6,490	8.9
353	Oldham	1,573	3.8
354	Rochdale	388	1.1
355	Salford	1,946	5.7
343	Sefton	3,318	6.9
342	St. Helens	742	2.6
356	Stockport	4,773	10.4
357	Tameside	229	0.6
358	Trafford	2,094	5.5
877	Warrington	7	0.0
359	Wigan	0	0.0
344	Wirral	2,335	4.3
	Yorkshire and the Humber[3]	32,990	3.9
370	Barnsley	225	0.6
380	Bradford	3,623	3.9
381	Calderdale	1,419	3.9
371	Doncaster	591	1.2
811	East Riding of Yorkshire	1,815	3.5
810	Kingston upon Hull, City of	1,119	2.8
382	Kirklees	1,881	2.9
383	Leeds	5,054	4.4
812	North East Lincolnshire	435	1.7
813	North Lincolnshire	223	0.9
815	North Yorkshire	6,628	7.0
372	Rotherham	261	0.6
373	Sheffield	2,866	3.7
384	Wakefield	4,387	7.8
816	York	2,460	9.3
	East Midlands[3]	33,490	4.8
831	Derby	1,231	3.0

Independent schools: number and percentage of pupils January 2006 (provisional)[1]—by local authority

		Number of pupils in independent schools	Percentage of pupils in independent schools[2]
830	Derbyshire	4,597	3.9
856	Leicester	3,206	6.4
855	Leicestershire	5,318	5.3
925	Lincolnshire	4,577	4.2
928	Northamptonshire	6,096	5.4
892	Nottingham	3,313	7.8
891	Nottinghamshire	2,995	2.4
857	Rutland	2,161	30.4
	West Midlands[3]	43,420	4.8
330	Birmingham	7,661	4.2
331	Coventry	3,014	5.8
332	Dudley	257	0.5
884	Herefordshire	2,016	7.9
333	Sandwell	14	0.0
893	Shropshire	4,974	11.0
334	Solihull	2,032	5.2
860	Staffordshire	4,518	3.4
861	Stoke-on-Trent	120	0.3
894	Telford and Wrekin	829	2.9
335	Walsall	1,010	2.0
937	Warwickshire	6,766	8.1
336	Wolverhampton	1,794	4.2
885	Worcestershire	8,417	9.5
	East of England[3]	62,650	6.9
820	Bedfordshire	5,687	8.1
873	Cambridgeshire	8,219	9.5
881	Essex	10,678	5.1
919	Hertfordshire	20,943	10.6
821	Luton	713	2.2
926	Norfolk	6,387	5.3
874	Peterborough	380	1.3
882	Southend-on-Sea	1,357	4.8
935	Suffolk	8,287	7.6
883	Thurrock	0	0.0
	London[3]	120,390	10.0
	Inner London[3]	57,610	13.4
202	Camden	7,266	25.0
201	City of London	1,903	89.2
204	Hackney	3,962	13.1
205	Hammersmith and Fulham	5,180	23.0
309	Haringey	2,154	5.9
206	Islington	588	2.5
207	Kensington and Chelsea	10,604	49.2
208	Lambeth	2,083	6.6
209	Lewisham	1,873	5.0
316	Newham	535	1.1
210	Southward	5,130	12.2
211	Tower Hamlets	906	2.3
212	Wandsworth	8,202	21.5
213	Westminster	7,227	26.7
	Outer London[3]	62,780	8.1
301	Barking and Dagenham	0	0.0
302	Barnet	6,416	11.9
303	Bexley	732	1.8
304	Brent	1,651	3.8
305	Bromley	4,515	8.8
306	Croydon	6,859	11.8
307	Ealing	5,121	10.6
308	Enfield	1,519	3.0
203	Greenwich	3,032	7.5
310	Harrow	4,995	14.7
311	Havering	886	2.4
312	Hillingdon	3,703	7.9
313	Hounslow	976	2.6
314	Kingston upon Thames	3,576	14.2
315	Merton	3,283	12.1
317	Redbridge	3,833	7.8
318	Richmond upon Thames	8,401	29.2
319	Sutton	1,543	4.7
320	Waltham Forest	1,740	4.5
	South East[3]	142,460	10.9
867	Bracknell Forest	2,659	14.9
846	Brighton and Hove	4,002	11.7
825	Buckinghamshire	8,672	10.2
845	East Sussex	7,107	9.7
850	Hampshire	15,886	8.4
921	Isle of Wight	770	3.8
886	Kent	17,461	7.5
887	Medway	1,533	3.4
826	Milton Keynes	1,130	3.0
931	Oxfordshire	15,383	15.2
851	Portsmouth	3,279	11.8
870	Reading	2,850	14.4
871	Slough	765	3.5
852	Southampton	1,750	5.9
936	Surrey	37,411	21.1
869	West Berkshire	3,054	10.9
938	West Sussex	11,303	9.7
868	Windsor and Maidenhead	4,491	18.9
872	Wokingham	2,956	11.2
	South West[3]	59,230	7.6
800	Bath and North East Somerset	4,314	14.7
837	Bournemouth	1,506	6.8
801	Bristol, City of	8,578	15.1
908	Cornwall	2,740	3.6
878	Devon	8,284	7.8
835	Dorset	5,004	8.3
916	Gloucestershire	8,317	8.9
420	Isles of Scilly	0	0.0
802	North Somerset	1,012	3.5
879	Plymouth	1,242	3.1
836	Poole	730	3.6

Independent schools: number and percentage of pupils January 2006 (provisional)[1]—by local authority

		Number of pupils in independent schools	Percentage of pupils in independent schools[2]
933	Somerset	9,268	11.6
803	South Gloucestershire	575	1.4
866	Swindon	65	0.2
880	Torbay	766	3.8
865	Wiltshire	6,828	9.4

[1] Figures are based on survey returns from around 94 per cent. of independent schools. No estimation has been made for those survey returns that are outstanding.
[2] Number of pupils in independent schools expressed as a percentage of pupils in maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools, all special schools, pupil referral units, city technology colleges, academies, direct grant nurseries and independent schools.
[3] National and regional totals have been rounded to the nearest 10. There may be discrepancies between totals and constituent parts.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Specialist Schools

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer of 4 May 2005, *Official Report*, column 1764W, on specialist schools, if he will list the 45 specialist schools who select by aptitude; and what the specialism is of each. [69835]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* The following table shows the names of the 45 specialist schools that select by aptitude and the specialism of each. These data were accurate as of the 1 September 2001; the Department no longer collects these data.

Specialism	School	Local authority
Arts (Perf)	Brentwood Ursuline Convent School	Essex
Arts (Visual)	Chestnut Grove School	Wandsworth
Arts (Perf)	Eastwood School (The)	Southend on Sea
Arts (Perf)	Intake High School	Leeds
Arts (Perf)	Latimer Community Arts College	Northamptonshire
Arts (Perf)	North Kesteven School	Lincolnshire
Arts	Springwood	Norfolk
Arts	St. Benedict	City of Derby
Arts (Perf)	St. Marylebone School (The)	Westminster
Arts (Perf)	Stantonbury Campus North	Milton Keynes
Language	Bohunt School	Hampshire
Language	Goffs	Hertfordshire
Language	Hendon School	Barnet, LB of
Language	Hockerill Anglo European Sch	Hertfordshire
Language	Kings Norton Girls	Birmingham
Language	Montsaye	Northamptonshire
Language	Robert Pattinson School	Lincolnshire
Sports	Oldfield School	Bath and NE Somerset
Sports	Southfields Community College	Wandsworth, LB of
Sports	The Deanes	Essex
Sports	Whitefield School	Barnet, LB of
Technology	Archbishop Blanch School	Liverpool
Technology	Archbishop Temple School	Lancashire
Technology	Budmouth Technology College	Dorset
Technology	Bushey Meads	Hertfordshire
Technology	Central School (The)	Lincolnshire
Technology	Chaucer Technology School	Kent
Technology	Cornwallis School	Kent
Technology	Deacon's School	Peterborough
Technology	Denbigh School	Milton Keynes
Technology	George Spencer GM School	Nottinghamshire
Technology	Glyn Technology School	Surrey
Technology	Heathside School	Surrey
Technology	Lodge Park School	Northamptonshire
Technology	Lynn Grove VA High School	Norfolk
Technology	Mill Hill County High School	Barnet, LB of
Technology	Monks' Dyke Technology College	Lincolnshire
Technology	Moseley Park School	Wolverhampton
Technology	Ninestiles School	Birmingham
Technology	Philip Morant School	Essex
Technology	Princes Risborough School	Buckinghamshire
Technology	Sandwich Technology School	Kent
Technology	Small Heath School	Birmingham
Technology	St. Margaret's C of E High School	Liverpool
Technology	St. Martin's School	Essex

HEALTH

Addictions

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of people with *(a)* a gambling addiction, *(b)* an alcohol addiction and *(c)* a drug addiction in each region in each of the last five years. [66466]

Caroline Flint: The Department's current estimate is that 0.6 per cent. of the adult population are problem gamblers. This figure is drawn from the most recent authoritative research: Kerry Sproston, Bob Erens and Jim Orford (2000): "Gambling Behaviour in Britain: Results from the British Gambling Prevalence Study" (National Centre for Social Research, June 2000). This research was conducted using a sample of addresses selected at random. It is not possible therefore to give figures by region.

During the coming year, and before the Gambling Act 2005 is implemented, the Gambling Commission will be conducting new research into the prevalence of problem gambling.

The Department's 2004 alcohol needs assessment research project (ANARP) is the first alcohol needs assessment in England conducted on a national scale, and reports there are 1.1 million people in England who meet the criteria of alcohol dependence. The regional breakdown is shown in table 1.

Table 1

Region	*Total*
North East	83,356
North West	145,054
Yorkshire and Number	163,889
East Midlands	42,656
West Midlands	126,658
East of England	95,808
London	217,429
South East	183,611
South West	95,257
Total for England	1,132,074

The Department does not hold data for the numbers of those with a drug dependency in the format requested but we can provide the following data on the prevalence of drug dependence.

Data on drug dependence are available from the survey Psychiatric Morbidity Among Adults (aged 16 to 74) Living in Private Households (in Great Britain) carried out in 2000, by the Office for National Statistics.

The latest data available from the drug survey are shown in table two. The same information is not held for those with a gambling addiction.

Table two provides the prevalence of drug dependence of adults aged 16 to 74 by NHS regional office area, based on responses to five questions, about drug use in the year prior to interview.

	NHS regional areas					
Rates per thousand in past year	*Northern and Yorkshire*	*Trent*	*West Midlands*	*North West*	*Eastern*	*London*
Women						
Dependence on...						
Cannabis	18	4	1	14	24	46
Amphetamines	1	2	—	4	5	—
Cocaine	1	—	—	4	—	1
Crack	1	—	—	—	—	2
Ecstasy	5	1	—	—	9	2
Heroin/Methadone	1	4	—	3	—	—
Tranquillisers	2	2	—	4	3	4
Volatile substances	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cannabis only	17		1	14	16	43
Other drug(s) with or without cannabis dependence	7	10	—	10	12	7
Any drug dependence	24	10	1	25	27	50
Base	528	414	405	559	435	490
Men						
Dependence on...						
Cannabis	31	32	30	68	27	37
Amphetamines	7	—	2	1	1	13
Cocaine	—	8	—	13	4	7
Crack	—	7	—	—	4	2
Ecstasy	3	10	10	12	4	5
Heroin/Methadone	1	2	7	4	—	4
Tranquillisers	1	—	—	7	—	4
Volatile substances	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cannabis only	22	27	22	54	23	33
Other drug(s) with or without cannabis dependence	13	12	18	20	19	19
Any drug dependence	34	39	40	74	41	52
Base	430	332	333	427	388	385
All Adults						
Dependence on...						
Cannabis	25	18	16	41	26	41
Amphetamines	4	1	1	3	3	7
Cocaine	1	—	4	2	7	3
Crack	1	—	3	—	—	3
Ecstasy	4	6	5	6	7	4
Heroin/Methadone	1	3	3	3	—	2

	NHS regional areas					
	Northern and Yorkshire	Trent	West Midlands	North West	Eastern	London
Rates per thousand in past year						
Tranquillisers	2	1	—	6	1	4
Volatile substances	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cannabis only	19	13	12	34	19	38
Other drug(s) with or without cannabis dependence	10	11	9	15	15	13
Any drug dependence	29	24	21	49	34	51
Base	958	746	738	986	823	875

	South East	South West	England	Wales	Scotland	All
All Adults						
Dependence on...						
Cannabis	13	1	16	12	18	16
Amphetamines	2	—	2	3	10	3
Cocaine	1	—	1	—	3	1
Crack	—	—	0	—	3	1
Ecstasy	—	—	2	—	13	3
Heroin/Methadone	—	1	1	—	—	1
Tranquillisers	3	3	3	3	—	2
Volatile substances	—	—	—	—		
Cannabis only	11	1	14	12	11	14
Other drug(s) with or without cannabis dependence	5	4	7	3	16	7
Any drug dependence	16	5	21	15	27	21
Base	722	432	3,985	213	505	4,703
Men						
Dependence on...						
Cannabis	58	51	43	30	83	46
Amphetamines	8	—	5	—	12	5
Cocaine	2	4	—	—	4	
Crack	—	2	—	—	2	
Ecstasy	17	9	9	—	10	9
Heroin/Methadone	—	—	2	—	—	2
Tranquillisers	1	—	2	—	—	2
Volatile substances	—	—	—	—	1 0	
Cannabis only	41	39	24	30	72	37
Other drug(s) with or without cannabis dependence	23	11	17	—	22	17
Any drug dependence	65	51	51	30	94	54
Base	578	356	3229	194	415	3,838
All Adults	36	25	30	21	50	31
Dependence on...	5	—	3	1	11	4
Cannabis	4	1	3	—	1	2
Amphetamines	1	—	1	—	1	1
Cocaine	9	5	6	—	11	6
Crack	—	1	2	—	—	1
Ecstasy	2	1	2	1	—	2
Heroin/Methadone	—	—	—	—	1	0
Tranquillisers	26	20	24	21	41	25
Volatile substances	14	7	12	1	19	12
Cannabis only	41	27	36	23	60	37
Other drug(s) with or without cannabis dependence	1,300	788	7,214	407	920	8,541

Ambulances

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she has issued on the fitting of emergency vehicles with satellite navigation systems; and what percentage of each NHS ambulance fleet is fitted with such devices. [68485]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* In 2001-02, there was a £3.4 million allocation from the Department to enable services to equip frontline ambulance vehicles with state of the art satellite navigation to help ambulances reach life-threatening emergencies more quickly. The Department expects all ambulance trusts to meet the national response time standards set, to ensure patients receive the most appropriate, timely care.

The Department does not collect central figures on ambulance vehicles fitted with satellite navigation systems.

Autism

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much was spent by the NHS on autism spectrum-related disorders in each of the last five years; [69399]

(2) what definition of autism is used by her Department; [69400]

(3) what her Department's latest estimate is of the incidence of autism among *(a)* males and *(b)* females; [69401]

(4) how many children have been diagnosed with autism in each of the last five years. [69436]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information on spend by the national health service on autism spectrum-related disorders is not held centrally.

For the purposes of statistical collection, the Department defines autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs) as including childhood autism, atypical autism, Asperger's syndrome, Rett's syndrome, and other less common ASDs.

Diagnoses of ASDs within hospitals are available from Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), as shown in the tables.

Number of finished consultant episodes involving a diagnosis of ASDs, by gender at end of episode, England, 2004-05

Gender	2004-05
Male	6,170
Female	2,460
Unknown	0
All diagnoses	9,170

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), The Information Centre for health and social care.

Number of finished consultant episodes involving a diagnosis of ASDs, by age at end of episode, England, 1997-98 to 2004-05

	16 and Under
2004-05	6,170
2003-04	5,770
2002-03	5,630
2001-02	5,180
2000-01	4,980
1999-2000	4,200
1998-99	4,030
1997-98	3,100

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), The Information Centre for health and social care.

Bowel Cancer Screening

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps have been taken to roll out the bowel cancer screening programme since 1 April; how many people have been offered screening since 1 April; how many people will be offered screening by *(a)* 1 July 2006, *(b)* 1 January 2007 and *(c)* 1 April 2007; and if she will make a statement' [65381]

(2) what funding she plans to make available for the bowel cancer screening programme in each of the next five years; and what changes in the funding allocation have been made since the programme was announced. [65744]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national bowel cancer screening programme will be rolled out nationally over the next three years. Funding for the first year of the screening programme is being transferred to the national cancer screening team in Sheffield, and Wolverhampton will be the first local screening centre.

We estimate that around £10 million will be spent on the first stages of the national bowel cancer screening programme. Funding decisions have not yet been made for future years but we are committed to ensuring that the necessary funding is available to see through the full implementation of the programme.

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to promote public awareness of bowel cancer and its symptoms. [65745]

Caroline Flint: Research has shown that a national, untargeted campaign will not be as effective as local initiatives targeted on areas where there is a higher risk of people developing cancer, often linked to their lifestyle choices.

We have learnt from other awareness raising programmes, for example the west of Scotland cancer awareness project, that people at risk can be encouraged to seek medical help if the message is delivered locally, in the most appropriate way for that audience.

We are working with the healthy communities collaborative and a small number of primary care trusts to pilot different local approaches to raising awareness of the signs and symptoms of bowel cancer, using a model developed by the healthy communities collaborative in their programmes to promote healthy diets, and reduce falls. These pilots will run throughout 2006-07.

Deep Vein Thrombosis

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines her Department provides to British-based airlines on deep vein thrombosis. [67191]

Caroline Flint: The Department has not issued any specific guidelines to British-based airlines on deep vein thrombosis (DVT). However, in 2001, the Department issued advice and information to the airlines and the public about minimising the risk of DVT during long journeys, which is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HealthAndSocialCareTopics/BloodSafety/VTE/fs/en

Dentistry

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many orthodontists there are in England, broken down by primary care trust (PCT); and what each PCT annual contract value with orthodontists was as of 1 April 2006. [6[illegible]]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of orthodontists in England is not available centrally as orthodontists are not separately identified within general dental services contracts or personal dental services agreements. The number of dentists claiming fees in relation to 200 or more orthodontic appliances in the year ending 31 March 2006 has been placed in the Library.

Information on annual contract values for orthodontists is not held centrally.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many full-time equivalent NHS general dental practitioners there were in the East Hull and West Hull primary care trust area in each year since 1997; [64094]

(2) how many NHS dentists were employed by *(a)* East Hull and *(b)* West Hull primary care trust in each year since 1997. [65465]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on a full-time equivalent basis is not available. Dentists are able to vary the amount of hours they work and to vary their national health service commitment. Many dentists do some private work.

Numbers of dentists with a general dental services (GDS) or personal dental services (PDS) contract for the relevant primary care trust (PCT) areas are shown in the following table.

General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS): numbers of dentists within the specified PCTs as at 31 March each year

	Eastern Hull PCT	West Hull PCT
1997	18	62
1998	18	59
1999	17	65
2000	27	68
2001	27	72
2002	21	73
2003	23	65
2004	22	66
2005	21	70
2006	17	67

Notes:

1. 2006 data includes all notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS, received by the Business Services Authority, up to 3 April 2006. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period, for example, data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS.
2. Dentists consist of principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts have been excluded from the data.
3. The postcode of the dental practice was used to allocate dentists to specific geographic areas. PCT areas have been defined using the Office for National Statistics all fields postcode directory.
4. A dentist with a GDS or PDS contract may provide as little or as much NHS treatment as he or she chooses or has agreed with the PCT. Information concerning the amount of time dedicated to NHS work by individual dentists is not centrally available.
5. Data on dentists that work only in private practice are not held centrally.

Source:

The Information Centre for health and social care Business Services Authority

Electrical Fields (Childhood Illness)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of links between overhead power lines and incidences of childhood leukaemia. [69404]

Caroline Flint: The Department's radiation protection research programme supports a number of studies investigating the possible health effects of electromagnetic fields (EMF). A study by Dr. Draper and colleagues on childhood leukaemia and distance from power lines, funded under this programme and published in the *British Medical Journal* last year, has added to a large existing body of work in this area (BMJ, volume 330, 4 June 2005).

The Health Protection Agency's radiation protection division (HPA-RPD) keeps the world-wide research findings on EMF continually under review. In 2004, on the basis of a comprehensive review of the existing body of research to date, the HPA-RPD, previously the National Radiological Protection Board, recommended the adoption of new EMF exposure guidelines in this country. In addition, in view of the scientific uncertainties, the HPA recommended the Government

"consider the need for further precautionary measures"

in relation to power frequency electromagnetic fields. They have also noted that the majority of elevated magnetic fields are due to variations in the electricity supply and distribution system, the presence of substations and equipment in the home rather than proximity to power lines.

Practical precautionary measures are currently being considered in detail by a stakeholder advisory group (SAGE) that includes the Government Departments, agencies, electricity industry, specialists and public concern groups. Details of the process can be found on the website at: www.rkpartnership.co.uk/sage.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment the Health Protection Agency has made of the effects of exposure to electrical fields on children. [69405]

Caroline Flint: The Health Protection Agency's radiation protection division (HPA-RPD) continually monitors the research relating to the potential health effects of electric and magnetic fields. Prior to April 2005, HPA-RPD was the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) and as such it undertook a comprehensive review of the scientific evidence relating to possible adverse health effects of exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMFs) in 2004. This review is available on HPA's website at:

www.hpa.org.uk/radiation/publications/documents_of_nrpb/abstracts/absd15-3.htm.

It provides the basis of HPA advice on quantitative restrictions on exposure and other measures to avoid adverse effects. It explored evidence on the possibility of variations in sensitivity between different groups in the population including children.

The preparation of this review was carried out at the request of the Department and has particularly examined the issues of uncertainty in the science and aspects of precaution. In developing this review, NRPB took advice from individual United Kingdom and international scientific experts, and from published comprehensive reviews by expert groups. It sought advice from an ad hoc expert group on weak electric field effects in the body and gave careful consideration to the views expressed in response to a consultation document on its proposed guidelines issued in May 2003.

Having considered the totality of the scientific evidence in the light of uncertainty and the need for a cautious approach, NRPB recommended that restrictions on exposure to EMFs in the UK should be based on the guidelines issued by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection in 1998.

General Practitioner Premises

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of general practitioners' premises were above minimum standards on the last date for which figures are available in *(a)* England and *(b)* each primary care trust. [61150]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Primary care trusts and predecessor organisations have responsibility for managing delivery of services provided by general practitioners (GPs), including the adequacy of their practice premises from which to provide services.

Since 1997, there has been a 60 per cent. increase in investment in GP premises. Part of this was through the NHS Plan targets to refurbish or replace 3,000 GP premises and create 500 primary care centres housing services appropriate to meet the local need by December 2004. These targets were achieved through the replacement or refurbishment of 2,848 GP premises and 510 primary care centres. We expect to see an additional 125 of these primary care centres built by the end of this year and in 2008 the total will stand at 750.

In addition, there are many examples of new premises provided under the NHS Local Finance Investment Trust initiative (NHS LIFT) that fully satisfy minimum standards. The LIFT programme has contributed to this progress and has proven to be a tremendous success. Already some £812 million in private sector and £210 million in public sector funding has been injected into GP premises and community facilities across the country. There are 42 NHS LIFT schemes established with another eight in procurement.

This has, to date, delivered 68 new buildings open to patients with, on average, a building a week opening during 2006. In addition, we are injecting a further £1 billion national health service capital this year specifically for new buildings and equipment. This money will further improve convenient access to health and social care.

A subjective assessment by PCTs of the proportion of premises meeting the minimum standards as at 31 March 2005 has been placed in the Library. This 2005 snapshot by PCTs shows that collectively they have judged some GP premises across the country as being below minimum standards. This needs to be set in context. Judgments for some of those standards are subjective which by their very nature may lead to some PCTs reporting higher levels of premises that do not meet minimum standards than other PCTs with similar premises. Being below minimum standards does not mean the buildings are in a dangerous state of repair. Rather, that the premises may not have for example, adequate access to and within premises and WC facilities for disabled patients and staff. Failure to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act requirements is a common reason for PCTs judging buildings as not meeting minimum requirements.

This is not because of a lack of intent by GPs' practices and their PCTs to provide these facilities but because for example, the building is too small to incorporate them; with a general lack of suitable, alternative locations to develop. These are historic problems for inner city PCTs that predate this Government and arose from difficulty of investing in smaller buildings.

Health Trainers

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 223W, on health trainers, what range of times have been taken by primary care trusts to complete the training scheme for health trainers. [66829]

Caroline Flint: Approximately 150 primary care trusts are involved in the health trainer project with wide variations in the ways health trainers are trained for the role. However, most training starts with an initial classroom-based period of between 14 and 35 days, over several weeks, followed by supported learning and skill development in the workplace. This may then be followed by further classroom-based training to allow reflection upon what has worked and provide ongoing training tailored to the individual and local environment.

The mandatory competences, upon which the health trainer training is based, were signed off in March 2006. The training programmes are still being developed, evaluated and modified according to local requirements. Therefore, it is likely that the current programmes will be revised and the range of times to provide the training could change.

Healthy Living

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department has *(a)* taken and *(b)* plans to take to improve (i) parents' and (ii) children's understanding of the benefits of healthy living; and if she will make a statement. [68838]

Caroline Flint: The Department is working closely with the Department for Education and Skills to ensure an explicit focus on supporting healthy living through children's centres, healthy schools and extended schools—engaging parents, as well as children, is central to each of these programmes. The child health promotion programme and planned life checks will also have a pivotal role to play in communicating health messages.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made in implementing her Department's White Paper "Choosing Health: making healthy choices easier". [68839]

Caroline Flint: A delivery plan was published in 2005 following publication of "Choosing Health". This sets down plans for delivery against all "Choosing Health" commitments. A progress report will be published shortly to ensure we remain on track to deliver against our 2010 commitments.

Insulin Supplies

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that *(a)* diabetes sufferers who are reliant on animal insulin will be guaranteed security of supply and *(b)* the monopoly position of Wockhardt UK is not exploited once Novo Nordisk discontinues its supplies at the end of 2007. [67954]

Andy Burnham: Wockhardt UK has assured the Department of its commitment to continue the supply of its animal insulin products. It has also given assurance that it will be able to meet any increased demand when Novo Nordisk's products are no longer available.

Under the pharmaceutical price regulation scheme, companies are required to seek the Department's agreement for any increases in the prices of branded prescription medicines. These are only granted if the reasons for the application meet the criteria for increases set out in the agreement.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what support her Department gives to those most severely affected by myalgic encephalomyelitis; [70192]

(2) what criteria were used to determine which primary care trusts received funding to set up specialist myalgic encephalomyelitis services; and under what terms the funding was granted; [70193]

(3) what commitment primary care trusts (PCTs) have made to continuing to provide funding for specialist myalgic encephalomyelitis services; and what steps her Department plans to take if PCTs do not fulfil that commitment. [70194]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Those most severely affected by chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME) have access to the full range of health and social services support as outlined in the national service framework for long-term conditions (the NSF). This includes:

Joint health and social care plans that change over time and take other needs into account such as housing, transport, benefits, education, careers advice, employment and leisure;

Access to a broad range of services including rehabilitation, equipment, accommodation, personal care to help people live as independently as possible at home; and

Support to help people to work or take up other vocational opportunities.

Applications for funding from the £8.5 million budget to establish new CFS/ME services were assessed by an investment steering group consisting of health professionals, as well as patient and carer representatives. The criteria used by the steering group included strategy and partnership working, the proposed service organisation and staffing structure, as well as the need to ensure an even geographic distribution of centres.

National health service organisations are expected to demonstrate that they are making progress towards achieving the level of service quality described in the NSF. The NSF sets out a clear vision of how health and social care organisations can improve the quality, consistency and responsiveness of their services and help improve the lives of people with neurological conditions, including CFS/ME. The Healthcare Commission and the Commission for Social Care Inspection may undertake performance reviews to assess progress on local implementation of the NSF.

Meningitis

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children have *(a)* been diagnosed with and *(b)* died from meningitis in each of the last five years. [69348]

Caroline Flint: Notified cases of meningitis are collected by the Health Protection Agency (HPA) and published as quarterly and yearly reports.

These reports are available on the HPA's website at: www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/noids/archive.htm

MMR Vaccination

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her most recent estimate is of the rate of MMR vaccination. [69340]

Caroline Flint: The latest annual estimate of mumps, measles and rubella uptake was published in table two of the statistical bulletin NHS Immunisation Statistics, England: 2004-05 of which a copy is available in the Library. The figure for 2004-05 was 80.9 per cent. Quarterly data are published by the Health Protection Agency in *CDR Weekly* and are available at: www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/vaccination/vac_cover.htm.

National Blood Service

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment the Government have conducted of the impact of the closure of the Plymouth unit of the National Blood Service and the transfer of its services to a new super centre at Bristol on *(a)* service provision to hospitals throughout the South West Peninsula and *(b)* the willingness of residents of Devon and Cornwall to give blood; and what cost/benefit analysis has been carried out of the regionalisation of blood service provision. [67874]

Caroline Flint: A key factor in the successful delivery of NHS Blood and Transplant's (NHSBT) activities is implementation of its estate strategy. As part of their estate strategy the National Blood Service (NBS) which is an operating division of NHSBT, has proposed the development of a new site at Bristol.

The NBS centre in Plymouth will not be closing. However, some services, such as blood processing will transfer from the Plymouth centre to the new Bristol centre. The NBS will continue to provide critical services from the centre in Plymouth. For example, the centre will continue to have a local blood bank to meet orders for blood. This means that deliveries of blood to hospitals serviced by the Plymouth centre, including emergency requests will not be affected by any change. The proposal to build the new centre in the most cost-effective way will consolidate some services into the new site from centres in Plymouth, Southampton and Birmingham.

It is not expected that the changes will impact on the willingness of donors to come forward and give blood. The NBS will continue to promote the vital role that blood donors play in maintaining the blood supply.

NHS Budgets

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether primary care trusts subject to budget top-slicing in *(a)* 2006-07 and *(b)* 2007-08 will have their contributions repaid in later years. [70467]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The new strategic health authorities (SHAs) should take the lead locally in developing and implementing a service and financial strategy for managing the financial position within their locality. For 2006-07, this will include creating local reserves to deal with local problems. The size of the reserves and the contribution from each primary care trust (PCT) will vary according to local circumstances.

In relation to the reserves, we expect SHAs to maintain the integrity of the allocations system with PCTs entitled to repayment of any contributions over a reasonable period not usually exceeding the three-year allocation cycle.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she is aware of the letter of 24 February from Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority (SHA) to the chief executives of the SHA's constituent trusts on allocations to primary care trusts, payment by results tariff correction and implications. [70468]

Caroline Flint: Responsibility for performance management of the national health service has been delegated to strategic health authorities (SHAs). The relevant SHA responsibilities are set out in "The NHS in England: the Operating Framework for 2006-07". These responsibilities include holding reserves on behalf of primary care trusts.

Mr. Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what measures she is taking to encourage NHS trusts to balance their budgets; and if she will make a statement; [70520]

(2) what initiatives are in place to reward those NHS trusts that operate to balanced budgets; and if she will make a statement. [70521]

Andy Burnham: All national health service trusts are expected to achieve financial balance, or better, each and every year. However, we recognise this has been a challenging year for NHS organisations, and the NHS as a whole was forecasting a deficit of around £620 million for 2005-06, at month six.

In 2006-07, the priority will be to restore overall financial balance in the NHS. In order to restore financial balance, the following measures are in place:

Strategic health authority (SHA) reserves—From 2006-07, SHAs have the responsibility to develop and implement a service and financial strategy for managing the financial position within their locality. They will develop this with primary care trusts (PCTs) and NHS trusts in their area. Strategies agreed locally may include the creation of local reserves to deal with local problems. The size of the reserves and any contribution from each PCT will vary according to local circumstances, but the underlying principle will be fairness.

Turnaround teams—In December 2005, the Secretary of State announced the creation of turnaround teams. These teams visited the NHS bodies identified as facing particular financial difficulties. The teams consisted of external consultants, they reviewed the bodies' financial positions and produced preliminary reports on what action could be taken to assist recovery. The bodies deemed to be at particular risk were required to engage appropriate turnaround support on the ground to help improve efficiency and cut costs. All the bodies are expected to produce plans to allow them to return to financial balance.

Parkinson's Disease

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many people diagnosed with Parkinson's disease there were in *(a)* England and *(b)* Beverley and Holderness in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement; [69899]

(2) what percentage of people in England with Parkinson's disease are required to pay for prescriptions; and if she will make a statement; [69896]

(3) how many Parkinson's disease specialist nurses there were in *(a)* England and *(b)* Beverley and Holderness in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement; [69897]

(4) what percentage of people in *(a)* England and *(b)* Beverley and Holderness diagnosed with Parkinson's disease have access to a specialist nurse; and if she will make a statement; [69898]

(5) what percentage of people in England who have Parkinson's disease were referred to a specialist nurse within six months of diagnosis; and if she will make a statement. [69895]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Data on the number of those diagnosed with Parkinson's disease are not collected. However, estimates produced by the Parkinson's Disease Society suggest that around 10,000 people are diagnosed with this disease each year in the United Kingdom (UK).

The number of people with Parkinson's disease required to pay prescription charges is not identifiable.

The number of Parkinson's disease nurse specialists (PDNSs), and the percentage of Parkinson's disease patients with access to such nurse specialists, is not collected centrally.

The Parkinson's Disease Society reports there are currently over 200 PDNSs in the UK.

Pharmacies

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to publish detailed proposals on how pharmacies may operate with remote supervision by a pharmacist. [67341]

Andy Burnham: Clause 25 of the Health Bill, which is currently before Parliament, makes provision for regulations prescribing the conditions that must be complied with if the preparation, assembly, sale and supply of medicines is to be considered as done under the supervision of a pharmacist, including where the pharmacist is not on the pharmacy premises, that is, remote supervision.

Subject to passage of the Bill, we intend to consult on the development of these regulations, with all interested parties, in due course. In the meantime, in January 2006, we published an information paper outlining the Government's thinking on this matter and reinforcing our intention to set conditions that will continue to ensure patient safety. This paper is available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk.

Post-operative Infections

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many post-operative infections were contracted by patients in each NHS hospital trust in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [67551]

Andy Burnham: Data on all post-operative infections are not available. However, information by trust, for the first year of mandatory orthopaedic surgical site infection surveillance, is available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/22/59/04122259.pdf
www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/13/03/22/04130322.pdf

Queen Mary's Hospital Trust, Sidcup

Derek Conway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the treatment refunding basis applicable to Queen Mary's Hospital Trust, Sidcup is; and what percentage this represents of the national tariff. [67379]

Caroline Flint: In 2006-07, Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust will be paid by national health service commissioners in England at the 2006-07 payment by results tariff rate for elective, non-elective, out-patient and accident and emergency activity. All other activity will be paid via locally agreed contracts between the trust and its commissioners. Information on what percentage this income represents of the total value of national tariff income is not collected centrally.

Strategic Health Authority for London

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the names are of the *(a)* chair, *(b)* chief executive and *(c)* members of the new strategic health authority for London. [67755]

Andy Burnham: I am pleased to confirm that the new strategic health authority (SHA) chair is Dr. George Greener OBE and the chief executive is David Nicholson CBE.

These appointments will commence when the new SHAs come into effect from 1 July.

The additional non-executive appointments have yet to be made. I will arrange for these details be sent to my hon. Friend once they are confirmed.

TREASURY

Correspondence

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will reply to the email sent on 30 March 2006 by Sarah Bowron, a constituent of the hon. Member for North-East Milton Keynes. [70795]

Mr. Timms: A reply was emailed to Ms Bowron on 20 April, and a copy was sent to her alternative email address on 10 May.

Earnings

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average earnings were of full-time employees in *(a)* Carlisle, *(b)* Eden, *(c)* Allerdale, *(d)* Copeland, *(e)* Barrow and *(f)* South Lakes district council areas based on the annual survey of hours and earnings in each year since 1997. [70154]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked her to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question to ask what the average earnings of full-time employees in *(a)* Carlisle, *(b)* Eden, *(c)* Allerdale, *(d)* Copeland, *(e)* Barrow-In-Furness and *(f)* South Lakeland was in each year since 1997. (70154)

Average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for full time employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

I attach tables showing Average Gross Weekly Earnings by place of work for the years 1997 to 2005 for Full Time Employees on Adult Rates. These statistics are already published on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=13101.

The ASHE, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a 1 per cent. sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Gross weekly(£) pay for full-time employee jobs[1] by place of work

	Median	Mean
Carlisle		
1997	*283	324
1998	*283	326
1999	284	345
2000	*308	348
2001	321	363
2002	*335	374
2003	*337	*410
2004	*362	402
2004[2]	*353	399
2005	*396	435
Eden		
1997	**256	*306
1998	**249	*279
1999	*238	*301
2000	*258	*322
2001	*275	*331
2002	**327	*368
2003	**323	*383
2004	**340	*380
2004[2]	**345	*374
2005	*407	*470
Allerdale		
1997	**287	331
1998	*293	322
1999	*310	341
2000	*308	344
2001	*349	372
2002	*340	*377
2003	*346	*398
2004	*327	*372
2004[2]	*326	*369
2005	**346	406
Copeland		
1997	*391	419

Gross weekly(£) pay for full-time employee jobs[1] by place of work

	Median	Mean
1998	*414	429
1999	*421	458
2000	*497	496
2001	*479	482
2002	503	511
2003	*495	517
2004	*524	541
2004[2]	*526	544
2005	*529	537
Barrow-In-Furness		
1997	**304	*317
1998	*327	348
1999	**356	386
2000	**318	*369
2001	*398	393
2002	**346	*409
2003	*352	*421
2004	**405	*451
2004[2]	**390	*451
2005	*402	*441
South Lakeland		
1997	*312	* 357
1998	*295	* 351
1999	*307	356
2000	*322	367
2001	*316	372
2002	*346	*392
2003	*355	408
2004	*370	*410
2004[2]	*366	*404
2005	*369	*435

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence

[2] Includes Supplementary survey data

Guide to quality:

The Coefficient of Variation (CV) indicates the quality of a figure, the smaller the CV value the higher the quality.

The true value is likely to lie within +/- twice the CV e.g. for an average of 200 with a CV of 5 per cent., we would expect the population average to be within the range 180 to 220.

Key:

CV <= 5 per cent.

* CV >5 per cent. and < = 10 per cent.

** CV > 10 per cent. and < = 20 per cent.

The median replaces the mean as the headline statistic. The weighted mean is the sum of the weighted values divided by the sum of the weights. The median is the value below which 50 per cent. of employees fall. It is preferred over the mean for earnings data as it is influenced less by extreme values and because of the skewed distribution of earnings data.

Source:

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Immigration (EU Accession Countries)

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what research he has evaluated on the impact on employment levels in the UK of immigration from EU accession countries since May 2004; and if he will make a statement. [70018]

Ed Balls: It is widely believed that net inward migration makes a positive contribution to growth of

the UK labour force and employment. With respect to the labour market, since May 2004 employment levels in the UK have risen to record highs, in part due to the expansion of the work force from immigration.

A paper entitled 'The Impact of Free Movement of Workers from Central and Eastern Europe on the UK Labour Market' (2006) published by the Department for Work and Pensions, suggests that the impact of migration from the new EU member states has been broadly positive, reflecting the flexibility and speed of adjustment of the UK labour market. The authors also found no discernible statistical evidence supporting the view that the inflow of A8 migrants is contributing to a rise in claimant unemployment in the UK.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment has been made of the effect on public expenditure in *(a)* the Eastern Region and *(b)* the East Midlands Region of immigration from EU accession countries since May 2004; and if he will make a statement. [70177]

Mr. Timms: Evidence from the most recent Home Office Accession Monitoring Report (February 2006) suggests that nationals from the Accession 8 countries continue to come to the UK to work, contributing to the success of the UK economy, while making very few demands of our welfare system or public services. Overall migrants make a net fiscal contribution to the UK. In many cases, Accession workers are supporting the provision of public services in communities across the UK.

The Report finds that numbers applying for tax-funded income-related benefits, child benefit, tax credits and housing support remain very low. Only 3,270 applications for income support and jobseeker's allowance were received from Accession 8 migrants between May 2004 and December 2005, less than 1 per cent. of the total number of Workers Registration Scheme applicants in that period. Of these, only 195 were allowed to proceed for further consideration. The East Midlands region received 5.7 per cent. of these applications and the East of England received 7.9 per cent.

Iraq

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Government have committed to military operations and peace-keeping in Iraq since 1 January 2000; and if he will make a statement. [69838]

Mr. Timms: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Twickenham (Dr. Cable) on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2260-61W, which provides the net additional costs of current operations in Iraq from financial years 2002-03 to 2004-05.

An estimated cost for operations in Iraq for 2005-06 of £1,098 million was included in the Ministry of Defence's Spring Supplementary Estimate published in February of this year. Final figures will be published in the MOD's Annual Report and Accounts for 2005-06 following audit by the National Audit Office.

Prior to commencing current operations in Iraq in March 2003, MOD also incurred expenditure enforcing United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Iraq. The costs recorded in the MOD's Annual Accounts for these activities were as follows:

Financial year	*£ million*
1999-2000	28
2000-01	25
2001-02	61

National Youth Volunteering Service

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he last met Rod Aldridge to discuss the National Youth Volunteering Service. [70753]

Ed Balls: I understand that the Chancellor has not met Rod Aldridge.

Public Sector Pensions

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the cost of public sector pensions as a share of gross domestic product in each year from 2005 to 2050; and if he will make a statement. [70291]

Mr. Timms: The latest estimate of the projected cost of unfunded public service pensions as a share of gross domestic product is set out in Table 5.1, which sets out the projections at 10 year intervals, of the 2005 Long Term Public Finance Report published with the pre-Budget report on 5 December 2005.

Standard Life

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what monitoring *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Financial Services Authority is undertaking of the Standard Life ballot on de-mutualisation. [65810]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Neither the Treasury nor the FSA has a role in the Standard Life ballot on de-mutualisation.

Trade Statistics

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the UK's balance of trade was in *(a)* services and *(b)* non-service industries in each of the last eight years; and what assessment he has made of the trends over this period. [69939]

Ed Balls: The Office for National Statistics publishes trade in goods (non-services) and services data in their monthly UK trade release (http://www.statistics.gov.Uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=1119). The UK has been running a trade in services surplus over the past few years, peaking at 1.8 per cent. of GDP in 2004 (a record high) before dipping slightly in 2005. The lower surplus in 2005 likely reflected the short-term

effects on tourism following the 7 July terrorist atrocities in central London and insurance claims arising from the effects of Hurricane Katrina.

Though the UK's trade in goods balance was in deficit in 2005, export and import volumes continued to grow. Volumes of goods exports rose by 7.9 per cent. in 2005, while goods imports rose by 6.1 per cent.

The current account deficit (which includes income and transfers as well as trade in goods and services) stood at 2.6 per cent. of GDP in 2005, is readily financeable and remains modest compared to historical peaks. The current account deficit last peaked at 5.1 per cent. of GDP in 1989.

Unleaded Petrol

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the change in revenue to his Department would be if the price of unleaded petrol were *(a)* increased and *(b)* decreased by (i) one, (ii) two, (iii) three, (iv) four and (v) five pence; and if he will make a statement. [70064]

John Healey: The overall impact of road fuel prices on tax revenues and the public finances is complex as they will increase some tax revenues and Government expenditures while decreasing others, depending on their wider impact on the economy in general. Reliable estimates of the impact of changes in prices are not available.

DEFENCE

Defence Information Initiative

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the revised delivery plan for the Defence Information Initiative will enable the achievement of the original estimated savings of *(a)* £170 million within three years and *(b)* £43 million within one year. [68383]

Mr. Watson: The Ministry of Defence expects that £43 million input efficiencies and cost avoidance measures will be achieved in 2005-06. This will be confirmed after the formal end of the financial year at the end of May 2006.

We further expect that £170 million input efficiencies and cost avoidance measures will be achieved in the next three years.

Departmental Credit Cards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what facility is available for senior civil servants in his Department to use credit cards supplied by the Department. [70620]

Mr. Watson: There is no facility available in the Ministry of Defence (MOD) for senior civil servants to use credit cards. However, the MOD does make use of the Government Procurement Card (GPC). The GPC is a VISA purchasing card where the account is settled in full by the MOD each month. As it is a charge card it does not attract any interest charges. The GPC is available to all staff having a business need through specific delegations and controls to obtain goods and services on behalf of the MOD.

Royal Ordnance Bishopton

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what type of hazardous materials and chemicals were held within the grounds of Royal Ordnance Bishopton prior to its sale in 1987; how they were disposed of; and if he will make a statement; [69971]

(2) what decontamination operations were conducted by *(a)* his Department prior to 1987 and *(b)* BAE Systems after 1987 within the grounds of Royal Ordnance Bishopton; what the cost of each operation was; what materials were (i) recovered and (ii) processed; and if he will make a statement; [69972]

(3) what assessment his Department made prior to the 1987 sale of Royal Ordnance Bishopton of *(a)* the presence of hazardous materials and chemicals on the site and *(b)* the likely cost of decontamination; and if he will make a statement. [69973]

Mr. Watson: Any information held has been archived and given the time that has elapsed since the disposal, it will take some time to ascertain what records have survived. I will write to the hon. Gentleman as soon as the material is to hand and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Algeria

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of reports of the use of detention and torture in Algeria. [70125]

Dr. Howells: I am pleased that Amnesty International's memorandum to the Algerian President of 13 April 2006 highlights that, despite Amnesty International's continuing concerns about the use of detention and torture in Algeria, there have been fewer allegations of torture in police custody, and progress has been made on strengthening safeguards to protect detainees.

Brazil

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of the likely impact of Brazil's decision to enrich uranium on other countries' attempts to acquire such technology; and whether the Government were informed of this development. [70072]

Dr. Howells: Brazilian development of its uranium enrichment facility at Resende has at all times been carried out in compliance with its safeguards obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and has been known to the international community. The International Atomic Energy Agency has confirmed that it has adequate monitoring measures in place. There is no reason why Brazilian inauguration of the facility should influence any other country's policy in this area.

The Brazilian Government have publicly abandoned the nuclear weapons programme pursued by previous military Governments and the development of nuclear weapons is prohibited under the country's constitution. There have been no indications that Brazil has attempted to break its obligations under the NPT. Any State party to the NPT has a right to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Article II of the Treaty.

Constitution for Europe

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make a statement on the proposed revision of the Constitution for Europe. [70525]

Mr. Hoon: No formal proposals for revision of the EU Constitutional Treaty have been tabled. However, a number of ideas have been expressed across the EU on possible alternatives to the Treaty over the last 11 months. There is no point in speculating on abstract possibilities. The Government believe the EU should continue to focus on economic reform and tackling the challenges of globalisation, the agenda set out at the Hampton Court Summit during our Presidency.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps her Department is taking to reduce the flow of arms to Democratic Republic of the Congo. [70009]

Dr. Howells: The UN imposed an arms embargo on the Democratic Republic of the Congo in July 2003 and later agreed to impose sanctions on violators of this embargo. The UK also supported action at the Security Council on 1 November 2005 to impose travel bans and asset freezes on 16 known violators of the embargo.

The UK continues to press the Governments of the region to co-operate more fully with the Group of Experts (which monitors the arms embargo), particularly in its efforts to discover the origins of arms found in the country. The UK further supported UN Security Council Resolution 1649 on 21 December 2005, providing for targeted sanctions against leaders of illegal armed groups.

Ethiopia

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the Government of Ethiopia on *(a)* the use of the death penalty, *(b)* conducting trials in accordance with international and regional standards and *(c)* observing international standards on freedom of expression. [69999]

Mr. McCartney: Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Ministers have not discussed the death penalty with the Government of Ethiopia recently.

The FCO has financed an international jurist, Michael Ellman, to observe the trial. He has now been officially recognised by the Ethiopian Government as the EU international observer.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn) met the Ethiopian Prime Minister on 18 January and raised the importance of the Ethiopian courts dealing with all charges fairly, quickly and transparently in accordance with international standards. Our ambassador in Addis Ababa reiterated this message to the Prime Minister on 25 April 2006.

We regularly raise our concerns about restrictions on freedom of expression and the detention of journalists.

EU Accession

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make a statement on the timetable for the accession of *(a)* Bulgaria and *(b)* Romania to the European Union. [70526]

Mr. Hoon: Romania and Bulgaria are scheduled to join the European Union on 1 January 2007. The European Commission will publish a report on Bulgarian and Romanian preparations for accession on 16 May. We expect this report to recommend whether Romanian and Bulgarian accession should go ahead in 2007 as planned, or whether further progress is required. This might require delaying accession until 2008, as provided for by the Accession Treaty. The Presidency have included Romanian and Bulgarian accession on the agenda of the European Council on 15 June.

European Parliament (Strasbourg)

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether it is her Department's policy to support the current practice of the European Parliament sitting in Strasbourg. [70524]

Mr. Hoon: The Government, and many Members of the European Parliament, agree that the splitting of the European Parliament site is far from ideal. However, there is a legal and historical basis for the sitting. At the Edinburgh Council in 1992, member states adopted a decision that designated the European Parliament's seat as Strasbourg and committed the European Parliament to holding 12 plenary sessions a year there.

Any change to the status quo would need the unanimous support of the 25 member states. Unfortunately, we do not think such unanimity is likely in the foreseeable future.

Failed States (Africa)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken by her Department to tackle the indicators of state fragility and failure in Africa identified in the failed states Index 2006. [69962]

Mr. McCartney: One of the major priorities of the year of Africa and a key aim of the commitments from the G8 Summit in Gleneagles, was to address state fragility and failure in Africa.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) is working closely with the Department for International Development (DFID) and other Government Departments to help create the conditions in which African countries can end conflict, improve governance and achieve their development goals. Through bilateral dialogue and working through the European Union and other international bodies, we are calling for more accountable governance and better human rights standards. We are also helping build greater capacity in national and regional bodies to prevent conflict and instability by providing training and technical support to African nations, the African Union and Sub Regional Organisations. Funding through the joint FCO, DFID, Ministry of Defence Africa Conflict Prevention Pool helps underpin this work.

G8 Summit

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what her strategy is for ensuring that the G8 Summit in July will include a substantive discussion on Belarus. [70278]

Mr. Hoon: In the run up to the St. Petersburg Summit, the UK is working with G8 partners at all levels to ensure that discussions reflect the core democratic values shared by all members of the G8.

Iran

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps her Department is taking to prevent the persecution of religious minorities in Iran, with particular reference to those of the Bahá'i faith. [69703]

Dr. Howells: We continue to have serious concerns about the situation of religious minorities in Iran. We have received numerous reports of discrimination against those wishing to practise minority faiths, including the Bahá'i community.

Ministers and officials have pressed the Iranian authorities on many occasions to address the intimidation and discrimination suffered by the Iranian Bahá'is. At our suggestion, the EU Presidency did so on 31 January and again on 11 April. On 10 April, EU Foreign Ministers underlined their

"continued concerns about the human rights situation in Iran, in particular regarding the situation of Bahá'is".

We have also taken action at the UN. We were pleased that all EU countries co-sponsored a UN General Assembly resolution on human rights in Iran in December last year. This expressed serious concern at, inter alia, "the escalation and increased frequency of discrimination and other human rights violations against the Bahá'i, including cases of arbitrary arrest and detention, the denial of freedom of religion or of publicly carrying out communal affairs, the disregard of property rights, the destruction of sites of religious importance, the suspension of social, educational and community-related activities and the denial of access to higher education, employment, pensions, adequate housing and other benefits". We expect Iran to uphold freedom of religion and belief in accordance with its international obligations under Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Kidnapping

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether it remains Government policy *(a)* not to pay ransoms for kidnapped UK citizens and *(b)* not to co-operate with organisations paying such ransoms. [70025]

Dr. Howells: It remains Government policy not to pay ransoms for UK nationals kidnapped overseas. The Government discourage the payment of ransoms by others and would not facilitate any such payments.

Lebanon

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations she has received about Iranian involvement in Lebanon; and if she will make a statement. [69198]

Dr. Howells: Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers and officials have regular discussions concerning Lebanon and foreign links to groups operating in Lebanon. We believe that Iran funds and has strong connections to Lebanese Hizballah. All members of the international community, including Iran and Syria, must co-operate fully with the Government of Lebanon, the UN Security Council and the UN Secretary-General to achieve full implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1559.

Muslim Brotherhood

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions her Department has had with representatives of the Muslim Brotherhood and its official organisations since September 2001; and if she will make a statement. [69262]

Dr. Howells: British officials have had contact with members of the Egyptian Parliament, including occasional contact with members of the Muslim Brotherhood since September 2001. Officials have also met representatives of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, Kuwait, and Lebanon. In addition, officials have had limited contact with members of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, whose leadership is in exile in London.

Nepal

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of the implications of the United Nations accepting a mediation role in Nepal; and what representations she has made on this matter. [70069]

Dr. Howells: The responsibility for resolving Nepal's conflict ultimately lies with the people of Nepal, who need to take responsibility for, and ownership of, any peace settlement. But it is clear to us that a lasting solution to Nepal's problems will need the active support of the international community and the assistance of an independent and credible external partner.

We are exploring with the Government of Nepal, and with our international partners, whether and how such a third party role might be helpful, and what its mandate should be. One candidate might indeed be the UN and the UN Secretary-General has made several welcome offers of his good offices. The UN is seen as a credible partner in Nepal; the UN's Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights mission there has proved successful. If all the parties concerned, including our international partners, were to agree on a viable UN role, then the benefits could be significant. But it will still require political will on all sides to make this work and the UN is not the only organisation that could provide such assistance. If external facilitation is agreed there will most likely be financial implications in terms of arranging this. However it is too early to judge what these will be.

We are at present discussing how to take this forward with our international partners.

Nigeria

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions have taken place between the US and British embassies in Nigeria on the proposed constitutional amendment by President Obasanjo to remove the limit of two presidential terms. [69678]

Mr. McCartney: Our high commission in Abuja regularly discuss issues of common concern with their US and EU counterparts including the internal political situation. The UK's position on constitutional change is that, done fairly and transparently, it is a matter for Nigeria.

Organ Harvesting (China)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what documents *(a)* she and *(b)* her officials have received on organ harvesting in China; and if she will make a statement. [66369]

Mr. McCartney: The Government have received media reports of large-scale organ harvesting in China, including among Falun Gong adherents. We have found no evidence to substantiate these reports. The Chinese Government have denied such allegations. We have also received correspondence from hon. Members, non-governmental organisations and members of the public expressing their concerns about organ harvesting. The Government are concerned about the practice of prisoners subject to the death penalty in China donating their organs and my hon. Friend the then Minister for Trade (Ian Pearson) raised these concerns with the Chinese Government on 7 April. We believe the right approach is to seek to overcome the social taboo of organ transplants in China and encourage donation from the general population. The Government welcome the announcement by the Chinese Ministry of Health of a new regulation to come into effect on 1 July, to ban the sale of organs and introduce medical standards for organ transplants.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations she has made to the Chinese authorities about the allegations of *(a)* organ harvesting and *(b)* the use of organs from executed prisoners in China. [66370]

Mr. McCartney: My hon. Friend the then Minister of State for Trade (Ian Pearson) raised the Government's concerns about the use of organs from executed prisoners with the Chinese Government on 7 April. The Chinese Government have acknowledged the practice of organ harvesting from executed prisoners. Despite Chinese Government assurances that prisoners agree to the donations voluntarily and that, in some cases, their families are paid, we are concerned about the use of these prisoners' organs. The Government welcome the announcement by the Chinese Ministry of Health of a new regulation to come into effect on 1 July, to ban the sale of organs and introduce medical standards for organ transplants. We have received no evidence to substantiate recent media reports of large scale organ harvesting in China. The Chinese Government have denied such allegations.

People Trafficking

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what response she has made to the UN report "Trafficking in persons: global patterns"; and what steps are being taken by her Department to tackle people trafficking. [70105]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary is not required to respond to this report. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) funds the delivery, including by non-governmental organisations, of project work designed to enhance the ability of source and transit countries to identify and dissuade

potential victims of trafficking to assist in their return. Projects address issues such as increasing awareness levels among victims and practitioners, methods of victim identification, reintegration assistance for returnees and training for judicial, law enforcement and immigration staff. The FCO, as part of the draft UK Action Plan on Trafficking, is also devising a strategy to publicise overseas the successful prosecution in British courts of human traffickers.

Sudan

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much the Government have *(a)* spent and *(b)* committed to spend on conflict resolution and peace-keeping efforts in Darfur, Sudan; and if he will make a statement. [69839]

Mr. McCartney: The UK has committed £20 million this financial year to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS). This brings our total contribution to AMIS, since its inception, to £52 million. £27 million has been spent providing 900 vehicles, airlift of African Union (AU) troops, rapid deployment kits and ground fuel. We have also provided experts including military logisticians, Military Observers and Civilian Police Trainers. On 10 March, the AU's Peace and Security Council agreed to support "in principle" a handover of their mission in Darfur to the UN, and we have provided a military and police planner to the UN planning team. This year's budget of £20 million will be used to fund the AU's ground fuel contract and experts, as well as a continued contribution of military and police experts, additional airlift of troops and we may also provide budgetary support to the AU's Peace Fund to enable the AU to pay for vital services.

The UK has also committed £1.25 million to the AU Inter-Sudanese Peace Talks on Darfur, of which over £700,000 has been spent so far. This has been used to fund technical experts for the security arrangements, negotiations and financial assistance to support the running of talks in Abuja, Nigeria. We welcome the signature of the Darfur Peace Agreement by the Government of Sudan and the largest faction of the Sudanese Liberation Movement rebel group, Minni Minnawi, following efforts by the UK and others to agree a deal between the parties.

Uganda

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what her assessment is of the statements by the Ugandan authorities that the President of the Forum for Democratic Change is associated with the Lord's Resistance Army; and if she will make a statement. [69273]

Mr. McCartney: We have seen no evidence from the Ugandan authorities that the Forum for Democratic Change President, Dr. Kizza Besigye, is associated with the Lord's Resistance Army. This issue is currently the subject of legal proceedings in Uganda where Dr. Besigye has been charged with treason. Dr. Besigye has strenuously denied any links to the rebel group.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what guidance is issued to magistrates on the publication of the name and photographs in local media of juveniles upon whom antisocial behaviour orders have been served. [69828]

Ms Harman: The Judicial Studies Board has published a guidance document relating to publicity in magistrates court proceedings entitled 'Reporting Restrictions: Magistrates Courts'. The document sets out the legislative, case law and procedural considerations to which magistrates should have regard when considering publicity issues in the context of antisocial behaviour order hearings. This guidance sets up the approach the courts should take in respect of the naming and publication of photographs of juveniles.

All magistrates are issued with a copy of the Adult Court Bench Book, which contains the Checklist "Reporting Restrictions—A Structured Approach". In addition, all youth court magistrates are issued with a copy of the Youth Court Bench Book which contains a similar checklist with information relating to youths, and a specific checklist on dealing with antisocial behaviour orders.

All magistrates sit in court with a qualified legal adviser who is able to provide them with advice on relevant legislation, guidance and case law.

Social Services Abuse

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the Legal Services Commission last funded an alleged victim of abuse by social services to bring their case to court; and how many cases funded by the Legal Services Commission relating to abuse by social services failed to reach court in each of the last five years. [64887]

Vera Baird: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Departmental Initiatives

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the departmental initiatives for each year since 2000 which required bids for funding from *(a)* voluntary organisations and *(b)* local authorities together with the total resource allocated to each initiative in each year; how many successful bids there were in each year; what proportion this figure represents of the total bids received; and what assessment she has made of the costs of (i) preparing bids for each initiative and (ii) assessing those bids. [66015]

Mr. Lammy: Most DCMS funding available to local authorities or voluntary sector bodies is distributed by the Department's public bodies. For example, £500,000 has been made available for each of the years 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 for Ofcom to allocate to support community radio stations. Those running community radio stations, including any voluntary organisations, can make applications to Ofcom for grants. Awards are made by Ofcom and we do not hold centrally information on individual grants.

Full information on these initiatives has not been gathered from all DCMS public bodies as the cost of doing so would fall beyond the threshold of disproportionate cost.

DCMS has no central initiatives which require bids for funding from voluntary organisations, though some voluntary organisations receive funding through contracts following competitive tender.

DCMS has two central initiatives which require bids for funding from local authorities. These are explained in the following table.

DCMS/Wolfson Foundation Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund

The DCMS/Wolfson Fund provides support for capital projects aimed at improving the infrastructure of museums and galleries in England The fund in its present form started in 2002 and bidding rounds have taken place annually since then. The fund currently has a total budget of £4 million a year, with DCMS and the Wolfson Foundation contributing £2 million each.

From 2004-05, the list of institutions eligible to bid for funding has included "Museums with designated collections" and "Museums with non-designated collections in Regional Hubs". The majority of bodies in these categories are either funded or operated by local authorities. Of the 95 institutions eligible to bid, 41 are museums with designated collections and 18 are museums in Regional Hubs.

The following table shows the total bids and sums awarded as a result of the 2004-05 and 2005-06 bidding rounds. The 2006-07 round has recently ended and the results are expected to be announced in July.

No assessment of the cost of preparing bids or of assessing them has been undertaken.

Further information, including a list of all eligible institutions, can be found on the DCMS website at: http://www.culture.gov.uk/museums_and_galleries/wolfson_improvement_fund.htm

	2004-05	*2005-06*
A. Summary of total bids[1]		
Total number of bids received[1]	55	48
Number successful[1]	31	34
Percentage	56	71
Total awarded[2] (£)	3,807,00	4,000,000
B. Summary of bids from museums and galleries with designated collections		
Total number of bids received[1]	55	48
Number received from designated collections	23	16
Number successful from designated collections	17	13
Bids from designated collections which were successful as a percentage of total bids	31	27
Total awarded to designated collections[2] (£)	1,782,200	1,231,081
C. Summary of bids from non-designated collections in Regional Hubs		
Total number of bids received[1]	55	48
Number received from non-designated collections in Regional Hubs	8	11
Number successful from non-designated collections in Regional Hubs	3	10
Bids from non-designated collections in Regional Hubs which were successful as a percentage of total bids	5	21
Total awarded to non-designated collections in Regional Hubs[2]	196,200	1,053,625

[1] Includes bids from all 95 eligible institutions in the following four categories: DCMS sponsored institutions; designated university-based collections; designated collections and non-designated collections in Regional Hubs.
[2] Matched funding provided jointly by DCMS and the Wolfson Foundation.

PFI Credits

The DCMS PFI programme allows local authorities to bid for PFI credits to support the cost of their projects, as long as the project satisfies the relevant criteria.

Table 1 lists the number of projects that put in a successful bid for DCMS PFI credits in that calendar year (we are unable to represent these figures in terms of the total number of bids received in each year).

Table 1: Successful bids

	Number
2000	1
2001	1
2002	7
2003	5
2004	0
2005	7
Total	21

Table 2 lists the total amount allocated to local authority PFI projects (in the form of PFI credits) during the relevant financial year.

Table 2: PFI credits

	£ million Amount
2000-01	6.0
2001-02	6.2
2002-03	6.4
2003-04	0.0
2004-05	62.7
2005-06	47.4
Total	128.7

The evaluation of PFI bids is handled by DCMS, Sport England, MLA and the 4ps; but given the number of organisations involved in assessing bids for DCMS PFI credits, a costing of the assessment process is not available.

Licensed Premises

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many *(a)* on-licensed and *(b)* off-licensed premises have lost their licences in each of the last five years. [69403]

Mr. Woodward: Data for the number of justices' licences revoked in England and Wales were collected every three years and are available for a 12-month period to the 30 June 2004 as detailed in the following table:

Year to 30 June	*Total on-licensed premises revoked*	*Total off-licensed premises revoked*	*Total revocations*
2001	132	51	183
2004	273	81	354

Source:
DCMS Statistical Bulletin: Liquor Licensing: England and Wales, July 2003 to June 2004, Table 5.

Licensing Fees

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment her Department has made of the recommendation by the Better Regulation Commission to reduce licensing fees payable under the Licensing Act 2003 by voluntary bodies; and if she will make a statement. [66832]

Mr. Woodward: I am currently considering the Better Regulation Commission's report and expect to make a formal response shortly.

However, the impact of fees on not-for-profit groups and events, as well as other sectors, is already being considered by the Independent Licensing Fees Review Panel, which will report in the autumn.

London 2012 Olympics

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much *(a)* her Department, *(b)* UK Sport, *(c)* the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games, *(d)* the British Olympic Association on behalf of the Olympic Sport national governing bodies, *(e)* the Youth Sport Trust and *(f)* the National Sports Foundation are seeking to raise in sponsorship from the private sector before the London 2012 Olympics. [70346]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is set out as follows:

(a) My Department does not, at this time, have any plans to directly engage in the raising of sponsorship moneys from the private sector prior to the London 2012 Olympics;

(b) UK Sport will seek to raise £100 million in the run up to 2012 to benefit and support our high performance athletes;

(c) The London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games' (LOCOG) current budget is approximately £2 billion. This money will be generated through ticket sales and merchandising as well as the sale of broadcast and sponsorship rights. LOCOG will be seeking to maximise the amount of money that they can raise from their sponsors to help fund the Games and achieve the overall target of £2 billion.

(d) This information is not held by my Department;

(e) The Youth Sport Trust is a charitable organisation and responsible for its own fundraising programme. However I can confirm that they have already secured sponsorship from Visa for the organisation of the 2006 UK School Games.

(f) The National Sports Foundation has been tasked with generating a total of £30 million additional investment into grass-roots and community sport over the financial years 2006-07 and 2007-08, and this will include moneys raised from private sponsors. Any activity beyond 2008 will be contingent on the outcomes of the next Comprehensive Spending Review.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she will take *(a)* to prioritise and *(b)* to prevent conflicts of interest relating to the raising of private sector sponsorship in the run-up to the London 2012 Olympics; and if she will make a statement. [70384]

Mr. Caborn: It is my intention that we effectively and successfully harness the passion that exists for sport in this country and provide effective mechanisms for those who wish to invest in or sponsor sport at all levels. My Department will, therefore, ensure that robust strategies are put in place precisely so that we can maximise the amount of new money flowing into sport, and avoid any possibility of these problems arising.

Preventing Extremism Together

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to implement the recommendation in the Preventing Extremism Together report to set up a unit to monitor the representation of Islam in the media. [69288]

Mr. Woodward: There are currently no plans to take forward this recommendation.

Schools Olympics

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what involvement *(a)* UK Sport, *(b)* the British Olympic Association and *(c)* the individual sport national governing bodies will have in the staging of the Schools Olympics announced in the Budget. [70347]

Mr. Caborn: The Youth Sport Trust have held initial discussions with the British Olympic Foundation, the charitable arm of the British Olympic Association and the British Paralympic Association to integrate and embed the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games' ideals and values into the UK School Games (UKSG).

Arrangements for the UKSG for 2007-11 are being finalised. However, the National Governing Bodies (Swimming, Fencing, Athletics, Table Tennis and Gymnastics) that are participating in the UKSG 2006 are responsible for the competition format, team selection and technical requirements of their sport in this event, as well as assuming responsibility for the developmental work around the National Competition Framework and engaging the National School Sport Associations in that process.

UK Sport has no formal contracted involvement with the UK School Games but it is supporting the event in two ways:

Ensuring that the performance and competition structures build on and link in with the World Class Performance Pathway; and

Advising on the drug testing procedures for the Games

UK Sport will also be using the event to promote Drug Free Sport through their 100 per cent. ME Outreach programme.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many school sport organisations were consulted before the announcement of a Schools Olympics in the 2006 budget; and what representations she received in response to the consultation. [70441]

Mr. Caborn: Prior to the announcement of the UK School Games (UKSG) 2006, as Minister for Sport, I co-ordinated a meeting with key partners. This included the National Council for School Sport (NCSS), (the representative body of the National School Sport Associations in England) and the NGB's from Athletics, Swimming, Gymnastics, Table Tennis and Fencing. The schools associations in England and the Home Countries were informed of these proposals, and an update of the meeting was sent to the Scottish Schools Federation.

The Youth Sport Trust, the organisation responsible for the UKSG 2006 has confirmed support from the School Sport Associations and NGB's.

Details of the UK School Games (UKSG) for 2007-11 have not been finalised.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which body is responsible for the organisation of the Schools Olympics announced in the Budget; and what role the private sector will play in the project. [70442]

Mr. Caborn: The lead responsibility for the UK School Games (UKSG) 2006, rests with the Youth Sport Trust. Sponsorship has been secured from Visa.

Arrangements for the UKSG for 2007-2011 have not been finalised. However the Millennium Commission has recently invited applications from organisations willing to organise the UKSG in 2007-11 and which it is intended will receive funding from the Trust which the Commission, the Big Lottery Fund, Arts Council England and the Government plan to establish to support a diverse range of cultural and sporting initiatives associated with the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. It is our expectation that, as with the Glasgow event, these Games would also attract private sponsorship.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Crown Immunity

Mrs. Dean: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when the majority of the immunity afforded to the Crown in respect of planning legislation will be revoked. [70756]

Yvette Cooper: The legislation required to remove the Crown's immunity from planning legislation has been made and will be laid before Parliament shortly.

Housing

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what representations her Department has received since 4 May on the proposed demolition of urban terraced housing in northern cities. [69959]

Yvette Cooper: We have received no representations of this kind since 4 May, but the majority received prior to this date are in support of the proposals put forward by the nine housing market renewal pathfinders.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment she has made of the delivery by her Department of the necessary additional infrastructure for housing expansion in North Northamptonshire. [70182]

Yvette Cooper: Infrastructure investment must support housing growth, using a mix of funding from mainstream programmes, investment by the private sector and top-up funding from the growth areas programme.

The Government are encouraging local delivery partners to focus on identifying, prioritising and sourcing investment in their locations—based on their individual circumstances and priorities, and using a mix of public and private funding.

Northamptonshire county council has commissioned EDAW consultants to undertake a study of the infrastructure requirements in North Northamptonshire. This work was supported by funds from my Department.

Delivery of the necessary infrastructure to support additional housing in the growth areas will be undertaken by a wide range of public and private organisations. Substantial funding has already been provided by my Department for those infrastructure schemes already identified to support growth, through

growth area funding, and jointly with DfT through community infrastructure fund.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will revise the housing expansion target for North Northamptonshire contained in the Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-regional spatial strategy. [70185]

Yvette Cooper: There are no plans at present to revise this target.

Infrastructure

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on how many occasions in the last two years personnel from the growth areas directorate have visited North Northamptonshire to discuss additional infrastructure provision, broken down by district council area. [70188]

Yvette Cooper: My officials from Growth Areas Division have been in regular contact with the local delivery vehicles in North Northamptonshire over the last two years to discuss growth issues, including infrastructure provision.

Local delivery vehicles have been established in most of the major locations of growth to drive the delivery of new homes and infrastructure. In North Northamptonshire the local authorities have been members of the delivery vehicles Catalyst Corby and North Northants Together and are founding members of the newly announced North Northants Development Company—a merger of the two organisations. The North Northants Development Company will continue to work with their partners to assess priority infrastructure requirements and suitable funding sources.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what her latest estimate is of the cost of infrastructure for *(a)* schools, *(b)* health services, *(c)* transport, *(d)* water and sewerage and *(e)* other services required to accompany housing expansion in North Northamptonshire. [70189]

Yvette Cooper: Infrastructure investment must support housing growth, using a mix of funding from mainstream programmes, investment by the private sector and top-up funding from the growth areas programme.

Northamptonshire county council has commissioned EDAW consultants to undertake a study of the infrastructure requirements in North Northamptonshire. This work was supported by funds from my Department.

The Government are encouraging local delivery partners to focus on identifying, prioritising and sourcing investment in their locations—based on their individual circumstances and priorities, and using a mix of public and private funding.

Assessing the infrastructure requirements for growth is a complex and lengthy process. It needs to assess the detailed layout of a development as it evolves and to allow for changing approaches to service provision affecting what is needed and when.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Financial Assistance Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how much on average has been paid *(a)* per person and *(b)* to each terminally ill person from the Financial Assistance Scheme; [66467]

(2) how many *(a)* people and *(b)* people who are terminally ill are eligible for payments from the Financial Assistance Scheme; [66471]

(3) how many *(a)* people and *(b)* people who are terminally ill have received payments from the Financial Assistance Scheme in each month since the scheme started. [66472]

James Purnell: To date, 43 people have been assessed as eligible for payments. Four of these are not yet being paid as they have not reached age 65. None of those eligible are terminally ill.

The gross average payment is £2,291.64 a year, or £190.97 a month. The following table details the number of payments made in each month since the first payments in December 2005.

Payments made each month

	Number
December	13
January	15
February	27
March	32
April	39

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much *(a)* the largest and *(b)* the smallest payment has been from the Financial Assistance Scheme. [66468]

James Purnell: The information requested is as follows:

(a) The largest gross payment has been £7,557.72 a year, or £629.81 a month;

(b) The smallest gross payment has been £600.96 a year, or £50.08 a month.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how much capital investment in technology systems there has been for the Financial Assistance Scheme; [66469]

(2) if he will list the main IT suppliers for the Financial Assistance Scheme; and how much has been spent with each supplier. [66470]

James Purnell: There has been no capital investment in IT systems for the Financial Assistance Scheme. The FAS IT system is being designed and built by BT and delivered in phases. At 31 March 2006 we had made payments totalling £483,707.

The IT application is also supported by BT in the live environment for a monthly charge of £13,698 since November 2005. EDS provide the hosting service for the FAS IT system at a charge of £4,252.50 per month, also since November 2005.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people were receiving payments from the Financial Assistance Scheme on 31 May 2005; and how many he expects will be in receipt of payments on 31 December 2006. [66473]

James Purnell: The first payments were made to 13 people on 21 December 2005. In the longer term we expect up to 15,000 people to be eligible for payments. We have no estimates for 31 December 2006.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many of his Department's staff are employed to administer the Financial Assistance Scheme; [66474]

(2) what the total staff cost of the Financial Assistance Scheme has been, broken down by *(a)* managers and *(b)* administrative staff. [66475]

James Purnell: The Financial Assistance Scheme Operational Unit in York employs 69 people to administer the scheme. Reflecting actual working patterns, this equates to a whole time equivalent of 62 people.

The costs for the financial year 2005-06 are for *(a)* managers: £234,281.29 and *(b)* administrative staff: £1,052,724.76.

Note:

Assumes managers are in grades of Higher Executive Officer and above.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many surviving spouses of scheme members have received payments from the Financial Assistance Scheme; [66476]

(2) how much is the average amount of payment made from the Financial Assistance Scheme to surviving spouses of pension scheme members; [66477]

(3) how much is the *(a)* largest and *(b)* smallest payment made from the Financial Assistance Scheme to surviving spouses of pension scheme members. [66478]

James Purnell: Under the Data Protection Act it is unlawful to reveal data which relate to a living individual who could be identified from those data. As there is only one surviving spouse currently receiving assistance, I cannot provide the information requested.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many appeals have been made against a decision concerning eligibility for the Financial Assistance Scheme; and what proportion have been *(a)* successful, *(b)* unsuccessful and *(c)* not yet determined. [66479]

James Purnell: To date, no appeals have been made.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what mechanisms are in place to reclaim overpayments made by the Financial Assistance Scheme. [66480]

James Purnell: In accordance with regulations, recovery of overpayments of financial assistance will be handled in the same way as recoveries of overpayments of social security benefits.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the average time taken to process applications to the Financial Assistance Scheme in the last 12 months. [66481]

James Purnell: As the Financial Assistance Scheme Operational Unit opened on 1 September 2005, information is only available for the last eight months.

Applications are generally made by trustees in the form of a notification of the scheme details to the Operational Unit.

Between 1 September 2005 and 25 April, 915 notification decisions have been made and on average it has taken 11 calendar days to process each notification.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many calls were received by the financial assistance scheme operational unit in each quarter for which figures are available; and how many calls *(a)* were answered, *(b)* met an engaged tone and *(c)* were abandoned in each quarter. [66914]

James Purnell: The information requested is as follows.

	September-November 2005	*December 2005-February 2006*	*March-April 2006*
Calls received	552	903	467
Calls answered	544	898	463
Calls engaged	0	0	0
Calls abandoned[1]	8	5	4

[1] 15 of the 17 abandoned calls were abandoned within two seconds, giving staff no chance of answering the call.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much of the £400 million made available for the financial assistance scheme he expects to be spent on *(a)* administrative costs, *(b)* capital costs and *(c)* payments to beneficiaries. [66915]

James Purnell: There are no capital costs and the administrative costs will be met from the Department's existing administration resources, separately from the £400 million. The provision of £400 million is to be used entirely for payments to beneficiaries.

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many people aged 60, 61 and 62 years are not eligible for assistance from the financial assistance scheme because their scheme had a retirement age of 65; [67153]

(2) how many people with a retirement age of 65 years who are over 60 years will not fall within the financial assistance scheme's three year window; [67154]

(3) how many people fall outside *(a)* the financial assistance scheme's three year window and *(b)* the

three year window but are within 10 years of retirement. [67155]

James Purnell: We estimate that around 70,000 of the 85,000 who may otherwise be eligible for assistance under the financial assistance scheme may fall outside the three year window and that around 55,000 may fall outside the three year window but are within 10 years of retirement.

We will not be able to provide more specific figures on the number of members with a particular retirement age and of a particular age, until detailed data have been collected from eligible schemes as they complete winding up.

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pension schemes will be eligible only for interim financial assistance scheme payments due to the wind up being delayed by trustees seeking to recover additional funds through legal action. [67156]

James Purnell: We cannot pay full financial assistance scheme payments until the final scale of individual losses can be established at the end of wind-up. 'Initial payments' allow us to pay some money at a lower rate to those qualifying members who become entitled to assistance before their scheme completes wind up. While the wind-up process may take some time to complete and this may be affected by ongoing court action, all FAS qualifying schemes will ultimately complete wind-up and all eligible qualifying members will then receive full FAS payments.

Vehicle Excise Duty

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will introduce a category of attendance allowance which exempts an individual from vehicle excise duty; and if he will make a statement. [69468]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

Attendance allowance is available for those who become disabled after the age of 65 and, unlike disability living allowance, does not have a mobility component. While some of those in receipt of attendance allowance may have mobility difficulties, receipt of attendance allowance does not of itself necessarily represent mobility needs; rather, it contributes towards the personal care needs of those with disabilities who are over the age of 65.

The Government believe that the benefit arrangements in place for disabled people are both fair and sensible and, in particular, that it is right to give the most help with the extra costs of disability to those who are severely disabled earlier in life. The Government have no plans to change the rules governing either AA or DLA.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Prosecutors (Humberside)

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Solicitor-General how many full-time equivalent qualified prosecutors there were in Humberside *(a)* in 1997 and *(b)* at the latest date for which figures are available. [69764]

The Solicitor-General: In May 1997, the CPS had 13 geographic areas and there were 95.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) prosecutors in the CPS Humber area, which consisted of Humberside, South Yorkshire and Lincolnshire police force areas. By applying, a calculation based on the percentage of staff employed in each of the three areas that made up the CPS Humberside area as at April 1999, we can estimate that there would have been 30.0 FTE prosecutors notionally employed in the Humberside area in May 1997.

As at May 2006, the Humberside area have 44.4 FTE prosecutors.

PRIME MINISTER

Bovine TB

Mr. Drew: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions has he had with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the situation regarding bovine TB; what plans he has to study the results of the recent consultation on a new strategy; and whether he will be involved directly in any decision on that strategy. [68650]

The Prime Minister: I have regular meetings and discussions with ministerial colleagues and others on a wide range of subjects. Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Consultants

Keith Vaz: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the companies which were paid consultancy fees by his Office in 2005-06; how much each was paid; and what each of the companies was used to accomplish. [69698]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I have therefore asked my right hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office (Hilary Armstrong) to reply. A copy of the reply will be placed in the Library of the House.

Honours (Investigation)

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister how many members of his private office have been interviewed by the Metropolitan Police Specialist Crimes Directorate in connection with investigations relating to the Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act 1925; and if he will make a statement. [68302]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the press briefing given by my Official Spokesman on Wednesday 3 May, a copy of which is available on the No. 10 website.

Middle East (Special Envoy)

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister what the duties and responsibilities are of his Special Envoy to the Middle East; whether this post incurs a cost to the public purse; how he measures the efficacy of this person's work; and if he will make a statement. [68763]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) on 17 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2581-82W.

Lord Levy receives no remuneration and travels at his own expense. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and diplomatic missions overseas provide him with practical support.

Ministerial Resignations

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Prime Minister on how many occasions he has received offers from members of his Government to resign which he has not accepted. [68610]

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister (1) on which occasions he has asked *(a)* a Cabinet and *(b)* a junior Minister to resign during changes to his Government in each year since 1997; [69626]

(2) which *(a)* Cabinet and *(b)* junior ministers offered to tender their resignation in each year since 1997; and how many of such offers he (i) accepted and (ii) rejected. [69627]

The Prime Minister: Details of Members of Government for the years requested are set out in the List of Ministerial Responsibilities, copies of which are available in the Library of the House.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Prime Minister what criteria he used in deciding not to accept the resignation of the Home Secretary. [68611]

The Prime Minister: A full list of Government changes and resignations was announced on 5 May. Copies are available in the Libraries of the House and on the No. 10 website.

Ministerial Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Prime Minister what percentage of his staff is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled. [69251]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I have therefore asked my right hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office (Hilary Armstrong) to reply. A copy of the reply will be placed in the Library of the House.

Petrol Prices

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister what recent discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the price of petrol; and if he will make a statement. [69625]

The Prime Minister: I have regular meetings and discussions with ministerial colleagues and others on a wide range of subjects. Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Staff Development

David Simpson: To ask the Prime Minister what the total cost was of *(a)* staff away days and *(b)* staff team building exercises in his Office in each of the last three years. [69250]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I have therefore asked my right hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office (Hilary Armstrong) to reply. A copy of the reply will be placed in the Library of the House.

TRANSPORT

A14

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received on the future development of the A14 around Kettering from *(a)* the East Midlands Regional Assembly, *(b)* the East Midlands Development Agency and *(c)* the East Midlands arm of the Highways Agency. [70187]

Dr. Ladyman: We have not received any specific representations from either the East Midlands Regional Assembly or the East Midlands Development Agency. Following our response to the recommendations of the London to South Midlands Multi-Modal Study in July 2003, the Highways Agency is currently investigating options to improve this section of the A14 and continues to work with the County Council and other local partners, including both the Regional Assembly and Development Agency. They hope to submit advice for Ministers to consider later this year.

Air Safety

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will commission research to review the extent of airline self regulation and assess the impact of commercial practices in the airline industry on operational safety. [67472]

Gillian Merron: All United Kingdom airlines are subject to safety regulation and oversight by the Civil Aviation Authority.

The authority's method of safety oversight is well established and is proportionate to the size and complexity of an airline's operation. Oversight includes periodic audit inspections in both commercial and maintenance disciplines. The audits and continued oversight activities are designed to ensure that an airline's commercial practices enhance rather than detract from operational safety. As a result, the Government do not consider that research is necessary.

Airport Security (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answers of 26 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1089W, on airport security (Northern Ireland), and 4 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1733-4W, on airport security, what steps are being taken at each of Northern Ireland's three airports to reduce the number of incidents requiring investigation by the Civil Aviation Authority. [70462]

Gillian Merron: There is a robust regulatory regime in place to ensure the safe operation of aircraft in the United Kingdom. Both the Civil Aviation Authority's Mandatory Occurrence Reporting scheme and investigations by the Department's Air Accidents Investigation Branch have key roles in this regime.

The CAA analyses Mandatory Occurrence Reports to identify any patterns or trends so that it can take any appropriate regulatory action. AAIB makes such safety recommendations as it considers necessary on a case by case basis to regulators and industry to prevent further accidents or incidents occurring.

Aviation Fuel

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent estimate he has made of how many litres of fuel are bought in a year for use in turbine-powered aircraft. [69747]

Gillian Merron: The Government publish annually the tonnage of aviation turbine fuel consumed in the UK. In 2004 that figure was 11.9 million tonnes.

British Airways

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funds were given to British Airways in each of the last 10 years. [67062]

Gillian Merron: None.

Buses

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much bus subsidy has been provided in the *(a)* Greater Manchester, *(b)* Merseyside, *(c)* Tyne and Wear, *(d)* West Yorkshire and *(e)* South Yorkshire passenger transport authority area in each of the last 10 years. [66925]

Dr. Ladyman: The following table shows the totals for the last nine years of expenditure by the relevant passenger transport authority on support for local bus services and re-imbursement of concessionary travel fares on buses in each area. There is no comparable figure for 1995-96.

£ million

	(a) Greater Manchester	*(b) Merseyside*	*(c) Tyne and Wear*	*(d) West Yorkshire*	*(e) South Yorkshire*
1996-97	57.4	53.1	29.5	40.1	27.1
1997-98	56.6	57.1	28.0	38.7	25.2
1998-99	58.7	59.7	27.9	40.5	17.4
1999-2000	60.3	43.5	30.3	39.2	16.9
2000-01	63.5	45.0	30.1	42.9	17.6
2001-02	59.2	46.8	30.0	44.9	18.8
2002-03	61.8	49.2	32.1	42.4	18.6
2003-04	77.5	52.4	27.4	45.0	20.3
2004-05	71.4	57.3	27.2	40.9	22.4

Source:
Local authority returns to ODPM, revenue out-turn (RO2).

In addition, operators of local bus services receive Bus Service Operators Grant from this Department. This is paid direct to operators and is not attributed to a specific area.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people travelled on buses in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* Greater Manchester in each year since 1985; and what percentage of the total population this represented in each case. [67253]

Gillian Merron: The number of bus passenger journeys is shown in the following table:

Million

	London	*Greater Manchester*
1985-86	1,152	357
1986-87	1,164	267
1987-88	1,207	310
1988-89	1,211	297
1989-90	1,188	291
1990-91	1,178	270
1991-92	1,149	260
1992-93	1,129	252
1993-94	1,117	236
1994-95	1,155	226
1995-96	1,193	224
1996-97	1,230	212
1997-98	1,281	211
1998-99	1,266	217
1999-2000	1,294	202
2000-01	1,347	204
2001-02	1,422	208
2002-03	1,527	208
2003-04	1,692	206
2004-05	1,777	203

Source:
DfT Annual Surveys of PSV Operators.

The figures in the table include journeys made by non-residents. The proportion of residents who used buses at least once a year is available from the National Travel Survey (NTS), as follows:

	Percentage	
	Greater London	*Greater Manchester*
1998	80	63
1999	81	63
2000	79	59
2001	80	55
2003	77	60

The NTS has recorded the proportion of people using buses at county level only since 1998, and on an alternate-year basis only since 2002. Data for all available years are shown in the aforementioned table.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average age is of buses in *(a)* Leeds and *(b)* Kirklees. [68852]

Gillian Merron: This information is not held by the Department for Transport.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures his Department is taking to encourage bus operators to introduce higher quality modern vehicles. [69155]

Gillian Merron: In 2002, the Department agreed targets with the Confederation of Passenger Transport to improve services for bus users. The Confederation committed its members, among other things, to achieve and maintain an average bus fleet age of eight years or less until 2010, and to ensure that 50 per cent. of buses are fully accessible by 2010.

The most recent surveys show that the average age of vehicles used mainly as local buses was 7.1 years (as on 1 July 2005) and that 46 per cent. of such vehicles were fully accessible (as on 31 March 2005).

Heathrow

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the maximum hourly landing rate at Heathrow. [68875]

Gillian Merron: The maximum number of arrivals at Heathrow is currently 44, with an hourly average across the day of 39.6.

Ice Falls (Aircraft)

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many ice falls from civilian aircraft there have been in Leicestershire in each of the last 20 years for which figures are available; where and when the incidents occurred; and what *(a)* injuries to people and *(b)* damage to property resulted. [66986]

Gillian Merron: The Civil Aviation Authority has received four reports of ice falls occurring in Leicestershire over the last 20 years. None of the ice falls caused any injury. The dates, location and property damage caused by the four reported ice falls are set out in the following table:

Date	*Time (UTC)*	*Location*	*County*	*Injuries*	*Damage to property*
24 July1987	1500	Quorn	Leicestershire	None	Roof tiles
7 October 1993	2215	Burbage	Leicestershire	None	None
2 September 1999	1810	Barlestone	Leicestershire	None	Shed panels and furniture
18 March 2006	1640	Great Glen	Leicestershire	None	Vehicle on driveway

It has not been possible for the Civil Aviation Authority to conclude definitively that the ice in these cases fell from civil aircraft.

Level Crossings

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many level crossings have been *(a)* closed, *(b)* upgraded and *(c)* introduced in each region of England and Wales since 1997. [69609]

Derek Twigg: This is an operational matter for Network Rail, who I have asked to reply directly to the hon. Member.

Liverpool Airport

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passenger flights *(a)* commenced and *(b)* terminated at Liverpool John Lennon International airport in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [69371]

Gillian Merron: The number of passenger flights that commenced and terminated at Liverpool John Lennon International airport is as follows:

Number of passenger flights to/from Liverpool airport 2003-05

		Thousand
	Commenced	*Terminated*
2003	16.0	16.0
2004	17.5	17.4
2005	22.8	22.8

Note:
Excludes air taxis (charter flights operated by aircraft below 15 tonnes maximum takeoff weight authorised)
Source:
Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Airports Statistics

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passenger movements were recorded at Liverpool John Lennon International airport in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [69372]

Gillian Merron: Information on passenger movements at Liverpool John Lennon International airport for last three years is as follows:

Passenger movements at John Lennon International airport: 2003-05

	thousand
	Number
2003	3,175
2004	3,352
2005	4,409

Note:
Passenger traffic carried on air taxi (charter flights operated by aircraft below 15 tonnes maximum takeoff weight authorised) services is excluded.
Source:
Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Airports Statistics

M26

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the estimated date is in which the M26 between junctions one and two is expected to be resurfaced with quieter surfacing. [70170]

Dr. Ladyman: Resurfacing was carried out at seven locations on the M26 between J1 and J2A in 2005-06.

The works had been identified to treat areas of life expired carriageway and, in total, 17.6 lane kilometres (approximately a third of the total area) were resurfaced using a low noise material.

Subject to the availability of funding and the rate of deterioration of the road surface it is expected that resurfacing the remaining carriageway between junctions J1 and 2A eastbound will take place in 2008-09 and westbound, between J2A and J1, in 2009-10. Low noise surfacing will be used and this will complete the resurfacing of the carriageways between junctions 1 and 2A.

Nottingham East Midlands Airport

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many overseas visitors arrived at Nottingham East Midlands airport in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [67112]

Gillian Merron: The information available on the estimated number of overseas passengers on international flights at Nottingham East Midlands airport is as follows:

Nottingham East Midlands airport, overseas passengers on international flights

	Thousand
1975	23
1983	31
1992-93	80
1999	132
2003	239

Source:
Civil Aviation Authority passenger surveys.

These figures include both arrivals and departures. Information on nationality is not collected every year at this airport.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many British passengers have flown out on international flights from Nottingham East Midlands airport in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [67114]

Gillian Merron: The information available on the estimated number of United Kingdom passengers on international flights at Nottingham East Midlands airport is as follows:

Nottingham East Midlands airport, United Kingdom passengers on international flights

	Thousand
1975	335
1983	648
1992-93	891
1999	1,661
2003	3,104

Source:
Civil Aviation Authority passenger surveys.

These figures include both arrivals and departures. Information on nationality is not collected every year at this airport.

Number Plates

Nick Herbert: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the Government's policy is on the promotion of spray-on formulas which obscure vehicle number plates. [70104]

Dr. Ladyman: The use of sprays designed to defeat speed cameras or automatic number plate reading equipment is in contravention of the Road Vehicles (Display of Registration Marks) Regulations 2001 and is subject to a fine of up to £1,000. The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency is working with police and trading standards officers to investigate what action might be taken against companies that advertise and sell such products.

Parking

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many local authorities in *(a)* England, *(b)* the North West and *(c)* Greater Manchester have decriminalised parking offences within their boundaries. [67251]

Gillian Merron: In England 146 local authorities (including those in the North West) have Decriminalisation Parking Enforcement (DPE) powers. In the North West economic planning region 32 local authorities (including those in Greater Manchester) have DPE powers. In Greater Manchester nine local authorities have DPE powers.

Railways

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what changes in capacity will be made to rail passenger services as a consequence of the Government's detailed specification for the Greater Western franchise. [64038]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport specified a minimum train service for the Greater Western franchise. This number will increase as a result of the timetable changes announced by First Great Western (FGW) on 3 April 2006. Rolling stock capacity is also a significant determinant of total capacity, and this was not specified by the Department; FGW's redesign of the High Speed Train fleet, a franchise obligation together with a new timetable, will

increase capacity on commuter and long-distance trains between London and Reading.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will take steps to ensure that the data on which the specifications in future rail franchise tender documents are based are made available to the public. [69680]

Derek Twigg: The non-commercially sensitive data on which the specifications for rail franchise tender documents are based are already available to the public via the following, and include:

TEMPRO forecasts (Trip End Model Presentation Program)—dft.gsi.gov.uk.

NATA (New Approach to Appraisal)—dft.gsi.gov.uk

Standard industry demand models and growth trend data is owned by the Office of Rail Regulation and ATOC (www.rail-reg.gov.uk and www.atoc.org

Journey data is available from the Office of Rail Regulation.

Commercially sensitive data, which are usually owned by Train Operating Companies are generally not available to the public.

Road Accidents

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many road traffic accidents resulting in fatality occurred in Suffolk in each year since 1997; and how many deaths these caused in total; [69807]

(2) how many serious motorcycle accidents occurred in Suffolk in each year since 1997; [69817]

(3) how many pedestrians have been seriously injured as a result of road traffic accidents in Suffolk in each year since 1997. [69819]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of *(a)* fatal accidents and fatalities *(b)* serious accidents involving a motorcycle and *(c)* pedestrians seriously injured in personal injury road accidents, reported to the police in Suffolk in each year between 1997 and 2004 (the latest for which figures are available) are given in the table.

Number of fatal accidents, fatalities, serious accidents involving a motorcycle and pedestrians seriously injured in Suffolk: 1997 to 2004

	Fatal accidents	Number of fatalities	Serious accidents involving motorcycles[1]	Pedestrians seriously injured
1997	42	43	70	62
1998	21	23	59	56
1999	45	48	72	56
2000	50	56	80	59
2001	49	53	75	41
2002	42	43	64	41
2003	50	60	69	42
2004	40	42	70	55

[1] Includes motorcycles and scooters, but excludes mopeds.

Road Safety

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many vehicle accidents occurred on *(a)* A roads and *(b)* motorways in Lancashire in each year since 1990; and how many (i) fatalities and (ii) serious injuries there were as a result in each year. [70264]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of road accidents reported to the police on *(a)* A roads and *(b)* motorways in Lancashire and the resulting (i) fatalities and (ii) serious injuries in each year from 1990 to 2004 (the latest year for which figures are available) are given in the table.

Accidents, fatalities and serious injuries on A roads and motorways in Lancashire (excluding Unitary Authorities): 1990-2004

	A roads			Motorways		
	Accidents	Fatalities	Serious Injuries	Accidents	Fatalities	Serious Injuries
1990	2,038	54	398	229	15	75
1991	1,954	45	377	164	11	44
1992	2,044	58	424	207	8	46
1993	1,983	42	442	222	7	70
1994	2,127	53	513	254	8	91
1995	1,968	40	488	220	6	67
1996	1,988	37	440	241	8	71
1997	2,033	36	451	364	7	70
1998	1,863	37	394	358	6	65
1999	1,864	34	398	343	9	58
2000	1,813	28	356	286	5	60
2001	1,886	32	349	299	7	42
2002	1,887	30	319	332	2	55
2003	1,673	31	328	337	8	54
2004	1,848	27	358	388	5	50

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what steps he *(a)* has taken and *(b)* plans to take to encourage pregnant women to wear seat belts; and if he will make a statement; [70366]

(2) what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the risks to unborn babies in a car crash; and if he will make a statement. [70367]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department recently published a new leaflet aimed at all pregnant women as part of the THINK! campaign seatbelt strategy to engage with audiences that are more difficult to reach with a particular message through mainstream media channels.

The aim of the leaflet is to educate mothers-to-be on the importance of wearing a seatbelt correctly to protect themselves and their unborn baby and to promote messages on child car seats. The leaflet will be distributed to 4000 doctors' surgeries across the UK and will be displayed prominently on countertops and tables in waiting areas. The leaflet is available on-line at www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk/campaigns/seatbelts/pregnant.htm

Pregnant women are required in law to use seat belts. A doctor may exempt any person from seatbelt wearing if there is a medical reason for such an exemption.

The Department has not undertaken its own studies as there is research elsewhere that adequately demonstrates the risks to mothers and unborn children in a car crash.

Road Traffic Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what amendments have been made to the Road Traffic Act 1988; for what purpose; and when. [70067]

Dr. Ladyman: The Road Traffic Act 1988 has been amended on many occasions by subsequent primary and secondary legislation. A breakdown of all these amendments, their purpose and when they came into effect, could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, several organisations publish consolidated versions of the Act, which also document the amendments. One of these, Butterworths, is available online to Members of this House.

Royal Helicopter

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 5 April 2006, on the Royal Helicopter, if he will make a statement on flights by Prince Andrew to the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews since 1 January 2004. [68510]

Gillian Merron: There have been no helicopter flights by HRH The Duke of York to The Royal and Ancient Golf Club since 1 January 2004.

Transport Projects

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what financial value is assigned by his Department to each hour of time saved when undertaking cost benefit analysis of transport projects; and if he will make a statement. [70522]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department provides guidance on the values that should be used in undertaking cost benefit analysis of all routine transport projects. It also provides guidance on how the values should be assumed to increase through time.

The published values differ according to whether the transport user benefiting from the time savings is travelling in the course of work or in their leisure time. To reflect the empirical evidence, values for leisure time differ according to whether or not the travel time savings is for a commuting trip. The values for work differ by transport mode. The reason for this is that the work values are based on the cost savings to the employer and this average saving differs between modes.

The average value placed on time saved in work time in the cost benefit analysis of routine transport schemes is equal to £26.73 an hour in 2002 prices and values. The value placed on commuting time savings is equal to £5.04 an hour (in 2002 prices and values) and the value placed on time saved in the course of all other leisure trips is £4.46 an hour (in 2002 prices and values).

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what financial value is assigned by his Department to each life saved when undertaking cost benefit analysis of major transport infrastructure projects; whether that value is applied to all other appraisals undertaken by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [70523]

Dr. Ladyman: The most recent values used to estimate the benefits of the prevention of road accidents are set out in the "Highways Economic Note No. 1: 2004 Valuation of the Benefits of Prevention of Road Accidents and Casualties" which can be found on the DfT website: http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_rdsafety/documents/page/dft_rdsafety_610642.hcsp

There is no formal value set for measures affecting aviation and maritime transport.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 15 May 2006

TRANSPORT

Aviation Security

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether military air bases handling civilian flights on an occasional basis are deemed to meet the requirements of the National Aviation Security Programme by virtue of their military status; [70528]

(2) whether military air bases handling incoming civilian flights on an occasional basis are required fully to meet the requirements of the National Aviation Security Programme. [70529]

Gillian Merron: All UK airports, whether civil or military, from which are operated flights regulated under the National Aviation Security Programme, must meet the requirements of the programme, and are subject to routine inspection, audits and tests by the Department for Transport. Incoming flights will need to have met the requirements of their airport of departure. Military airports are not deemed to have met the requirements of the National Aviation Security Programme simply by virtue of their military status.

European Directive

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on his policy on directive 2003/20/EC; when the directive will be implemented in England and Wales; and what consultation he has undertaken on the provisions of the directive. [70401]

Dr. Ladyman: We are implementing directive 2003/20/EC. We will lay draft regulations for approval before both Houses of Parliament as soon as possible and if approved we aim to bring them into force in September 2006.

Public consultation in respect of the requirements in buses and coaches was published on 21 September 2004. The Department's decision following that consultation was published on 19 July 2005.

Public consultation in respect of the requirements for greater use of child restraints in cars and goods vehicles was published on 13 June 2005. The Department's decision following consultation was published on 27 February 2006. These documents have been placed in the Library and are also available on the Department's website at: http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_rdsafety/documents/divisionhomepage/039143.hcsp and http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_control/documents/contentservertemplate/dft_index.hcst?n=13759&1=2 respectively.

Highway Code

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what provisions he has in place to assess the level of adherence to the Highway Code by cyclists; and if he will make a statement. [70198]

Dr. Ladyman: We do not have any provisions in place to assess the level of adherence to the Highway Code by cyclists. Road traffic law and The Highway Code apply as much to cyclists as anyone else. Enforcement of the law is a matter for the police. They can prosecute cyclists who ride dangerously, carelessly, ignore traffic signs
or signals, cycle on the pavement or commit any other road traffic offence. These offences carry maximum fines between £500 and £2,500. Also, £30 fixed penalty notices can be issued for cycling on the pavement, by police and community wardens.

Road Safety

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what discussions he has had with Governments in *(a)* Italy, *(b)* Spain, *(c)* Portugal and *(d)* Austria on the effects on road safety of compulsory reflective vests for car drivers leaving their vehicles following a breakdown or accident; and if he will make a statement; [70345]

(2) what estimate he has made of the number of deaths and serious injuries that have been prevented by the requirement in law in *(a)* Italy, *(b)* Spain, *(c)* Portugal and *(d)* Austria for drivers to wear reflective vests when leaving their vehicles at the roadside following a breakdown or accident; and if he will make a statement; [70357]

(3) whether the Government submitted an opinion on the notification by Italy in the Official Journal of the European Union of its intention to require car drivers to wear reflective vests when leaving their vehicle at the roadside following accidents or breakdowns (notice number 2003/357/1); [70358]

(4) if he will commission research to evaluate the effectiveness of the requirement in *(a)* Italy, *(b)* Spain, *(c)* Portugal and *(d)* Austria for drivers to wear reflective vests when leaving their vehicle at the roadside in the event of a breakdown or accident; and if he will make a statement; [70359]

(5) if he will commission a cost-benefit analysis of a requirement to wear reflective vests for car drivers who leave their car at the roadside following an accident or breakdown; and if he will make a statement. [70383]

Dr. Ladyman: No discussions have been entered into with other Governments, or opinions submitted upon, the benefits for road safety of compulsory reflective vests for car drivers leaving their vehicles following a breakdown or accident.

We will continue to monitor experience in other countries that introduce legislation requiring drivers to wear reflective vests when leaving their vehicles at the roadside following a breakdown or accident. If clear evidence starts to emerge that it is beneficial, we would look again at the need to legislate.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Educational Materials

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will list the material produced by *(a)* the House of Commons Information Office and *(b)* the Education Unit for (i) schools and (ii) individual pupils; and if he will make a statement. [70365]

Nick Harvey: The following tables show the information requested:

(a) Materials produced by the House of Commons Information Office

Weekly Information Bulletin	An authoritative weekly guide to the work and business of the House of Commons.
Sessional Information Digest	A cumulated form of the Weekly Information Bulletin produced after the end of each Session.
Commons Knowledge	A simple, easy-to-use weekly guide to forthcoming business.
Factsheets	A range of 65 brief informative guides to various facets of the House of Commons and its work.
Find Your MP	A service on the parliamentary website that enables members of the public to find out who their MP is by entering their postcode.

The Information Office also updates a range of material on the parliamentary website, including Frequently Asked Questions, lists of Members (by constituency, party, county/unitary authority), membership of all-party subject and country groups, members of the Government and party spokespeople.

(b) Materials produced by the Parliamentary Education Unit

Materials for teaching ages 7-11	
Wise Up about Parliament	This booklet explains the work and role of Parliament.
General Elections Explained	This booklet describes the different aspects of a general election including constituencies, representation and voting.
The Palace of Westminster: A Guide for Young People	This booklet illustrates what can be seen on a tour of the building and is particularly useful in preparing pupils for a visit to Parliament.
The Work of an MP	This booklet explains the work of MPs both at Westminster and in their constituencies.
Big Ben and the Clock Tower	This booklet, with pullout poster, describes the history and workings of "Big Ben".
Wallchart: About Parliament	A poster, suitable for classroom use, supporting the Wise Up about Parliament booklet.[1]
Citizenship Pack	A series of worksheets with ideas for classroom activities and information about the Citizenship curriculum.[1]
Our Parliament video and teachers' pack	A modular series of short films for use in the classroom, accompanied by a workbook containing ideas for class activities.[1,2]
Materials for teaching ages 11-18	
Discover Parliament	An introductory guide for younger students (ages 11-13) (also available in a Welsh/English bilingual version).
Introduction to Parliament	A general guide for older and general studies students (ages 14+).
Parliament Explained	A set of six booklets providing greater detail on specific aspects of Parliament, such as elections, debates, legislation, the two Houses and Parliament's relationship with government.
Wallcharts: Parliament Explained	Posters supporting each of the six Parliament Explained booklets.[1]
The Speaker of the House of Commons	A guide for teachers on the history and role of the Speaker.[1]
Our Parliament video	A modular series of short films for use with younger students (ages 11-13).[1,2]
Parliament Uncovered video	A series of short films similar to Our Parliament but addressing the Citizenship curriculum for older students (ages 14+).[1,2]
Scrutiny Uncovered DVD	A film focussing on the work of committees (ages 16-18).[1]
General Election 2005 DVD	A film that uses footage of the 2005 general election to explain the concepts of representation and voting (ages 14+).[1]
General materials	
Explore Parliament	An educational website containing information about Parliament, interactive games for pupils, with lesson plans and other teaching aids.[1]

[1] Includes dedicated resources for teachers.
[2] The existing Our Parliament and Parliament Uncovered films are due to be replaced with new DVD-based resources for the start of the next academic year (September 2006).

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what plans the House of Commons Information Office has to produce new factsheets; how many factsheets

were sent to members of the public in each of the last three years; how members of the public may obtain copies; at what cost; and if he will make a statement. [70364]

Nick Harvey: The House of Commons Information Office publishes 65 factsheets covering a range of parliamentary, legislative and procedural topics. These are currently being reviewed to ensure that they continue to address the queries most commonly raised by members of the public, and in line with planned changes to the parliamentary website. The Information Office would be pleased to receive suggestions from Members and their constituents for suitable subjects for inclusion in future factsheets.

The following table shows the number of factsheets that have been sent to the public, or downloaded from the parliamentary website, for each of the last three years:

	Financial year		
	2003-04	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
Factsheets posted to members of the public	3,725	4,965	5,771
Factsheets downloaded[1]	309,200	280,300	309,600

[1] Figures include factsheets downloaded by users of the Parliamentary Network as well as members of the public.

Members of the public can obtain factsheets, free of charge, by contacting the House of Commons Information Office on 020 7219 4272 (email: hcinfo@parliament.uk) or, alternatively, downloading them from the parliamentary website (www.parliament.uk).

IT Equipment

Mr. Dismore: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission (1) how often information technology equipment is renewed for *(a)* hon. Members and *(b)* each Department of the House; and if he will make a statement; [70282]

(2) when information technology equipment was last renewed in each Department of the House. [70283]

Nick Harvey: Information technology equipment for staff of the House is now renewed every four years as part of a rolling programme to maximise the return on the investment. There is therefore no single renewal date. For Members, information technology equipment is currently renewed each Parliament, providing this is near to or longer than four years.

Reserved Seating (Officials)

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how many seats are reserved for *(a)* staff and *(b)* advisers of (i) the Government and (ii) Opposition parties on (A) the Floor of the House and (B) the Floor of Standing Committees; and how many there were in (1) 1979, (2) 1997 and (3) 2001. [70404]

Nick Harvey: On the Floor of the House the Government has the use of eight seats in the Officials Box and two seats in the Under Gallery. The Opposition parties have the use of four seats in the Under Gallery. On the floor of Standing Committees the Government have the use of between four and eight seats depending on the size of the Committee Room. There are no seats reserved for advisers or staff of Opposition parties. The House authorities are not aware of any change in these arrangements since 1979.

Weekly Information Bulletin

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how many copies of the House of Commons Weekly Information Bulletin were *(a)* published and *(b)* sold in each of the last three Sessions for which information is available. [70363]

Nick Harvey: The number of *(a)* editions published and *(b)* copies sold of the House of Commons Weekly Information Bulletin sold in the present Session to date and two previous Sessions is as follows:

	Editions published	*Copies sold*
2003-04	37	23,420
2004-05	15	9,066
2005-06[1]	33	18,672

[1] To Edition 33.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Prosecutions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Solicitor-General how many cases put forward by the police to the Crown Prosecution Service in each of the last five years *(a)* resulted in a prosecution and *(b)* did not result in a prosecution. [69745]

The Solicitor-General: The number and proportion in these two categories was as follows:

	Cases prosecuted		*Cases not prosecuted*	
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
2001-02	1,021,431	78.1	285,759	21.9
2002-03	1,076,491	78.5	294,594	21.5
2003-04	1,107,604	80.7	264,386	19.3
2004-05	1,048,074	83	214,741	17
2005-06	999,980	85	176,132	15

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Correspondence

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will reply to the letter dated 10 February from the hon. Member for North Down in relation to the tail docking of dogs. [63515]

Mr. Bradshaw: I apologise for the delay. A reply was sent on 28 March 2006.

Forestry

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the comments on the programme for the endorsement of forest certification scheme in the Environmental Audit Committee's second report of Session 2005-06 on sustainable timber; and if she will make a statement. [65244]

Ian Pearson: The Government note that the Committee had some concerns with the Government's decision to accept the programme for the endorsement of forest certification scheme (PEFC) as giving assurance of legal and sustainable timber sources. The Government's response to the Committee focused on the Committee's recommendation that the central point of expertise on timber (CPET):

"should make clear to PEFC that it would be desirable for it clearly and simply to set out the minimum standards it expects all its national members to conform to if it wants continued approval of its scheme."

The Government are generally satisfied that PEFC, having made changes to its scheme, now has a set of requirements that, if implemented by the national schemes endorsed by PEFC, will adequately assure compliance with Government contract requirements for legal and sustainable timber. However, this assessment was made prior to the process of implementation by national schemes being complete, and therefore a public commitment was made to assess the adoption of these changes by the national schemes endorsed by PEFC within a reasonable timeframe.

The assessment of changes made is under way but not complete. It has raised concerns with the interpretation some national schemes have made of the PEFC requirement for achieving consensus in the development and revision of standards. In particular, it is not clear that the voting procedures adopted by some of the schemes reviewed would ensure that decisions could be made only in 'the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests'—the definition of consensus adopted by PEFC. In the light of further discussions with interested parties the Government have decided that these interim findings merit further scrutiny before resolving the probationary status of PEFC. This will be done as part of a review of the five forest certification schemes first assessed by CPET in 2004. In the meantime, the Government are continuing to accept the PEFC scheme as assuring compliance with Government contract requirements for legal and sustainable timber.

Fuel Poverty

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much has been spent on tackling fuel poverty in England and Wales during 2005-06; how much is proposed to be spent during 2006-07; and if he will make a statement. [69152]

Ian Pearson: In 2005-06 the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) was funded, and spent, over £190 million to tackle fuel poverty. In 2006-07 this figure will increase to over £300 million.

Most of this funding has been/will be spent on the warm front scheme, which has already assisted more than one million households since its launch in June 2000.

Fuel poverty is a devolved issue, and responsibility in Wales lies with the Welsh Assembly Government. The primary scheme to assist vulnerable households at risk of fuel poverty is the home energy efficiency scheme, which the Assembly Government funded to the order of £14.1 million in 2005-06 and will fund to the order of £19.6 million in 2006-07.

DEFENCE

Body Armour

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the same body armour is issued to armed forces personnel and visiting journalists in Iraq. [69833]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* Enhanced Combat Body Armour (ECBA) is standard issue for all personnel serving on operations in Iraq. All civilians visiting Iraq, such as journalists, who are hosted by the Ministry of Defence are afforded the same force protection measures as UK forces and are, therefore, issued with the same ECBA.

Counselling

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many counsellors are employed by each of HM armed forces; and for how many hours per week. [69291]

Mr. Watson: The Ministry of Defence does not employ counsellors within the armed forces. Advice and support to personnel is available from within the chain of command as well as from specialists such as chaplains, medical staff, uniformed and civilian welfare officers and voluntary agencies.

Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people in his Department have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* dismissed for (i) inappropriate use of the internet while at work and (ii) using work telephones to access premium rate numbers in each of the last five years. [67985]

Des Browne: Information is not held centrally on the number of civil servants in the MOD that have been disciplined and dismissed for inappropriate use of the internet while at work and using work telephones to access premium rate numbers in each of the last five years. Because action on investigating and dealing with

disciplinary offences has been delegated to line management in individual MOD business units, it would incur disproportionate cost to collate the requested data. Data for armed forces personnel are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Helicopters

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many helicopters UK forces have in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan. [70240]

Mr. Ingram: UK forces have sufficient helicopters in Iraq and Afghanistan for the task for which they have deployed, and this level is kept under constant review.

My right hon. Friend the then Secretary of State for Defence (Dr. John Reid) announced the UK force package for Afghanistan on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1529; however, we work in a multi-national environment, in both theatres, and therefore other helicopter assets are available to UK forces. To provide the total number of air assets in each theatre would likely prejudice the security of British forces.

HMS Sheffield

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has for a permanent commemorative memorial to *(a)* the crew of HMS Sheffield and *(b)* other Royal Navy personnel on the 25th anniversary of the sinking of HMS Sheffield; and if he will make a statement. [69663]

Mr. Watson: There are currently no plans for a permanent commemorative memorial for HMS Sheffield, or for the other ships or Royal Navy personnel, lost in the south Atlantic conflict. All those who fell during the conflict will be remembered as part of the official commemorations in 2007. Furthermore, there are plans to construct an armed forces memorial dedicated to members of the UK armed forces killed on duty or by terrorist action since the second world war.

Intelligence Courses

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the countries which sent students to attend *(a)* the joint school of photographic interpretation and *(b)* the international intelligence directors course in 2004-05. [63458]

Mr. Ingram: The information requested is being withheld on the grounds that to release it would prejudice relations between the United Kingdom and other states.

Operation Rockingham

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the present functions are of Operation Rockingham; how many staff are employed on it; and if he will make a statement. [69799]

Des Browne: The Operation Rockingham cell is working on residual issues relating to Iraqi WMD and analysing the lessons learned from the Iraq survey group deployment. It consists of three people (two part-time and one full-time).

RNAS Yeovilton

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his plans for RNAS Yeovilton. [70299]

Mr. Ingram: RNAS Yeovilton is the main operating base for the Royal Navy's Lynx and commando helicopter forces and, despite the departure of the Sea Harrier in March of this year, it is still the UK's largest (by aircraft number) and busiest military airfield.

In 2004 the RAF-led defence airfield review (DAR) identified irreducible spare capacity at RNAS Yeovilton which could be exploited. Following publication of the review's report in May 2004, a number of working groups were formed to take the detailed work forward. The issue of spare capacity at RNAS Yeovilton is being considered by the programme belvedere working group. programme belvedere is responsible for the joint helicopter command basing element of DAR and is currently examining options for the basing of all of the Department's current and future battlefield helicopters. No decisions have yet been made, but the effect of any changes on the local community will be taken into consideration as part of the analysis.

The Royal Navy has recently announced the relocation of 727 Naval Air Squadron from Plymouth Roborough airport to RNAS Yeovilton. As part of its task, the squadron provides air experience flying (AEF) opportunities for younger members of the public. A recent review of AEF concluded that the relocation to RNAS Yeovilton will offer a greater selection of AEF to a much wider audience. The relocation will also result in a small increase in employment opportunities in the local area.

Sea King Helicopters

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Sea King helicopters are serving with the Royal Navy; how many are fully operational; how many are non-operational; and what time period is required to bring those which are non-operational into front-line service. [67858]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* As at April 2006 the number of Sea King helicopters serving with the Royal Navy was 69, of which 50 were operational and 19 non-operational. Operational is defined as those Sea King helicopters that are in the forward fleet and non-operational as those in the depth fleet. The time period to bring individual Sea King helicopters through depth maintenance ranges from three to six months.

It is our policy not to have the whole fleet available to support the front line at all times. An ongoing programme of maintenance and repair is necessary to ensure that helicopters are kept in an appropriate state of repair to meet operational requirements.

Hospital Treatment

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements are in place for injured service personnel to receive family visits. [66542]

Des Browne *[holding answer 27 April 2006]*: Our priority is to provide the most appropriate medical care to injured personnel, and to give them the peace and quiet needed to allow a speedy recovery. We recognise that the emotional support provided by friends and family is of key importance to our injured soldiers, and visit arrangements for their relatives are managed by the welfare officer of the individual's unit.

The Royal Centre for Defence Medicine (RCDM), Birmingham, has allocated six rooms in one wing of the hospital for relatives of service personnel who are listed "Very Seriously Ill" (VSI) or "Seriously Ill" (SI) where relatives can stay whilst visiting a patient. These rooms are provided free. Depending on availability, RCDM also allow families and/or relatives of non-listed patients to stay in these rooms, but the priority is of course for the relatives of VSI/SI-listed patients.

One exception to this is that the University Hospital Birmingham Foundation Trust do not allow children under 16 to stay in this accommodation. This is in line with the practices of the trust concerning child protection issues, since the accommodation contains communal facilities which are deemed inappropriate for children as they are used by other adults staying in the accommodation. RCDM therefore can also provide a list of local bed-and-breakfast accommodation which has been inspected by Defence Medical Welfare Services. If there is a medical recommendation that relatives of a patient should stay with them, the MOD provides travel and subsistence costs for two relatives for up to seven days, although this can be extended if medical advice recommends it. If patients are not listed as VSI or SI, the individual's regiment can also pay for family travel. Such decisions are made at individual regiment level.

The Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre (DMRC) at Headley Court also has a facility where family members visiting patients can stay. Costs for this facility are met by DMRC.

Submarines (Pollution)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent assessment he has made of the levels of radioactive pollution on foreshores close to the locations of Z berths *(a)* in Portsmouth harbour and *(b)* elsewhere; and if he will make a statement. [64784]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL) Environmental Sciences Department monitors the level of radioactive pollution on foreshores close to the locations of Z berths as part of its wider marine environmental survey programme, the findings from which are published annually. Z Berths are monitored on a regular basis of between one and five years depending on their location. The Portsmouth Z berth is normally monitored every two years.

DSTL's November 2005 report, entitled "Marine Environmental Radioactivity Surveys at Nuclear Submarine Berths 2004", includes information on samples taken in Portsmouth harbour. The report concluded that there was no radiological hazard to the public during 2004 as a result of operational nuclear-powered submarines. Copies of the report will be made available in the Library of the House.

Unspent Budget

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of the budget for his Department remained unspent in the 2005-06 financial year. [70614]

Mr. Ingram: We shall publish figures as soon as they are available. Provisional figures will appear in the Public Expenditure Provisional Outturn which will be published around the middle of July and audited figures in our Annual Report and Accounts which is planned for publication before the summer recess.

Urban Warfare (Training)

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the amount of training army units have received in all-arms urban warfare in recent years. [65444]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 9 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 563W, to the right hon. and learned Member for Devizes (Mr. Ancram).

It is assessed that all infantry units receive sufficient urban warfare training in accordance with the collective training levels required of their formation commanders.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what percentage of the staff in her Department is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled, broken down by grade. [69128]

Mr. Lammy: The percentage of staff in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport who are *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled as at 31 December 2005, broken down by grade is as follows. (Data on disability are collected on a voluntary self-declaration basis.)

Grade	Male	Female	Percentage Disabled[1]
SCS	70	30	—
A/A Upper	59	41	—
B	51	49	—
C	46	54	—
D	37	63	8

[1] As the Department has less than five disabled members of staff within the grades SCS to C we are unable to give further information on grounds of confidentiality.

Millennium Projects

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 24 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1358-59W, on millennium projects, if she will collect information on the performance of each project; and what monitoring of the performance of each project is undertaken. [69888]

Mr. Caborn: Like all lottery distributing bodies, the Millennium Commission takes decisions independently on which projects to support with national lottery proceeds. Under Financial Directions from the Department, the Commission is required to undertake appropriate monitoring and evaluation of projects to make sure that, among other things, lottery funds are being used for the purposes intended, that they represent value for money and that they are delivering the benefits identified in the application to the Commission. Under the Directions, a report on monitoring and evaluation studies carried out by or for the Commission must be included in the Commission's annual report to Parliament.

In view of the Commission's independent status, the Department does not collect information on, or separately monitor the performance of, its projects.

Recruitment

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on recruitment, search and selection agencies in each of the last five years. [68346]

Mr. Caborn: The Department and its agency does not separately identify the cost of recruitment, search and selection agencies from other recruitment costs. The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Television Licences

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether those who do not have a television set are required to inform Television Licensing that they do not require a TV licence. [69812]

Mr. Woodward: A television licence is required to install or use a television receiver, as defined in regulations made by the Secretary of State, rather than a television set. Members of the public who do not require a television licence are under no obligation to inform TV Licensing of the fact.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what discussions she has had with the *(a)* Department of Trade and Industry and *(b)* Department for Work and Pensions on the decision to stop selling television licences through the Post Office; [70335]

(2) if she will make a statement on the BBC's decision to stop selling television licences through the Post Office; [70311]

(3) what discussions her Department has had with the BBC on the decision to stop selling television licences through the Post Office; [70412]

(4) if she will list the different ways that viewers are able to purchase television licences; [70415]

(5) how many and what proportion of television licences were bought through the Post Office in the last period for which figures are available; [70416]

(6) what the average annual cost to the Government of selling television licences through the Post Office has been over the last three years. [70414]

Mr. Woodward: The award of the contract for over the counter sales of television licences is a commercial matter for the BBC as television licensing authority. The Government have no power to intervene in such matters, nor would it be appropriate to comment on the corporation's decision. The Secretary of State has not therefore discussed the matter with Cabinet colleagues but DCMS officials have liaised with the DTI to keep them informed of developments. Officials were informed by the BBC of the proposal to put the contract out to tender and were notified by the corporation prior to the announcement of the award of the contract.

The BBC, as licensing authority, bears the costs of licence fee collection direct. The Government have not incurred any costs relating to the sale of television licences through the Post Office since 1991.

As regards the different ways in which the television licence can be paid and the number and proportion of licences currently brought through the Post Office, I have asked the BBC's head of revenue management to consider the questions raised by the hon. Member and to write to him direct. Copies of the reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Tourism

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she is taking to promote tourism in south-east London. [70183]

Mr. Woodward: DCMS supports the tourism industry as a whole. South-east London benefits from my Department's funding for VisitBritain, which for 2006-07 includes £35.5 million for marketing Britain as a tourism destination overseas, and £12.4 million for marketing England to the domestic tourism market.

Responsibility for tourism policy in London has been devolved to the Mayor and the Greater London Authority (GLA), which works with the London Development

Agency (LDA) and Visit London. My Department contributes £1.9 million to the GLA in support of this role and the LDA spent a total of around £24 million supporting tourism in 2005-06, including over £11 million on tourism marketing and promotion for London and its sub-regions. In south-east London, this includes working with South London Business and TourEast London to deliver market research and other business support.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much Government funding has been allocated to promote tourism to the south-west in 2006-07; and how much has been allocated to regional development agencies to promote tourism in the south-west in each of the last five years. [70246]

Mr. Woodward: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) supports the tourism industry as a whole. The south-west benefits from my Department's funding for VisitBritain, which for 2006-07 includes £35.5 million for marketing Britain as a tourism destination overseas, and £12.4 million for marketing England to the domestic tourism market.

The regional development agencies (RDAs) took on strategic responsibility for tourism in the regions in 2003. Since then DCMS has contributed £3.6 million each year to the single pot in support of this role, which is allocated to the RDAs according to the Department for Trade and Industry's single pot funding formula.

All RDAs, including the south-west regional development agency (SWRDA), recognise the importance of the visitor economy to their regions. SWRDA has allocated £2.2 million to direct support for the industry in 2006-07, including marketing, as well as a further £500,000 for tourism skills development and £500,000 towards a regional data management system and the development of EnglandNet.

Before 2003-04, DCMS grant in aid passed to the English Tourism Council and was then allocated to the regional tourist boards, including South West Tourism, which was allocated £663,000 in 2002-03, £814,000 in 2001-02 and £563,000 in 2000-01.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total expenditure by Visit Britain was in each of the last five years. [70247]

Mr. Woodward: VisitBritain is responsible for promoting Britain to the rest of the world and England to the British.

Expenditure is funded by grant in aid provided by DCMS and non government funding raised by VisitBritain in relation to its marketing and promotion activities.

Total expenditure

			£ million
	Grant funded expenditure	*Non grant funded expenditure*	*Total expenditure*
2001-02	49.7	15.7	65.4
2002-03	53.8	21.6	75.4
2003-04	48.4	19.5	67.9
2004-05	48.4	15.5	63.9
2005-06	48.9	21.5	70.4

Additional amounts of £14.2 million in 2001-02, and £19 million in 2002-03, were allocated from the reserve to help the tourism sector to recover from the impacts of the foot and mouth outbreak, and the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress is being made in providing alternative sources of income through humanitarian aid for poppy growers in Afghanistan. [69734]

Hilary Benn: DFID's focus in Afghanistan has changed from mainly humanitarian assistance in 2002 to an approach now looking to secure long-term development.

The UK is playing a major role in supporting the development of legal livelihood opportunities in Afghanistan. In 2005-06, DFID spent almost £50 million for this purpose. In 2006-07 the level of spending is expected to continue at similar levels.

DFID is a major supporter to the National Solidarity Programme, which has helped nearly 7,000 villages prioritise their own development needs, and to plan and implement community-led small scale infrastructure projects. The UK is providing £20 million to the Micro-Finance Investment Support Facility of Afghanistan (MISFA) to provide small loans to the rural poor, particularly women. By funding the National Rural Access Programme (NRAP) the UK is helping those currently dependent on illegal production and processing of drugs, to gain productive employment constructing and repairing essential infrastructure such as roads.

These projects are complemented by a £3 million fund to develop and promote alternative livelihood options for rural Afghans currently economically dependent on opium poppy. The fund is helping to identify local, national and international market opportunities for alternative crop varieties. Under our support for alternative agricultural livelihoods, 26,500 Afghan farmers have received important agricultural inputs.

Burma

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent representations he has received about providing assistance and support for *(a)* women's networks, *(b)* civil society groups, *(c)* democracy groups and *(d)* organisations working with refugees and internally displaced peoples in Burma. [68235]

Mr. Thomas: DFID regularly receives representations about providing assistance and support in Burma to each of these four groups and considers each seriously. For example, in planning a new fund to tackle HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis in Burma we are carrying out extensive and detailed discussions

with opposition groups, civil society groups and other non-governmental organisations. Representations have recently been made at meetings of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Burma on 28 February, 19 and 26 April, and the Burma Forum in Brussels on 29 March on behalf of all of these groups, with the greatest emphasis on organisations working with refugees and internally displaced peoples.

In Rangoon, the regular representations we receive from a wide range of groups are most frequently concerned with providing support to civil society in Burma. I have also recently received representations from a number of members of the House of Commons arguing for increased support to organisations working with refugees and internally displaced people living near the Thai-Burma border. In response to the increased vulnerability of those internally displaced people, DFID is, with the UN and local community leaders, currently assessing the possibility of providing assistance to these internally displaced people through local community mechanisms. Subsequently, DFID will be carrying out a fundamental review of the level and means of our support to internally displaced people and refugees in Burma.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent representations he has received about providing aid and support for *(a)* Burmese refugees living in Thailand, *(b)* internally displaced people living on the Thai-Burma border and *(c)* vulnerable groups living in Burma. [68241]

Mr. Thomas: DFID regularly receives representations about providing assistance and support in Burma to each of these groups and considers each seriously. For example, DFID's support to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (£500,000 in each of the past two years) is intended to provide vital support to those in prison or in conflict-affected areas and our support to the Thai-Burma Border Consortium (£1,838,705 over three years) is intended to assist Burmese refugees living in Thailand. Representations have recently been made at meetings of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Burma on 28 February, 19 and 26 April, and the Burma Forum in Brussels on 29 March on behalf of all of these groups, with the greatest emphasis on internally displaced people living on the Thai-Burma border.

In Rangoon, the regular representations we receive from a wide range of groups are most frequently concerned with vulnerable groups living in Burma. I have also received recently representations from a number of honourable members arguing for increased support to organisations working with refugees and internally displaced people living near the Thai-Burma border.

In response to the increased vulnerability of those internally displaced people, DFID is, with the UN and local community leaders, currently assessing the possibility of providing assistance to these internally displaced people through local community mechanisms. Subsequently, DFID will be carrying out a fundamental review of the level and means of our support to internally displaced people and refugees in Burma.

Ethiopia

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will take steps to ensure that development funding for basic services in Ethiopia is channelled through non-governmental organisations. [70036]

Hilary Benn: We provide aid through non-governmental organisations in Ethiopia and are identifying ways to increase this. But NGOs in Ethiopia do not have the capacity to absorb the amounts of aid required to make significant progress on health and education and the other Millennium Development Goals; only the Government have sufficient reach to provide essential basic services for the entire country. For this reason we are also working with the Government of Ethiopia and other donors to develop a Protection of Basic Services Grant to deliver basic services such as education, health and water to the poor, with appropriate monitoring safeguards.

Malaria

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent representations he has received on the use of DDT to tackle malaria; and what recent discussions he has had with international bodies on this matter. [69988]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has received no recent representations and has not had any recent discussions with international bodies on the use of DDT to tackle malaria. However DFID does look to the World Health Organisation (WHO) to provide updated technical information on the most appropriate strategies to control malaria.

Current WHO guidance is that DDT may be used for mosquito control provided that it is used only for indoor residual spraying (IRS); it is effective; the material is manufactured according to WHO specifications, and the necessary safety precautions are taken for its use and disposal.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact of the use of DDT on rates of malaria in South Africa. [69989]

Hilary Benn: Data for the number of cases of Malaria is available from the South African Department of Health's website (http://www.doh.gov.za/). The following are the official annual figures for the number of malaria cases, the number of deaths and the case fatality rate in South Africa.

	Total cases	*Total deaths*	*Case fatality rate*
1999	51,444	406	0.8
2000	64,622	458	0.7
2001	26,506	119	0.4
2002	15,649	96	0.6
2003	13,459	142	1
2004	13,399	89	0.6
2005	5,351	40	0.7

Approximately 13 per cent. of the South African population are at risk from endemic malaria, another 6 per cent. face the risk of epidemic malaria. The provinces of Mpumulanga, Kwa Zulu-Natal and Limpopo suffer the greatest burden of the disease and it is in these provinces where DDT is used, after its reintroduction in 2001.

The decline in cases in the table starting in 2001 is noticeable, though there are no reports to substantiate the extent to which this effect was due to the re-introduction of DDT. Both the South African Department of Health and the World Health Organisation (WHO) propose that it is a cost-effective prevention strategy for the provinces which provides a prevention service for a population of some 4.2 million.

DDT use was originally stopped in South Africa because of concerns about its environmental impact. It was reintroduced after careful assessment to demonstrate its effective and safe use. The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants states that countries should only use DDT for malaria control under guidance from WHO, which South Africa is doing.

DFID supports the WHO managed Southern Africa Malaria Control Programme, with a grant of £18 million over six years. The project will finish in 2007. WHO has been successful in working with Governments in the region to revise and update their policies concerning all aspects of malaria control, including the safe and effective use of DDT for indoor residual spraying. A significant amount of material can be accessed at http://www.malaria.org.zw/

WHO is also organising a conference in Brazzaville in June of this year to review experiences in the use of DDT in Africa. DFID has asked to be kept up to date with the lessons and recommendations from this meeting.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the recent report in *The Lancet* on the World Bank and malaria treatment. [69990]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has carefully reviewed the critical report published in *The Lancet*, as well as the World Bank's response in the same issue. As a member of the donor group for the Bank's malaria booster programme DFID will continue to hold the Bank accountable to its commitment to increase its financing to malaria control, and improve the effectiveness of this work.

In its Global Strategy and Booster Programme on malaria the World Bank recognises that from 2000 to 2005 its investments in malaria control were not sufficient for success on a large scale. DFID is encouraged that new agreements totalling US $62 million made under the Booster programme to DR Congo, Eritrea, Niger and Zambia do represent increased commitment and demonstrate demand from countries for Bank lending for malaria control.

DFID supports the World Bank's position that countries should be able to define their own drug policies based on local patterns of resistance, and with the support of the World Health Organisation (WHO), who provide updated technical information on the most appropriate strategies to control malaria. In large countries there may be cause for different policies in different parts of the country.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with the World Bank on the use of chloroquine to treat malaria. [69991]

Mr. Thomas: As a member of the donor group for the World Bank's booster programme on malaria, DFID is in close contact with World Bank officials on progress in this programme, and issues such as the procurement of drugs that arise with the programme. DFID supports the World Bank's position that countries should be able to define their own drug policies based on local patterns of drug resistance, and with support and technical guidance from specialist agencies such as the World Health Organisation (WHO). In large countries there may be cause for different policies in different parts of the country.

DFID also looks to specialist agencies such as the World Health Organisation to provide international guidance on the choice of antimalarial drugs for malaria treatment programmes. WHO advises that chloroquine is still effective for certain strains of malaria, but when resistance develops artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT) should be used, which is more effective and can delay the emergence of resistance.

Malnutrition (Millennium Goals)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact of malnutrition on the ability to meet the other Millennium Development Goals. [69963]

Mr. Thomas: As highlighted in the recent United Nations (UN) report, "Progress for Children: A Report Card on Nutrition", several key Millennium Development targets may be missed due to nutritional problems of children in developing countries. DFID shares the concerns of the report and is convinced of the critical importance of hunger and malnutrition to achieving, not only the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) for hunger (Goal 1), but also to achieving other MDGs.

Children who are malnourished in their early years never reach their full physical or mental potential, trapping them in poverty. They are less likely to attend school and, when they do, they perform poorly (Goal 2, Education). Women are often disproportionately affected by food shortages as in the family they often eat last and least. Educating girls and ensuring good nutrition empowers women and girls (Goal 3, Gender Equality). Child mortality (Goal 4) is dramatically affected by hunger, and malnutrition is implicated in two thirds of child deaths. A malnourished mother will give birth to a low weight child and is more likely to suffer complications during pregnancy and birth (Goal 5, Maternal Health). Finally, those who are malnourished are more susceptible to disease and are less likely to attend school and be able to afford medicine (Goal 6, Combating Disease).

DFID is working closely with the UN, other development partners and developing country governments to address the affects of malnutrition on the MDGs. DFID continues to respond to humanitarian needs and has committed £40 million to the immediate relief effort in the Horn of

Africa and £67 million to the southern Africa crisis. DFID is also putting in place social protection mechanisms or welfare transfers; cash, food or other forms of in-kind transfers. They provide predictable and long-term assistance for the chronically hungry to help people before a crisis develops. This includes a three-year commitment of £70 million to the Productive Safety Nets Programme which got under way in Ethiopia last year and is helping over 7.2 million people fight hunger and malnutrition.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he expects the Millennium Development Goal for reducing rates of child malnutrition to be met. [69964]

Hilary Benn: There is no Millennium Development Goal (MDG) which specifically looks at child malnutrition. However, MDG 1 seeks to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger and MDG 4 seeks to reduce child mortality. An indicator associated with MDG 1 is to reduce the proportion of underweight children by half and under MDG 4 there is an indicator to reduce the mortality of under five-year-olds by two thirds.

DFID does not make assessments of when individual goals are likely to be reached. However, we draw on data from the United Nations (UN). For both the indicators mentioned, the UN's latest assessment is that across the developing world as a whole, progress is insufficient to meet the targets by 2015—and in fact both are described as 'lagging far behind'.

DFID measures its progress against a set of public service agreement (PSA) targets, which tie in to the MDGs. In our 2005-08 PSA, DFID has adopted targets for selected countries in Africa and Asia. We have targets to reduce under-five mortality rates for girls and boys by 24 per 1,000 live births in Asia and by eight per 1,000 live births in Africa.

Progress against the PSA targets is assessed twice-yearly in DFID's autumn performance reports and departmental reports. The most recent analysis of progress against the PSA targets was published in DFID's departmental report 2006. The target for Asia was judged off track as the number of live births per 1,000 has reduced only by four. It is too early too tell whether the target for Africa will be reached by 2008, though a reduction of four per 1,000 live births has been achieved to date. The departmental report also gives details of how DFID is seeking to improve off track targets.

The departmental report 2006 was laid before Parliament on 9 May 2006. It is available both in hard copy in the Library of the House of Commons and electronically on DFID's website (http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/departmental-report/default.asp).

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the recent UNICEF report on malnutrition in children; and what steps are being taken by his Department to improve malnutrition rates in developing countries. [69965]

Mr. Thomas: More than one quarter of all children under the age of five in developing countries are underweight. Poor nutrition contributes to half of the 11 million child deaths each year. Improving nutrition is essential in tackling poverty and is a critical factor in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). At international level the UK Government is one of the biggest donors to UNICEF. DFID has worked closely with UNICEF in the development of its health and nutrition strategy.

UNICEF's "Progress for Children: A Report Card on Nutrition", states that achieving improved nutrition requires action across sectors. DFID's approach to nutrition at country level has always been that it cannot be dealt with in isolation. DFID's support for better nutrition therefore encompasses improved food security, support for agricultural production, fisheries and market access, better water and sanitation, education and strengthening health services for women and children.

Particular strategies are implemented in areas of high HIV prevalence, following natural disasters and during conflict. To be successful, programmes to improve nutritional status must be integrated into wider country led poverty reduction strategies.

State Failures

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken by his Department to tackle the indicators of state fragility and failure in Africa identified in the Failed States Index 2006. [69967]

Hilary Benn: There is no international agreement on what constitutes state fragility. A common way of estimating fragility is derived from the World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessments (CPIA). CPIA scores divide low-income countries into five categories of performance plus an unranked group. The lowest two categories plus the unranked group are used by DFID and other donors as a list of fragile countries. Our understanding of fragility set out in our January 2005 policy paper 'Why we need to work more effectively in fragile states' is therefore similar to that of the "Failed State Index" but not the same.

Our policy on fragile states sets out how we can most effectively tackle the challenges and the underlying causes of weakness. Our approach includes support to early warning systems, analysis to understand the underlying political drivers of fragility and the funding of interventions that are tailored to the specific needs of those states where we work. But aid alone is not enough, and we work with others to help ensure that the international system as a whole works together to reduce fragility and address its causes.

In Africa we are working in the Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe, Somalia and Sierra Leone—all states identified by the "Failed States Index". In each of these we have tailored our support to best tackle the fragility and support poverty reduction and growth.

A copy of the 2005 policy paper is available in the Library of the House.

Water Strategies

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which countries the UK is helping to develop their water strategies. [69525]

Hilary Benn: DFID is committed to helping achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets of halving the proportion of people without access to safe water and basic sanitation by 2015. Our programmes are focussed on sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia, where achieving the target will be most difficult.

DFID's Water and Sanitation strategy was set out in the 2004 Water Action Plan. This included commitment to doubling spending on water in Africa to £95 million by 2008.

We are currently actively involved in seven African countries (Ethiopia, DRC, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zambia), and through our funding of other agencies' programmes, we reach many other countries. In Asia, we have significant bilateral programmes on water and sanitation in China, India and Bangladesh. Our large humanitarian programmes in Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan, also include assistance on provision of water and sanitation. We also provide core funding to the Global Water Partnership which assists countries in developing Integrated Water Resource Management Plans.

DFID closely monitors progress in water and sanitation and publishes regular updates on the DFID website. The latest update will published this month.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Post Office Card Account

Nick Herbert: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the progress of the pilot schemes for the migration of Post Office Card Account holders to banking facilities. [68272]

Mr. Plaskitt: We ran a number of small-scale pilots between 13 February and 10 March 2006. Now that they have concluded we are evaluating the results. We will share the results with the Post Office, and I will place a summary report of the findings in the Library.

Pathways to Work

Liz Blackman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress is being made in engaging the private and voluntary sector in the Pathways to Work service. [68273]

Mrs. McGuire: Private and voluntary sector providers already play a key role in delivering a number of important programmes within our successful Pathways to Work programme. Their innovative approach has been a significant factor in helping over 21,000 people into work.

We want to draw further on the expertise and skills of a wide variety of organisations to help us to support people on incapacity benefits in getting back to work.

That is why we are currently consulting with a range of providers and stakeholders about our Pathways proposals and will announce our plans for future roll-out shortly.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress is being made in engaging the private and voluntary sector in the Pathways to Work service. [67335]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* Private and voluntary sector providers currently play a key role in delivering a number of important programmes within our Pathways to Work pilots—notably New Deal for Disabled People and many of the other programmes in the 'Choices' package.

Discussions are continuing on how we can further draw on the expertise and skills of a wide variety of organisations that can help us to get people off incapacity benefits and back into work. We are consulting with a range of providers and other stakeholders about our proposals and intend to announce our plans for future roll-out shortly.

Benefits

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was spent on *(a)* jobseeker's allowance, *(b)* income support and *(c)* incapacity benefit claims later determined to be fraudulent in London in each year since 1997, broken down by London borough; and if he will make a statement. [57206]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 9 March 2006]:* The information is not available.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on progress in reducing benefit fraud. [65080]

Mr. Plaskitt: In 2004-05 fraud across the benefit system was estimated to be less that 1 per cent. of total benefit expenditure at around £900 million; which is less than £1 billion for the first time since systematic measurement of fraud began.

We have firm targets to reduce fraud and error in the benefits which are most vulnerable to fraud. The target for reducing fraud and error in income support and jobseeker's allowance for working age people was 33 per cent. by March 2004, and 50 per cent. by March 2006. National Statistics published in December 2005 show that by March 2005, we had reduced fraud and error in income support and jobseeker's allowance by 44 per cent. Looking at fraud alone, this has reduced by more than two thirds compared to the 1998 baseline figure of 10.4 per cent.

We have set a challenging target to reduce levels of housing benefit fraud and error for working age claimants by 25 per cent. by 2006, and to maintain the 25 per cent. reduction by March 2008 against the 2002-03 baseline year. National Statistics published in January 2006 shows that by March 2005, housing benefit fraud has fallen by around 30 per cent. over a two-year period. However, over the same period there has been a 40 per cent. increase in customer error. The net effect of this is that fraud and error for working age claimants is now reported to be 2 per cent. above the baseline.

We are also taking steps to reduce customer error. We have an on-going programme of addressing complexity in benefits to make benefit rules easier and simpler for our customers to understand. Our processes and customer handling methods aim to make the claim making process straightforward thus lessening the opportunities for customers to make mistakes or leave out important information.

This shows we are getting results in preventing, detecting and deterring fraud. We have achieved this by a variety of methods. In 2004-05, through improved data matching, nearly 300,000 data anomalies were identified. The Targeting Fraud campaign has helped to increase public awareness of the problem of fraud. We now have a more appropriate sanctions regime. In 2004-05, in partnership with local authorities, we imposed nearly 43,000 prosecutions and sanctions—more than ever before and a fourfold increase since 1998. We have tightened our procedures to root out identity fraud. People are now required to verify their identity before they are allocated a national insurance number or have access to the benefits system. We have maintained the National Benefit Fraud Hotline, and for every £1 spent on its running costs, we identify overpayments of over £9 in defrauded benefit.

Despite these good results, we are not complacent and will maintain this hard work. Our efforts in the future will focus on using new technology available to us to stop fraud earlier before it enters the benefit system; increasing our ability to data match to include data from the private sector; exploring the use of new technologies, such as voice risk analysis; the proposed identity card, which will be a useful tool to combat identity and other frauds by verifying identity more effectively; continuing to warn fraudsters and potential fraudsters through the Targeting Benefit Fraud campaign and maintaining the National Benefit Fraud Hotline.

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many single parents in each ward in Doncaster North received income support on average in *(a)* 1984, *(b)* 1994, *(c)* 2004 and *(d)* the most recent year for which figures are available; and what proportion of all single parents this represented in each case. [68296]

Mr. Plaskitt: Income support data is not available at ward level prior to August 1999. The available information for lone parents in receipt of income support is in the table.

Lone parents on income support (IS), by ward in Doncaster, North parliamentary constituency

	November 2004		*November2005*	
Ward name	*Lone parents on IS*	*Proportion of lone parents (%)*	*Lone parents on IS*	*Proportion of lone parents (%)*
Adwick	330	59.8	325	58.9
Askern	135	44.6	145	47.9
Bentley, Central	295	67.7	300	68.8
Bentley North Road	145	47.1	135	43.8
Stainforth	245	58.9	215	51.7
Thorne	310	55.7	295	53.0

Notes:
1. Claimant numbers have been rounded to a multiple of five, percentages to one decimal place.
2. IS lone parents includes people claiming income support who are single with dependents and not in receipt of a pensioner or disability premium.
3. Proportions have been calculated using the total number of lone parents from the 2001 census.
4. Doncaster, North constituency contains the six wards specified, which are based on 2003 ward boundaries.

Source:
DWP Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 719W, what year his Department published "Paying for Rented Housing: Non-Dependant Deductions from Housing Benefit"; and if he will commission an exercise to update this research. [67215]

Mr. Plaskitt: The research "Paying for Rented Housing: Non-Dependant Deductions from Housing Benefit" was published as (then) Department of Social Security Research Report no. 43 in 1996. There are currently no plans to commission an update to this research.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 234W, on housing benefit sanctions, when he expects to make a decision on who he will be consulting informally on his plans to use sanctions to ensure that those who are evicted for antisocial behaviour take up the help offered to them; and if he will make a statement. [67217]

Mr. Plaskitt: As set out in my response of 10 March, we are currently assessing the use of sanctions to ensure that those households who are evicted for antisocial behaviour take up help offered to them more fully, before deciding who to consult and whether to legislate.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many prosecutions there were for refusals to pay back housing benefit overpayments in each year since 2000-01, broken down by local authority. [67260]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many housing benefit compensation payments were ordered in each year since 2000-01, broken down by local authority. [67261]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available as it is not centrally collated.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the total cost was of housing benefit overpayments recovered by *(a)* payments made under compensation orders, *(b)* payments made as a result of civil proceedings and *(c)* payments made with legal process in each year since 2000-01, broken down by local authority; [67262]

(2) what the total cost was of housing benefit overpayments written off as irrecoverable in each local authority in each year since 2000-01, broken down by *(a)* benefit claimant and *(b)* landlord. [67263]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available in the format requested.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* non-UK and *(b)* UK citizens received unemployment benefits in each London borough in each of the last five years. [70115]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available; no record is kept of claimants' nationalities.

Child Support

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) whether the Child Support Agency deposited funds owed to Mrs. Joanna Stephenson, ref. PCU/154933, into an escrow account pending completion of the inquiry to determine why she has not received the moneys paid by her former husband; [70038]

(2) when Child Support Agency (CSA) payments to Mrs. Joanna Stephenson, ref. PCU/154933, will resume; when she will receive funds collected by the CSA since November 2002; and if he will make a statement; [70039]

(3) why the Child Support Agency (CSA) case of Mrs. Joanna Stephenson, ref. PCU/154933, ceased in November 2002; and if the CSA will pay compensation for errors in dealing with the case. [70040]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is the matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive. As the Chief Executive is currently unavailable, I am responding on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions three Parliamentary Questions regarding one of your constituents, case number 3210019483335. As all three questions relate to the same constituent, I will provide a joint response.

As details about individual cases are confidential I have written to you separately about this case.

Income Support

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many single parents in Easington constituency were in receipt of income support in each year between 2001 and 2005; and if he will make a statement. [69423]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the table.

Lone parents in receipt of income support in the Easington parliamentary constituency

	Number of lone parents
November 2001	1,440
November 2002	1,330
November 2003	1,260
November 2004	1,190
November 2005	1,190

Notes:
1. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
2. Single parents are defined as single claimants with dependants aged under 60 and not receiving IB/SDA.

Source:
DWP Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS).

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many single parents in Coventry South were in receipt of income support in each year between 2001 and 2005; and if he will make a statement. [69844]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the following table.

Lone parents in receipt of income support in the Coventry South parliamentary constituency: each November 2001 to 2005

	Number
2001	1,550
2002	1,540
2003	1,550
2004	1,540
2005	1,520

Notes:
1. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
2. Figures are based on 100 per cent. data.
3. Single parents are defined as single claimants with dependants aged under 60 and not receiving IB or SDA.
4. Parliamentary constituency is allocated by matching postcodes against the relevant ONS postcode directory.

Source:
Information Directorate Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS)

Jobseeker's Allowance

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many 16 and 17-year-olds are in receipt of jobseeker's allowance in each London borough. [70059]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the following table.

Jobseeker's allowance claimants aged 16 and 17 years by London borough: March 2006

	Number
City of London	?
Barking and Dagenham	70
Barnet	25
Bexley	45
Brent	35
Bromley	40
Camden	45
Croydon	80
Ealing	10

Jobseeker's allowance claimants aged 16 and 17 years by London borough: March 2006

	Number
Enfield	35
Greenwich	95
Hackney	70
Hammersmith and Fulham	35
Haringey	45
Harrow	10
Havering	35
Hillingdon	30
Hounslow	30
Islington	45
Kensington and Chelsea	10
Kingston-upon-Thames	10
Lambeth	65
Lewisham	90
Merton	15
Newham	50
Redbridge	20
Richmond-upon-Thames	10
Southwark	80
Sutton	30
Tower Hamlets	40
Waltham Forest	65
Wandsworth	15
Westminster, City of	15

Notes:
1. Figures have been rounded to the nearest five.
2. Jobseeker's allowance figures are not seasonally adjusted.

Source:
Count of unemployment-related benefits, Jobcentre Plus computer systems (excluding clerically held cases).

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many individuals in each London borough received jobseeker's allowance in each of the last five years. [70060]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the following table.

Jobseeker's allowance claimants by London borough: at March each year, 2001 to 2006.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
City of London	75	94	95	104	101	87
Barking and Dagenham	3,009	3,002	3,329	3,612	3,771	3,965
Barnet	4,514	5,137	5,852	5,394	5,205	5,398
Bexley	2,600	2,656	2,959	2,817	2,907	3,193
Brent	6,565	8,098	8,255	8,201	7,965	7,941
Bromley	3,202	3,676	3,967	3,963	3,955	3,891
Camden	5,561	5,991	6,019	5,771	5,571	5,614
Croydon	6,057	6,456	6,783	5,969	6,312	6,381
Ealing	5,198	6,123	6,303	6,160	5,898	6,184
Enfield	5,736	5,567	5,837	6,053	6,077	6,732
Greenwich	5,950	6,119	6,075	6,096	5,965	6,199
Hackney	8,240	7,897	8,557	8,112	7,660	7,984
Hammersmith and Fulham	4,285	4,521	4,856	4,382	3,964	3,918
Haringey	8,169	7,693	7,875	7,802	7,695	8,302
Harrow	2,327	2,783	2,984	3,250	3,127	3,186
Havering	2,496	2,371	2,640	2,467	2,495	2,744
Hillingdon	2,423	3,035	3,523	3,768	3,842	3,793
Hounslow	2,129	2,998	3,356	3,385	3,288	3,679
Islington	6,534	6,495	6,533	6,465	5,846	6,310
Kensington and Chelsea	2,922	3,005	3,189	2,880	2,517	2,684
Kingston-upon-Thames	1,235	1,510	1,787	1,688	1,670	1,476
Lambeth	10,312	11,042	10,825	10,172	10,019	9,543
Lewisham	8,068	8,333	8,471	7,923	7,539	7,855
Merton	2,344	2,723	3,138	2,952	2,966	3,065
Newham	7,659	7,765	7,938	7,430	7,293	8,391
Redbridge	3,776	4,034	4,260	4,055	4,143	4,627
Richmond-upon-Thames	1,437	1,767	2,060	1,897	1,708	1,659
Southwark	9,011	9,528	9,744	9,457	9,085	8,746
Sutton	1,564	1,810	2,021	2,022	2,153	2,331
Tower Hamlets	7,893	7,973	8,350	8,328	7,746	8,427
Waltham Forest	5,541	5,955	6,079	6,112	6,469	6,574
Wandsworth	5,101	5,790	5,785	5,433	5,305	5,260
Westminster, City of	4,512	4,669	4,555	4,236	3,972	4,117

Notes:
1. Jobseeker's allowance caseload figures are unrounded.
2. Jobseeker's allowance figures are not seasonally adjusted.

Source:
Count of unemployment-related benefits, Jobcentre Plus computer systems (including clerically held cases).

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. David: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to reply to question 53502, on Remploy, tabled by the hon. Member for Caerphilly for answer on 27 February 2006. [63191]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave on 26 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1143-44W.

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to reply to question *(a)* 47075 and *(b)* 47074, on his Department's buildings in Lytham St. Annes, tabled by the hon. Member for Fylde on 26 January 2006. [63474]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave on 26 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1139-40W.

Single Room Rent Restrictions

Natascha Engel: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many young people were in receipt of single room rent restricted housing benefit on 1 April in each year since its introduction. [68451]

Mr. Plaskitt: Information is not available in the format requested. Data is produced quarterly in February, May, August and November each year; the available information as at May each year is in the table.

Housing benefit recipients assessed under the single room rent scheme: Great Britain

As at May:	
1997	31,600
1998	33,240
1999	24,790
2000	17,920
2001	14,420
2002	11,020
2003	10,650
2004	11,010
2005	11,990

Notes:
1. Figures have been rounded to the nearest ten.
2. Figures for any non-responding authorities have been estimated.
3. Housing benefit figures exclude any extended payment cases.

Source:
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System Quarterly 100 per cent. caseload stock-count taken in May 1997 to May 2005.

Natascha Engel: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many single room rent restriction determinations there were in each year since October 1996. [68452]

Mr. Plaskitt: The available information for single room rent determinations in England is in the table.

	Number of referrals with Rent Officer single room rent restriction determination	*Number of referrals with Rent Officer single room rent restriction determination, where single room rent restriction is binding restriction*
1997-98	101,300	85,000
1998-99	84,900	69,100
1999-2000	65,000	53,200
2000-01	52,100	43,800
2001-02	44,500	37,500
2002-03	—	—
2003-04	48,100	37,700
2004-05	44,800	35,000

Notes:
1. A reliable estimate of the number of Rent Officer determinations in 2002-03 is not available due to data limitations.
2. The table presents both the number of referrals assessed under the single room rent restriction and the number of referrals where this restriction is binding. Some referrals assessed under the single room rent restriction will be bound by other Rent Officer restrictions and some will not have their rent restricted.
3. The numbers of referrals are rounded to the nearest hundred.

Source:
Rent Officer data, England from 1997-98 to 2004-05.

Natascha Engel: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will amend the housing benefit regulations in line with the recommendation in the departmental research report number 243 that all care leavers and disabled people should be exempted from the single room rent restriction. [68454]

Mr. Plaskitt: Our Green Paper "A New Deal for Welfare: Empowering People to Work" sets out our proposals for extending the local housing allowance (LHA) across the private rented sector. The LHA scheme replaces the single room rent with a new shared room rate, which is based on a broader definition of shared properties. We will continue to look at the operation of the shared room rate as we move forward with housing benefit reform, but the underlying principles of the rate, that of encouraging work, remain.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

EU Arms Embargo

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations she has made to the European Union on the lifting of the EU arms embargo on China; and if she will make a statement. [70797]

Mr. McCartney: There have been no recent representations made to the European Council on lifting the EU arms embargo on China. The European Council decided in December 2003 to review the EU Arms Embargo on China. This review is ongoing and it was last discussed by EU Foreign Ministers at the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 13 December 2005. There is no consensus at present in the EU for lifting the embargo. The Government continue to fully implement the embargo.

EU Reform

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether it is her Department's policy to endorse the EU Commission's call for a declaration of commitment to future institutional reform; and if she will make a statement. [71140]

Mr. Hoon: The UK welcomes the communication from the Commission "A Citizens Agenda Delivering Results for Europe". The communication stresses that the EU should now be focusing on practical policies which deliver practical results to citizens, and on the economic reforms needed to make the EU competitive in today's global economy.

The Commission recognises that there is as yet no consensus on the constitutional treaty and underlines the need to concentrate on delivery. The Government are open to the idea of a political declaration setting out Europe's values and ambitions and believe that the real challenge ahead for the next year is delivering on the policy agenda.

Kifle Tigneh Abate

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the trial of Kifle Tigneh Abate has begun in Addis Ababa; what representations she made to the Ethiopian Government prior to the trial; and what reports her Department has received from Michael Ellman, the international observer of the trial. [70037]

Mr. McCartney: The trial of Kifle Tigneh Abate started on 10 May in parallel with the trial of other Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) members. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, my noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development and our ambassador in Addis Ababa have made representations to the Ethiopian Government about the trial of the CUD party leadership including Kifle Tigneh Abate. They asked that the courts deal with the charges fairly, quickly and transparently in accordance with international standards.

We have not yet received a report from Michael Ellman, who is acting on behalf of the European Union.

Russia

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what work her Department is undertaking with civil society groups in Russia to tackle racism and racial violence. [69993]

Mr. Hoon: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office continues to actively co-operate with civil society groups in Russia to promote human rights. Between 2003 and 2006 we have supported the following racial tolerance projects:

National Associations and Local Media: Co-operation or Confrontation?

Project duration: April 2006 to May 2007

Project aim: Develop contacts between youth leaders of national non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the Urals region and local media to promote balanced media coverage of ethnic issues.

Implementing partner: International Information Centre

Project cost: £5,190

Fund: Devolved Programme Budget.

Promotion of Racial Tolerance in St. Petersburg

Project duration: 1 September 2006 to 30 November 2006

Project aim: Achieve higher public recognition of the importance of tolerance towards ethnic and cultural minorities and broader acceptance of the value of diversity, particularly by the younger generation, drawing from the positive experience of the UK in promoting diversity and building relationships between different ethnic communities and the authorities.

Implementing partners: Fund for the Development of Peter & Paul Fortress, Association of Photo Correspondents of the Union of Journalists of St. Petersburg, St. Petersburg Institute of Law and the Youth Information Centre.

Project costs: £25,000

Fund: Public Diplomacy Challenge Fund.

From Heart to Heart

Project duration: April 2005 to September 2006

Project aim: Develop ethnic tolerance in Ekaterinburg through increasing awareness of national cultures and traditions.

Implementing partner: Pervouralsk XXI Century

Project cost: £2,900

Fund: Devolved Programme Budget.

Defending Roma Rights

Project duration: July 2005 to June 2006

Project aim: To challenge the use of hate speech in the media, particularly with regard to the Roma community.

Implementing partner: European Roma Rights Centre

Project cost: £26,300

Fund: Global Opportunities Fund.

Creating of 'The International Information Portal'

Project duration: April 2005 to February 2006

Project aim: Create an internet resource that will collect information about history, culture, rights and freedoms of ethnic groups in the Ural region. Promote the results of hate speech monitoring 'the language of hostility' in mass media.

Implementing partner: International Information Center

Project cost: £1,130

Fund: Devolved Programme Budget.

Training in Multi-cultural Education of Young People

Project duration: December 2005 to February 2006

Project aim: Train professionals working with children and teenagers in promoting ethnic, racial and cultural diversity and tolerance.

Implementing partner: St. Petersburg Youth Information Centre

Project costs: £3,650

Fund: Devolved Directorate Programme Budget.

Ethnic Minorities and Access to Justice

Project duration: September 2003 to December 2005

Project aim: Improve community policing through a joint programme between ethnic minority representatives and local police in Moscow, Samara, Krasodar and Ekaterinburg. Drawing on the experience of UK police forces.

Implementing partner: European Dialogue

Project cost: £103,285

Fund: Global Opportunities Fund.

"School of Tolerance" (a youth camp for children of different ethnic origin in the Pskov region, North-West Russia)

Project duration: 4 to 24 July 2005

Project aim: Bring together children of different ethnic origin and social positions, including refugees, to give them first-hand experience of living in a diverse multi-cultural society. Raise their awareness of issues such as human rights and tolerance and give them communication and leadership skills.

Implementing partner: 'Pskovskaya Glubinka' NGO

Project costs: £2,996.65

Fund: Devolved Programme Budget.

Training of Trainers in Human Rights and Tolerance Issues (workshop for teachers of Pskov oblast, North-West Russia)

Project duration: March 2005

Project aim: Promote human rights and the values of tolerance among teachers and give them practical skills to disseminate this information among their students.

Implementing partner: 'Pskovskaya Glubinka' with support from Amnesty International

Project costs: £3,709.38

Fund: Devolved Programme Budget.

Trade Deals

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1676W, on trade deals, how many bilateral trade negotiations the European Commission has *(a)* conducted and *(b)* signed on behalf of the UK in each of the last eight years. [70201]

Mr. Hoon: The European Commission has competence for EU trade policy and conducts all trade negotiations on behalf of, and on the basis of a mandate from, EU member states.

Within the last eight years, and in addition to the trade agreements relating to enlargement of the EU, the following EU trade agreements have entered into force: Mexico, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Croatia, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Chile, South Africa and the Cotonou Agreement (with 77 Africa, Caribbean and Pacific countries).

Negotiations are ongoing with Mercosur, the Gulf Co-operation Council, Turkey and Albania, and on Economic Partnership Agreements (which will replace the Cotonou Agreement). Signature of an Association Agreement with Syria is pending.

A comprehensive list of EU trade agreements currently under negotiation or which have already been concluded can be found on the Europa website:

http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2005/july/tradoc_111588.pdf

NORTHERN IRELAND

Advertising Review

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, pursuant to the Answer of 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 699W, on recruitment advertising, when he expects the Government advertising review to be published. [71125]

Mr. Hanson: The final report on the review of Government advertising in Northern Ireland was published on 14 April this year. Copies of the report have been placed in the Library of the House.

Ambulances

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the *(a)* facilities and *(b)* extent of cover planned for the new ambulance station on the west bank of the Foyle in Derry; and if he will make a statement. [69686]

Paul Goggins: The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (MAS) currently operates from 32 locations throughout Northern Ireland but has identified additional sites from which to deploy ambulances to improve response times for life threatening emergency calls. One of the first of those sites is shared with the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service Station at Northland Road on the Foyle West Bank and became operational earlier this month.

Initially, one ambulance from Altnagelvin Station will be assigned to Northland Road during daytime hours seven days per week and on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. In addition, when Altnagelvin has more than one ambulance available and the Northland Road location requires cover, the additional vehicle will be dynamically deployed there. The effectiveness of these arrangements will be reviewed after one month's operation and regularly thereafter. However, preliminary information suggests that ambulance response times have improved in the West of Derry City since the Northland Road site became operational.

Arterial Routes (South Down)

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will take steps to improve the main arterial routes from the constituency of South Down to the Belfast/Dublin corridor. [68251]

David Cairns: The chief executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 12 May 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about steps to improve the main arterial routes from the constituency of South Down to the Belfast/Dublin corridor.

I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

You may recall that in my letter to you dated 19 December 2005, I advised that these routes are assessed to be the A50 through Katesbridge, the A25 through Rathfriland, the A25/B8 through Hilltown and the A2 through Kilkeel, Rostrevor and Warrenpoint.

The information I provided then of the improvement works currently planned with the estimated costs has been updated as follows:-

A50—road realignment at Corbet Lough in 2006/07 and 2007/08 at a cost of £375,000;

A25—the junction improvements scheme at Burrenreagh Road, Castlewellan due in 2005/067 at a cost of £40,000 has been delayed until 2006/07 due to difficulties with land acquisition;

A25—road realignment and visibility improvement at Burrenbridge Road, Castlewellan in 2006/07 at a cost of £100,000;

A25—the resurfacing at Windsor Hill, Newry in 2006/07 at a cost of £65,000 has been delayed due to ongoing work by utilities;

A25—junction improvements at Moneygore Road, Rathfriland in 2007/08 at a cost of £20,000;

B8—road realignment and visibility improvement at Crobane on Hilltown Road, Newry, in 2006/07 at a cost of £400,000;

B8—a resurfacing scheme in 2006/07 at Castlewellan Road, Hilltown at a cost of £160,000; and

A2—the junction signals scheme at Moor Road, Kilkeel due in 2005/06 at a cost of £90,000 has been delayed until 2006/07 due to difficulties with land acquisition.

The routes A2, A25, and B2 will also benefit from junction improvements as a result of the Al Beech Hill to Cloghogue, Newry dualling scheme. This work is currently scheduled to start in 2007.

Business Improvements Districts

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to introduce legislation to enable the introduction of business improvements districts in Northern Ireland. [69677]

Mr. Hanson: Given the changes expected to arise from the Review of Public Administration (RPA) and the likelihood of a number of regeneration functions transferring to local government, the Government consider that it would not be appropriate to proceed with legislation to introduce BIDs in Northern Ireland at this time. In addition, the legislative time scale for bringing forward proposals for RPA preclude the opportunity to bring forward BIDs legislation for some time yet.

Code of Sustainable Building

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the Government plans to implement the Code of Sustainable Building in Northern Ireland. [64800]

Mr. Hanson: The implementation of the voluntary "Code for Sustainable Homes" in Northern Ireland will be informed by the implementation plans for the Sustainable Development Strategy for NI which was launched by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on 9 May; revisions planned for the code following the consultation exercise which was completed in England in March 2006; and following limited consultation with the local construction industry and other stakeholders, which is scheduled to commence at the next meeting of the Construction Industry Forum for Northern Ireland in June 2006.

Communications

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the percentage of communications between the general public and the Department for the Environment for Northern Ireland made *(a)* by post, *(b)* by telephone, *(c)* in person and *(d)* by e-mail during 2005. [69268]

David Cairns: It is not possible to provide the hon. Member with the answer in the format he has requested.

I am advised that of the 633 pieces of correspondence received in the Minister of the Environment's Private Office during 2005 nearly 97 per cent. was in the form of a letter and just over 3 per cent. was by e-mail. No records are kept of the contact made either in-person or by telephone.

Community Differentials

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what targets have been set for reducing the community differentials between Catholics and Protestants in relation to *(a)* economic inactivity, *(b)* unemployment and *(c)* housing allocation. [66373]

Mr. Hanson: The report of the task force on employability and long-term unemployment included a number of performance indicators and targets relating to employment and economic activity. A progress report was published in December 2004. There are no targets for reducing differentials between Catholics and Protestants in respect of housing allocation. All social housing is allocated on the basis of need.

We remain committed to eliminating the differentials in unemployment rates between the two communities and will take into account recent information and research. Government continue to direct resources and effort of those in greatest need in a way that will reduce social economic differentials between different sectors of society, and will monitor progress. I have arranged for copies of the documents to be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Consumer Advice Handbook

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many copies of the Consumer Advice Handbook have been produced by the Consumer Council in Northern Ireland in 2006. [70425]

Maria Eagle: 10,000 copies were produced in 2006.

Counterfeit Money

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many convictions have been secured in Northern Ireland against people involved in *(a)* handling and *(b)* producing counterfeit money in the last five years. [69191]

Mr. Hanson: The number of convictions for handling and producing counterfeit money are included in Table 1 and cover the calendar years 1999 to 2003. Data beyond 2003 are not yet available. Figures are based on the principal offence rule, thus only the most serious offence with which an offender is charged is included.

Table 1: Number of convictions for handling and producing counterfeit money 1999-2003

	Handling[1]	Producing[2]	Total convictions for counterfeiting offences
1999	19	6	25
2000	14	1	15
2001	16	1	17
2002	26	2	28
2003	16	1	17

[1] Convictions include the offences of "tendering counterfeit currency", "possessing counterfeit currency with intent to use" and "possessing counterfeit currency".
[2] Convictions include the offences of "counterfeiting" and "counterfeiting with intent to use".

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of staff in each department in Northern Ireland, including the Northern Ireland Office, is *(a)* male, *(b)* female, *(c)* Protestant, *(d)* Roman Catholic and *(e)* disabled, broken down by grade. [69236]

Mr. Hanson: The information requested is set out in the following tables and includes staff in the NI Departments and Agencies and the Northern Ireland Office (including members of the Home Civil Service). This reflects the position at 1 January 2006.

Analysis of permanent NICS staff in each of the 11 ministerial departments and NIO, as at 1 January 2006 by gender and grade level

Percentage

Department	Gender	G7 +	DP	SO	Grade EOI and EOII	AO	AA	Industrial
DARD	Female	28.9	30.6	33.0	32.4	63.6	67.7	7.1
	Male	71.1	69.4	67.0	67.6	36.4	32.3	92.9
DCAL	Female	36.4	43.1	38.6	35.2	63.9	43.5	0.0
	Male	63.6	56.9	61.4	64.8	36.1	56.5	100.0
DE	Female	46.7	44.9	58.4	64.5	69.8	68.5	0.0
	Male	53.3	55.1	41.6	35.5	30.2	31.5	0.0
DETI	Female	21.7	35.8	52.3	61.4	68.5	61.6	0.0
	Male	78.3	64.2	47.7	38.6	31.5	38.4	100.0
DFP	Female	31.6	31.3	41.9	48.9	65.8	54.4	0.0
	Male	68.4	68.8	58.1	51.1	34.2	45.6	100.0
DEL	Female	36.7	40.2	49.1	74.7	71.8	57.8	0.0
	Male	63.3	59.8	50.9	25.3	28.2	42.2	100.0
DHSSPS	Female	30.4	37.2	42.9	56.5	70.5	62.5	0.0
	Male	69.6	62.8	57.1	43.5	29.5	37.5	0.0
DOE	Female	26.5	44.3	39.7	52.9	57.8	64.6	3.6
	Male	73.5	55.7	60.3	47.1	42.2	35.4	96.4
DRD	Female	16.0	17.0	18.3	26.2	67.5	37.7	0.3
	Male	84.0	83.0	81.7	73.8	32.5	62.3	99.7
DSD	Female	33.6	49.4	52.4	63.4	65.2	59.5	0.0
	Male	66.4	50.6	47.6	36.6	34.8	40.5	0.0
OFMDFM	Female	35.8	50.0	55.9	69.9	66.7	70.3	0.0
	Male	64.2	50.0	44.1	30.1	33.3	29.7	0.0
NIO	Female	41.6	44.9	45.8	69.0	75.6	55.3	40.0
	Male	58.4	55.1	54.2	31.0	24.4	44.7	60.0

Analysis of permanent NICS staff in each of the 11 ministerial departments and NIO, as at 1 January 2006 by community background and grade level

Percentage

Department	Community background	Gr7 +	DP	SO	Grade EOI and II	AO	AA	Industrial
DARD	Protestant	50.9	61.8	61.5	51.6	50.6	44.4	51.1
	Roman Catholic	29.1	32.5	33.5	45.1	48.5	54.9	45.2

Analysis of permanent NICS staff in each of the 11 ministerial departments and NIO, as at 1 January 2006 by community background and grade level

Percentage

Department	*Community background*	*Gr7 +*	*DP*	*SO*	*Grade EOI and II*	*AO*	*AA*	*Industrial*
	Not determined	20.0	5.7	5.0	3.3	1.0	0.6	3.7
DCAL	Protestant	54.5	54.9	61.4	63.0	43.1	56.5	52.5
	Roman Catholic	42.4	41.2	35.7	34.5	55.6	43.5	39.1
	Not determined	3.0	3.9	2.9	2.4	1.4	0.0	8.7
DE	Protestant	57.9	68.1	72.7	66.7	60.4	70.8	—
	Roman Catholic	41.1	27.5	24.7	31.7	39.1	27.0	—
	Not determined	0.9	4.3	2.6	1.6	0.6	2.2	—
DETI	Protestant	59.4	65.1	54.1	53.5	58.3	61.6	[1] —
	Roman Catholic	36.2	33.0	43.2	43.7	39.3	37.4	[1] —
	Not determined	4.3	1.9	2.7	2.8	2.4	1.0	[1] —
DFP	Protestant	54.6	61.1	59.4	55.6	51.0	51.1	[1] —
	Roman Catholic	40.3	37.3	39.1	43.3	47.1	46.8	[1] —
	Not determined	5.1	1.7	1.5	1.1	1.9	2.1	[1] —
DEL	Protestant	55.1	44.9	44.6	39.2	40.8	36.1	[1] —
	Roman Catholic	42.9	51.4	53.7	59.5	57.7	63.9	[1] —
	Not Determined	2.0	3.7	1.7	1.3	1.5	0.0	[1] —
DHSSPS	Protestant	57.1	50.6	55.6	58.8	52.5	66.7	—
	Roman Catholic	36.0	47.0	41.8	40.0	45.9	32.5	—
	Not determined	6.8	2.4	2.6	1.2	1.6	0.8	—
DOE	Protestant	55.5	53.2	50.4	52.4	50.1	43.9	59.5
	Roman Catholic	35.5	41.8	45.7	44.2	48.5	54.3	34.5
	Not determined	9.0	5.0	3.9	3.4	1.4	1.8	6.0
DRD	Protestant	65.4	62.4	56.7	54.2	47.3	48.7	57.4
	Roman Catholic	26.9	35.6	40.5	43.5	51.9	48.5	37.6
	Not determined	7.7	2.0	2.9	2.4	0.9	2.8	5.1
DSD	Protestant	44.9	38.1	44.3	42.4	39.9	38.5	—
	Roman Catholic	51.4	60.2	54.1	56.0	58.4	59.2	—
	Not determined	3.7	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.7	2.3	—
OFMDFM	Protestant	65.7	54.8	51.5	72.3	64.9	67.6	—
	Roman Catholic	31.3	43.5	44.1	25.3	35.1	29.7	—
	Not determined	3.0	1.6	4.4	2.4	0.0	2.7	—
NIO	Protestant	60.2	65.2	68.5	64.8	68.1	62.3	[1] —
	Roman Catholic	32.5	29.4	25.4	33.3	29.4	30.3	[1] —
	Not determined	7.3	5.4	6.2	1.9	2.5	7.4	[1] —

[1] It has not been possible to show the perceived religious affiliation of staff due to the small numbers involved in order to protect the confidentiality of the information held.

Note:

The figures for NIO do not include Home Civil Servants who work in London, as the legislation does not require their community background to be monitored

Analysis of permanent NICS staff in each of the 11 ministerial departments and NIO, as at 1 January 2006 by declared disabilityand grade level

Percentage

Department	*Declared disability*	*G7 +*	*DP*	*SO*	*Grade EOI and EOII*	*AO*	*AA*	*Industrial*
DARD	No disability declared	96.3	93.4	93.7	91.6	91.0	88.4	93.9
	Disability declared	3.7	6.6	6.3	8.4	9.0	11.6	6.1
DCAL	No disability declared	96.7	93.8	97.0	93.2	95.6	90.7	100.0
	Disability declared	3.3	6.3	3.0	6.8	4.4	9.3	0.0
DE	No disability declared	97.8	92.5	100.0	97.7	95.0	92.7	0.0
	Disability declared	2.2	7.5	0.0	2.3	5.0	7.3	0.0
DETI	No disability declared	96.9	97.0	97.1	96.5	97.5	92.4	100.0
	Disability declared	3.1	3.0	2.9	3.5	2.5	7.6	0.0
DFP	No disability declared	94.8	95.6	96.0	96.3	96.6	94.6	92.0

Analysis of permanent NICS staff in each of the 11 ministerial departments and NIO, as at 1 January 2006 by declared disabilityand grade level

Department	Declared disability	G7 +	DP	SO	Grade EOI and EOII	AO	AA	Industrial
								Percentage
	Disability declared	5.2	4.4	4.0	3.7	3.4	5.4	8.0
DEL	No disability declared	100.0	95.7	93.0	94.8	95.4	89.8	0.0
	Disability declared	0.0	4.3	7.0	5.2	4.6	10.2	0.0
DHSSPS	No disability declared	94.7	96.7	97.8	95.8	95.5	94.6	0.0
	Disability declared	5.3	3.3	2.2	4.2	4.5	5.4	0.0
DOE	No disability declared	98.6	97.2	96.6	95.9	94.7	94.0	98.1
	Disability declared	1.4	2.8	3.4	4.1	5.3	6.0	1.9
DRD	No disability declared	97.2	97.2	97.0	97.0	95.6	95.0	93.6
	Disability declared	2.8	2.8	3.0	3.0	4.4	5.0	6.4
DSD	No disability declared	96.9	96.4	93.4	94.2	95.3	92.9	0.0
	Disability declared	3.1	3.6	6.6	5.8	4.7	7.1	0.0
OFMDFM	No disability declared	93.7	100.0	98.3	95.9	98.1	97.1	0.0
	Disability declared	6.3	0.0	1.7	4.1	1.9	2.9	0.0
NIO	No disability declared	97.6	96.3	95.6	96.0	95.1	95.5	100.0
	Disability declared	2.4	3.7	4.4	4.0	4.9	4.5	0.0

Note
Figures exclude staff who have not declared whether or not they have a disability.
Key to Grades:
Grade 7 +: Grade 7 and above
DP: Deputy Principal
SO: Staff Officer
EOI and II: Executive Officer, Grades 1&2
AO: Administrative Officer
AA: Administrative Assistant

Electricity Supply (Limavady)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answers of 28 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 665W, on mains electricity supplies, and 9 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1736W, on electricity supply (Limavady), what the cost would be of locating the power lines in the area concerned underground. [69272]

Maria Eagle: Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) estimates that, subject to the outcome of technical feasibility studies, undergrounding the electric lines in the Limavady area would cost in the order of £2-£3million.

Fishing

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board to promote fishing holidays in Northern Ireland. [65865]

Maria Eagle: The internet is a key marketing tool for providing detailed information on all aspects of angling. The Tourist Board's website www.discovernorthernireland.com/angling.aspx provides details and contacts on angling waters, licences, permits, tackle and bait, boat hire, ghillies and local angling events.

NITB further markets the angling product through familiarisation trips for angling journalists, media and tour operators, and attendance at specialist shows in Great Britain, Europe and Republic of Ireland.

Tourism Ireland represents NITB and the angling product on the international market. A suite of angling guides has been produced covering game, coarse, sea and pike fishing in the island of Ireland, distributed at all angling shows and servicing consumer enquiries.

The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) promotes angling in Northern Ireland under the tourism Ireland banner at angling fairs and shows in Great Britain, France, Holland and Denmark. DCAL also takes stands at angling fairs in the Republic of Ireland. DCAL has developed a website promoting the public angling estate, which is specifically aimed at tourist anglers with direct links to travel and accommodation providers—www.dcal-fishingni.gov.uk

Free Passports (Senior Citizens)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will reduce the age at which free passports are provided to senior citizens. [69194]

Joan Ryan: I have been asked to reply.

The decision to give free passports for those born on or before 2 September 1929 was announced on 19 May 2004. This was a special concession intended to recognise the sacrifices made by adults of the World War two generation, whether in the services or on the home front. It would therefore not be appropriate, and there are no plans, to extend the scheme by reducing the qualifying age.

Human Rights Commission

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the running costs of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission; and what plans he has to change its annual budget. [7576]

Mr. Hanson: The Commission's annual budget is currently £1.35 million. There are no plans to change the budget in the current spending review period (April 2005-March 2008).

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many applications were received for the position of Chief Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission; how many were shortlisted for the position; and what the nationality was of each applicant. [7578]

Mr. Hanson: There were two appointment processes for the Chief Commissioner post. The interview panel on the first process could not recommend an appointment.

Applicants were not asked to confirm their nationality.

	Number
First process	
Applications	14
Short-listed for interview	5
Second process	
Applications	16
Short-listed for interview	5

La Mon House Bombing

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he plans to meet the victims of the La Mon House bombing. [69670]

Mr. Hanson: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has agreed to meet the hon. Lady and the victims of the La Mon House bombing as soon as a meeting can be arranged.

MOT

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many vehicles were tested at each of the MOT test centres in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [71126]

David Cairns: The following table details all MOT tests undertaken in Northern Ireland in the last five years.

Centre	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
Armagh	19,691	17,007	22,940	16,158	21,524
Ballymena	42,742	28,340	44,213	46,479	42,788
Belfast	59,954	44,794	59,697	47,194	63,188
Coleraine	28,384	34,049	39,058	41,261	45,121
Cookstown	30,470	35,003	37,397	36,827	41,238
Craigavon	31,833	31,016	36,459	25,182	30,291
Downpatrick	21,538	20,614	29,870	33,412	27,387
Enniskillen	22,993	16,548	25,827	25,648	28,988
Larne	11,852	20,570	25,616	23,002	26,031
Lisburn	22,033	34,578	35,711	26,790	34,724
Londonderry	31,431	27,802	35,516	26,585	38,159
Mallusk	50,943	61,200	37,978	41,109	49,934
Newry	33,326	41,446	31,505	28,410	44,541
Newtownards	50,833	53,761	56,540	56,517	64,286
Omagh	19,240	31,964	19,440	23,444	26,458
Total	477,263	498,692	537,767	498,018	584,658

New Build Housing Programme

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the legislative framework will be for the transfer of the management of the new build housing programme from the Department of Social Development to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. [68254]

Mr. Hanson: Consultation on the Housing (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 is currently under way and responses are due by 21 July 2006. On receipt of responses, amendments will be made to the order if necessary. Following on from this the appropriate legislative route will be followed and it is hoped that the legislation will be effective from April 2007.

Northern Ireland Civil Service

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many vacancies there are in the Northern Ireland civil service at *(a)* AO, *(b)* EOII,

(c) EO1 and *(d)* SO grades, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [68257]

Mr. Hanson: Details of vacancies in the Northern Ireland civil service at *(a)* AO, *(b)* EO11, *(c)* EO1 and *(d)* SO grades, broken down by parliamentary constituency are shown in the following table. These figures relate to vacancies for which Departments have current financial provision and are within the departmental headcount.

The table also shows identified surpluses for each grade.

Vacancies/surpluses in the Northern Ireland civil service broken down by parliamentary constituency at 2 May 2006

Parliamentary constituency	*SO vacancies*	*SO surpluses*	*EO1 vacancies*	*EO1 surpluses*	*EO11 vacancies*	*EO11 surpluses*	*AO vacancies*	*AO surpluses*
Belfast East	24	—	4	—	21	4	16	2
Belfast North	4	—	4	—	27	—	10	—
Belfast South	38	—	27	3	78	4	44	3
Belfast West	3	—	1	—	22	—	—	14
North Down	6	—	1	—	6	—	6	2
Lagan Valley	—	—	1	—	1	—	2	1
Strangford	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	4
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	—	—	1	2	—	—	1	16
West Tyrone	2	—	1	1	2	1	11	10
Foyle	2	—	3	—	4	—	1	18
Newry and Armagh	1	—	1	1	—	—	—	6
South Down	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	8
North Antrim	2	—	1	—	2	—	1	8
South Antrim	—	—	—	—	1	2	9	11
Antrim Coast and Glens	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	2
East Londonderry	—	—	1	—	3	—	4	3
Mid Ulster	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Upper Bann	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10

Railway Maintenance

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been spent in the past 10 years on maintenance of the railway line between *(a)* Bangor and Belfast, *(b)* Larne and Belfast and *(c)* Lisburn and Newry. [67640]

David Cairns: Information has been provided by Translink on the maintenance costs from 1999-2000 to 2004-05 with estimated costs for 2005-06 as shown in the following table. Other cost details are not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Summary of permanent way, signalling and structures maintenance costs—available costs seven years to 2006 (including estimated costs 2005-06)

£000

	Line section			
	Belfast-Bangor	*Belfast-Larne*	*Lisburn-Newry*	*Total*
1999-2000	236	466	860	1,562
2000-01	244	480	887	1,611
2001-02	306	745	1,115	2,166
2002-03	325	595	1,184	2,104
2003-04	384	725	1,396	2,505
2004-05	360	716	1,311	2,387
2005-06 forecast	371	737	1,350	2,458

The maintenance costs relate to work on the permanent way, signalling and structures but exclude the major works undertaken in recent years for track relays on all these lines.

Regional Development Strategy

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he plans to undertake the five year review of the regional development strategy; and what the timetable will be for that review. [68252]

David Cairns: The first five-year review of the regional development strategy commenced with a re-assessment of housing figures. This work was the subject of a public examination in February this year. The intention is to publish revised uplifted figures in May. In addition, the Department will publish a consultation document on all other aspects of the RDS in May for a three-month consultation period. The objective is to publish the final document on these aspects by the end of the year.

Religious Discrimination

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 501W, on religious discrimination, what the total cost was of investigating complaints of discrimination for religious belief or political opinion in each of the last 10 years. [69238]

Maria Eagle: The Department does not record separately the staff costs of the fair employment tribunal, dealing with religious or political discrimination cases, within the total tribunal service costs. The following table shows the estimated cost of

staff dealing with fair employment cases based on the relevant percentage of the religious and political discrimination cases as a total number of cases received by the tribunal service plus the cost of fees paid to fair employment tribunal part-time panel members.

	Cases of Religious Belief/Political Opinion registered in the year	*Cost to Government (£)*
1996	566	[1]146
1997	666	[1]202
1998	559	[1]204
1999	499	[1]147
2000	561	374
2001	268	162
2002	480	284
2003	467	199
2004	479	257
2005	190	255

[1] Staff costs element is estimated based on actual figures for subsequent years.

Road Maintenance/Safety

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been spent over the past 10 years on maintenance of *(a)* the A8 road between Larne and Belfast, *(b)* the A2 road between Carrickfergus and Belfast, *(c)* the A1 road between Lisburn and Newry and *(d)* the A26 road between Antrim and Ballymena. [67639]

David Cairns: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 12 May 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question regarding how much has been spent over the past 10 years on maintenance of (a) the A8 road between Larne and Belfast, (b) the A2 road between Carrickfergus and Belfast, (c) the A1 road between Lisburn and Newry and (d) the A26 road between Antrim and Ballymena.

As this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service, I have been asked to reply.

Unfortunately the particular information you requested is not available because Roads Service does not record maintenance spend against individual roads or class of roads. We only record expenditure incurred by Roads Service on maintenance activities and on capital (major and minor) road improvement schemes for each District Council area.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will take steps to ensure that road safety education officers are allowed to attend District Road Safety Community Committee meetings in Northern Ireland. [68250]

David Cairns: The principal aim of the Department of the Environment's Road Safety Education Officers is the education and training of children and young people in road safety and, while not the limit of their activities, this takes up the majority of their time.

The decision to withdraw Road Safety Education Officers from attending Road Safety Committee meetings as a matter of course does not mean that Committees cannot avail of their support and advice. This is an operational matter and the Department will consider any reasonable request for support on a case-by-case basis balanced against other priorities.

School Buses

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many school bus accidents there have been in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [67068]

Maria Eagle: The number of school bus accidents in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years is set out in the following table. The vast majority of the incidents/accidents recorded are of a minor nature and do not involve injury to children.

Financial Year	*Number of accidents*
1996-97	[1]258
1997-98	281
1998-99	276
1999-2000	291
2000-01	227
2001-02	210
2002-03	231
2003-04	193
2004-05	181
2005-06	245

[1] Excludes Translink figures which are not currently available.

The information relates to Education and Library Board vehicles and Translink buses. Details are not available for accidents involving Private Operator vehicles.

School Reductions

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* timetable and *(b)* process will be for the reduction in the number of schools in each board area under the Review of Public Administration. [69664]

Maria Eagle: The Review of Public Administration does not require a reduction in the number of schools. Rationalisation of the estate is required because of the reduction in the number of pupils, which is expected to decline further over the coming years. There is no timetable for the reduction in the number of schools in each board area. Where it is proposed to close a school or amalgamate two or more schools, this will follow the normal process, which involves the publication of a development proposal, a two-month consultation period, followed by a decision by the Department for Education.

Schools (Financial Balance)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the end of year financial balance was for each *(a)* grammar school and *(b)* non-grammar secondary school in Northern Ireland in the last available year. [68545]

Maria Eagle: The following tables provide details of the financial balance at the end of the 2004-05 financial year for each voluntary grammar and grant-maintained integrated secondary school. Schools in both of these sectors receive their funding directly from the Department of Education.

These tables also cover controlled integrated, controlled grammar and other secondary schools in three off the five education and library boards (the western, north eastern and south eastern). The requested information in respect of schools in the other two boards (Belfast and Southern) is not available as these two boards have not yet published their 2004-05 local management of schools outturn statements. When these have been published copies will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Copies of the published 2003-04 local management of schools outturn statements for all five education and library boards are available in the Libraries of both Houses.

Grammar schools—voluntary[1]	*Year-end financial balance*
Abbey Grammar, Newry	-159,588
Aquinas Grammar, Belfast	-381
Assumption Grammar, Ballynahinch	515,778
Ballymena Academy	85,252
Belfast High School	-55,520
Belfast Royal Academy	-348,382
Bloomfield Collegiate, Belfast	5,727
Campbell College, Belfast[2]	105,357
Christian Brothers' Grammar School, Omagh	78,560
Coleraine Academical Institution	-86,905
Dalriada School, Ballymoney	50,332
Dominican College, Portstewart	186,600
Dominican, Belfast	511,935
Foyle and Londonderry College	61,369
Friends' School, Lisburn	57,826
Hunterhouse College	470,234
Larne Grammar School	65,349
Loreto Grammar, Omagh	129,588
Loreto, Coleraine	113,399
Lumen Christi, Derry	98,988
Methodist College, Belfast	353,557
Mount Lourdes, Enniskillen	780,971
Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock	323,080
Our Lady's Grammar, Newry	368,475
Portora Royal, Enniskillen	288,605
Rainey, Magherafelt	364,308
Rathmore Grammar, Belfast	430,869
Royal Belfast Academical Institution[2]	-174,667
Sacred Heart, Newry	513,739
St. Colman's College, Newry	216,880
St. Columb's College, Derry	6,705
St. Dominic's, Belfast	7
St. Joseph's Donaghmore	65,179
St. Louis' Ballymena	192,048
St. Louis' Kilkeel	188,182
St. MacNissi's, Garrop Tower	1,318
St. Malachy's, Belfast	30,345
St. Mary's CBS, Belfast	435,580
St. Michael's College, Enniskillen	-284,141
St. Michael's Grammer, Lurgan	130,149
St. Patrick's Academy, Dungannon	546,362
St. Patricks Downpatrick	661,703
St. Patrick's Grammar, Armagh	-609,038
Strathearn School, Belfast	16,550
Sullivan Upper School	-44,416
The Royal School, Armagh	74,787
The Royal School, Dungannon	98,431
The Wallace High School	42,648
Thornhill College, Londonderry	48,777
Victoria College, Belfast	27,412

[1] The figures have been extracted from the audited year-end accounting information submitted by schools, and may be impacted upon by sources of funding other than the Department of Education

[2] A cumulative balance is not available and these figures represent their surplus/deficit position for the 2004-05 financial year only.

Grammar schools—controlled	*Year-end financial balance*
Antrim Grammar	-58,543
Ballyclare High	86,373
Cambridge House	37,876
Carrickfergus	-31,203
Coleraine High	40,574
Down H.S.	-118,493
Enniskillen Collegiate	-13,486
Glenlola Collegiate	668,282
Limavady Grammar	-63,383
Omagh Academy	19,060
Regent House	420,687
Strabane Grammar	16,884

Integrated—schools—grant maintained[1]	*Year-end financial balance*
Armagh Integrated College	-1,773
Drumragh Integrated College	200,750
Dungannon Integrated College	276,875
Erne Integrated College	64,967
Hazelwood Integrated College	135,267
Lagan Integrated College	65,531
Malone Integrated College	55,231
New-Bridge Integrated College	-12,305
North-Coast Integrated College	99,469
Oakgrove Integrated College	25,042
Shimna Integrated College	55,651
Slemish Integrated College	374,724
Sperrin Integrated College	5,657
Strangford Integrated College	118,494
Ulidia Integrated College	371,535

[1] The figures have been extracted from the audited year-end accounting information submitted by schools.

Other—secondary—controlled/ maintained	*Year-end financial balance*
Western Education and Library Board	
Castlederg High School	80,048
Dean Brian Maguire College	173,280
Devenish College	43,230
Holy Cross	—
Immaculate Conception College	-13,742

Other—secondary—controlled/ maintained	*Year-end financial balance*
Limavady High School	22,646
Lisnaskea High School	51,045
Lisneal College	199,058
Omagh High School	-76,773
Our Lady of Mercy High School	25,563
Sacred Heart College	-55,542
St. Aidans High School	25,188
St. Brigid's College, Carnhill	137,464
St. Cecilia's College	193,513
St. Colman's High School	69,484
St. Comhghall's High School	84,401
St. Eugene's High Roslea	-5,190
St. Eugene's High School	-25,896
St. Franchea's College	-70,214
St. John's High School	52,842
St. Joseph's College Enniskillen	117,702
St. Joseph's High Plumbridge	-61,750
St. Joseph's See Creggan	141,391
St. Mary's College Londonderry	41,685
St. Mary's High Limavady	-6,748
St. Mary's Sec Brollagh	57,206
St. Mary's Sec Irvinestown	33,187
St. Patrick's and St Brigid's High	11,899
St. Patrick's High Dungiven	76,563
St. Peter's High School	79,308
Strabane High School	58,593
North-Eastern Education and Library Board	
Ballee Community	-188,213
Ballycastle High	190,867
Ballyclare	131,511
Ballymoney High	123,101
Carrickfergus College	134,471
Coleraine College	-218,922
Cross and Passion College	22,823
Crumlin High	-66,164
Cullybackey High	80,256
Downshire	54,806
Dunclug College	-19,391
Dunluce	57,297
Edmund Rice College	43,581
Garvagh High	-13,342
Glengormley High	-160,431
Larne High	-111,660
Maghera High	14,951
Magherafelt High	-83,878
Massereene Community	-372,301
Monkstown Community	48,372
Newtownabbey Community	-45,329
Our Lady of Lourdes	-91,651
Parkhall College	-35,080
St. Aloysius' High	-20,600
St. Colm's High	-19,091
St. Comgall's High	-59,760
St. Joseph's High	238,000
St. Malachy's High	-275,076
St. Mary's College	30,614
St. Olcan's High	-117,617
St. Patrick's College Ballymena	-55,766
St. Patrick's College Maghera	87,198
St. Paul's	46,488
St. Pius X	56,312
South-Eastern Education and Library Board	
Bangor Academy and 6th Form	749,137
Comber High	169,907
De La Salle High	465,255
Donaghadee High	-7,831
Down Acaddemy	91,592
Dundonald High	304,823
Dunmurry High	63,057
Fort Hill College	960,770
Glastry College	433,130
Knockbreda High	138,179
Laurehill Community College	248,649
Lisnagarvey High	110,782
Lisnasharragh High	19,721
Movilla High	505,961
Newtownbreda High	329,188
Priory College	-133,206
Saintfield High	151,821
St. Colmans High	217,711
St. Colmcilles High	58,501
St. Colms High	233,468
St. Columbanus High	150,890
St. Columbas High	255,384
St. Malachys High	175,462
St. Marys High	292,008
St. Patricks High	69,813
The High School Ballynahinch	295,965

Sewage Services

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the Water Service is meeting EU standards for sewage treatment in Northern Ireland. [68116]

David Cairns: During 2004—the most recent year for which verified compliance data are currently available—seven out of 35 relevant Water Service waste water treatment works did not meet the requirements of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD) as they did not have the required secondary treatment. In addition 13 works failed to meet either the effluent quality standards or the monitoring requirements of the UWWTD.

Initial assessment of 2005 data indicates an improvement in compliance compared with 2004.

Over the three year period to 2007-08 some £290 million is being invested in upgrading Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTWs) to ensure compliance with EC directive standards. Since the compliance assessment of 2004, the Water Service Capital Works Programme has delivered new WWTWs at Culmore, Omagh, Cookstown and Ballyclare, all of which are now capable of producing UWWTD quality effluent. The new works at Larne was completed in early 2006 and, in addition, Carrickfergus and Newtownabbey are scheduled for completion in mid-2006.

In addition, work has commenced on the new North Coast WWTW to resolve compliance requirements at Portrush, Portstewart and Coleraine. In addition, Water Service is pursuing the use of public private partnership (PPP) investment to complement conventionally funded programmes. Initial PPP programmes for wastewater and sludge treatment, currently estimated at some £122 million, are being taken forward for detailed planning and procurement.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action is being taken to avoid fines for not meeting the EU standards for sewage treatment in Northern Ireland; and what level of fines could be imposed if standards are not met. [68145]

Maria Eagle: The Chief Executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Mrs. Katharine Bryan, dated 12 May 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about what action is being taken to avoid fines for not meeting the EU standards for sewage treatment in Northern Ireland; and what level of fines could be imposed if standards are not met. (68145). I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Water Service.

Water Service recognises that not all of its waste water treatment works are fully compliant with the effluent discharge standards set out in the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive. The nine locations which the Commission identified as having failed to meet the Directive requirements to have secondary treatment in place by 31 December 2000 are at Bangor, Donaghadee, Carrickfergus, Coleraine, Londonderry, Larne, Newtownabbey, Omagh and Portrush. A major capital investment programme is currently underway across Northern Ireland to address deficiencies in the sewerage infrastructure and to achieve compliance as quickly as possible. Since 2000/01, investment on improvements to waste water treatment works has increased tenfold, from approximately £12 million per year to some £122 million per year in 2005/06. Work has been completed at Londonderry, Omagh and Larne and significant levels of expenditure will continue to be invested as Water Service strives to meet the requirements as soon as possible.

It is not possible to specify the level of fines that could be imposed by the European Commission on a particular Member State. Such fines take into account the seriousness and duration of the breach of compliance, the ability of the Member State to pay, and the profile of the Member State within the European Union. They may comprise a lump sum and, or, a penalty.

Water Services

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many domestic properties in Northern Ireland are estimated to be without a mains water supply. [69461]

David Cairns: The Chief Executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Katharine Bryan, dated 12 May 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about how many domestic properties in Northern Ireland are estimated to be without a mains water supply (69461). I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Water Service.

It is estimated that less than 1% of domestic properties in Northern Ireland are not connected to the mains water supply. Water Service does not, at present, have a database of all domestic properties connected to mains water. However, a comprehensive customer database is currently being developed in preparation for the proposed introduction of domestic charging from April 2007 and this will identify any domestic properties not connected to the mains water supply.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what procedures are in place for regular testing of the quality of tap water in domestic properties in Northern Ireland. [69470]

David Cairns: The Chief Executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Mrs. Katharine Bryan, dated 12 May 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about what procedures are in place for regular testing of the quality of tap water in domestic properties in Northern Ireland (69470). I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Water Service.

The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations (NI) 2002 necessitate a thorough and extensive water sampling programme to be undertaken, to monitor water quality throughout the supply and distribution systems. The sampling locations and frequencies for the monitoring of drinking water quality are specified in the Regulations. The results and procedures are audited by the Drinking Water Inspectorate. The mandatory sampling programmes requires water samples to be collected regularly at water treatment works, at service reservoirs and water towers used to store treated water, and at customers' taps in the water supply zone.

During 2005, the latest date for which data are available, a total of 57,758 parameters were tested and 99.73% were found to be satisfactory. The results of all unsatisfactory samples are reported to the Drinking Water Inspector along with details of the reasons for the failures and the actions considered necessary by Water Service to rectify the position.

WALES

Consultants

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the companies which were paid consultancy fees by his Department in 2005-06; how much each was paid; and what each of the companies was used to accomplish. [69689]

Mr. Hain: None.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for Ministers of State in his Department on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [68972]

Mr. Hain: As required by the Ministerial Code and Travel for Ministers, we have made the most efficient and cost-effective travel arrangements. The total cost of overnight accommodation overseas for the Secretary of State for Wales is:

	£
2003-04	0.00
2004-05	1,389.67
2005-06	0.00

Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year, this information includes accommodation costs. Copies are available in the Library.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Neighbourhood Policing

12. **Rosie Cooper:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the roll-out of the neighbourhood policing model. [70217]

Mr. Byrne: Thanks to an additional £91 million investment in neighbourhood policing provided by the Chancellor in his recent Budget, neighbourhood policing will be introduced to every community in England and Wales by April 2007. There will be increased numbers of police community support officers and police officers working with local people to address those issues that are causing most concern to communities.

17. **Chris Mole:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the roll-out of the neighbourhood policing model. [70223]

Mr. Byrne: Thanks to an additional £91 million investment in neighbourhood policing provided by the Chancellor in his recent Budget, neighbourhood policing will be introduced to every community in England and Wales by April 2007. There will be increased numbers of police community support officers and police officers working with local people to address those issues that are causing most concern to communities.

21. **Michael Jabez Foster:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the effectiveness of neighbourhood policing schemes. [70227]

Mr. Byrne: Evaluation findings from the National Reassurance Policing Programme which were published in January this year showed that a neighbourhood policing approach could deliver statistically significant reductions in levels of crime and perceptions of antisocial behaviour. Such an approach also increased public confidence in policing and feelings of safety, and improved trust in the local area.

Antisocial Behaviour

13. **Anne Snelgrove:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued in the south-west region. [70218]

Mr. Coaker: The latest available figures, as reported by the Court Service, for the period up to September 2005, show that 427 antisocial behaviour orders were issued in the south west region.

The Government are committed to tackling antisocial behaviour and its underlying causes, with a cohesive programme to promote positive behaviour and challenge bad. The Respect Action Plan, which was launched in Swindon in January, sets out commitments we will deliver to make that vision a reality.

Prisons

14. **Mr. Evennett:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to reduce prison overcrowding. [70220]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The National Offender Management Service keeps under review the capacity of prisons to accommodate those prisoners sent to them by the courts. It is ensuring that maximum use is made of all spare capacity within the prison estate and increasing useable operational capacity by building additional places as part of an ongoing funded building programme.

Home Detention Curfew Scheme

15. **David T.C. Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of the management of the home detention curfew scheme. [70221]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The home detention curfew scheme is kept under continuous review.

HDC has been very successful in providing prisoners with a smoother and more effective re-integration back into the community while providing protection to the public.

Asylum Seekers

16. **Mr. Bailey:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to tackle illegal working by asylum seekers. [70222]

Mr. McNulty: The Government are firmly committed to preventing illegal migrant working and the misuse of our asylum system by those seeking financial advantage rather than protection. We have significantly reduced the number of unfounded asylum claims since 2002, increased removals of refused applicants, and strengthened controls on illegal working. Our strategy also involves increasing enforcement, encouraging compliance by business, and developing joint working between relevant agencies.

Licensing

18. **Lynda Waltho:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions there were for alcohol sales to people *(a)* already under the influence of alcohol and *(b)* under the age of 18 years in 2004 and 2005. [70224]

Mr. Coaker: In 2004, there were 13 prosecutions for selling alcohol to a drunken person, and 856 prosecutions for selling alcohol to people under 18 years of age. Data for 2005 will become available in the autumn.

Police Force Mergers

19. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will reverse the mergers of local police forces proposed by his predecessor. [70225]

Mr. Byrne: The Home Secretary has just completed his first week in post. He has been receiving briefing from senior officials on all key Home Office issues and this includes the police restructuring process. He will make any further announcements as soon as he has had time to give this important issue the careful consideration it deserves. Meanwhile, he will continue to work closely with the police service on all aspects of police reform.

Foreign Prisoners

20. **Mr. Hands:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what new measures he has put in place to secure the prompt deportation of released foreign prisoners. [70226]

Mr. Sutcliffe: A new multi-agency centre has been created to collate intelligence on the released prisoners. The police and other agencies have been brought together in order to detain the released prisoners, tackling first those where the severity of the crime or the potential risk to the public is greatest. Additional staff have been appointed and trained and processes have been overhauled so that the necessary casework can be completed and those involved can be deported without further delay.

Alcohol-related Crime

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what research he has evaluated on the level of alcohol-related *(a)* crime and *(b)* antisocial behaviour in Kent since December 2005; and if he will make a statement; [68536]

(2) how many alcohol-related *(a)* crimes and *(b)* antisocial behaviour incidents there were in Kent in each of the last 10 financial years. [68537]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The Home Office has not received any research on the level of alcohol-related crime and antisocial behaviour in Kent since December 2005. From the information collected on recorded crime, it is not possible to identify those offences which are alcohol-related. Such offences are not specifically defined by statute and details of the individual circumstances of offences do not feature in the data series.

Antisocial behaviour is not measured by incident data but through a measure of people's perceptions of antisocial behaviour in their local area using the data from the British Crime Survey (BCS). The size of the sample in the BCS means that we can not provide reliable data for geographical areas smaller than police force areas. Due to changes in the measure of antisocial behaviour used police force area data that are comparable to the national figures are only available for 2004-05.

The following table sets out the national figures for the last four years and the comparable figure for Kent police.

Data on the percentage of people perceiving problems with drunk and rowdy behaviour is only produced and reported at the national level; in 2004-05 22 per cent. of people in England and Wales perceived there to be problems with drunk and rowdy behaviour in their local area. The equivalent figures are not available for police force areas.

Percentage of people perceiving high levels of antisocial behaviour in the local area

	National (percentage)	*Kent police (percentage)*	*Statistically significantly different (at the 95 per cent. level) from the national average*
2001-02	19	—	—
2002-03	21	—	—
2003-04	16	—	—
2004-05	17	18	No

Note:
The measure of antisocial behaviour used is based on a scale constructed from seven questions on problem due to noisy neighbours or loud parties, teenagers and young people hanging around, rubbish and litter, vandalism, people using or dealing drugs, people being drunk or rowdy and abandoned cars.

Background Checks (EU)

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the EU-wide register of criminal offences involving children was created; and what impact it has had on facilitating checks on backgrounds of people employed in the school system who come from other EU countries. [68674]

Mr. Byrne: The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure process does not make a distinction between UK nationals and EU or other nationals where it is considered appropriate to undertake a Disclosure application. For posts in schools, applicants from overseas are subject to the same vetting procedures as UK applicants.

However, where staff are recruited from countries outside the UK, the CRB's checks of the police national computer, local police force intelligence, the Protection of Children Act list and List 99 may not be sufficient, particularly where job applicants are newly arrived or have recently lived abroad. The CRB has an overseas information service to provide help with this. If it is considered that a Disclosure may not represent a complete picture of an individual's non-UK record the overseas information service provides guidance on how to obtain further information from a current list of 21 EU and non-EU countries.

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) also currently advise employers to take additional steps in employment checks on overseas candidates and to seek information as to any criminal history from the authorities in their country of origin wherever possible.

In addition, with effect from 21 May 2006, when the European Council decision on the Exchange of

Criminal History Records between member states will come into effect, the UK will have the ability to request criminal conviction information held on nationals of other member states. It is the intention that the CRB will be able to subsequently incorporate into its Disclosure service the ability to request such information directly through the UK Central authority for the exchange of information set up in accordance with the Act.

Child Abuse (Internet)

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made by his Department with internet service providers in preventing access to graphic images of child abuse via the internet. [67167]

Mr. Coaker: UK internet service providers (ISPs) continue to lead the world in tackling this issue and the majority are committed to taking all steps available to them to prevent users accessing illegal images of child abuse. This is evidenced, for example, by their commitment to and funding of the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) and the reduction in the proportion of illegal sites reported to the IWF that are hosted in the UK from 18 per cent. in 1997 to 0.4 per cent. in 2005.

Recently, it has become technically feasible for ISPs to block home users' access to websites irrespective of where in the world they are hosted. It is clear from the various meetings that Ministers have had with the ISPs, that the industry has the will to implement solutions to block these websites. Currently, all the 3G mobile network operators block their mobile customers from accessing these sites and the biggest ISPs (who between them provide over 90 per cent. of domestic broadband connections) are either currently blocking or have plans to by the end of 2006.

We recognise the progress that has been made as a result of the industry's commitment and investment so far. However, 90 per cent. of connections is not enough and we are setting a target that by the end of 2007, all ISPs offering broadband internet connectivity to the UK general public put in place technical measures that prevent their customers accessing websites containing illegal images of child abuse identified by the IWF. For new ISPs or services, we would expect them to put in place measures within nine months of offering the service to the public. If it appears that we are not going to meet our target through co-operation, we will review the options for stopping UK residents accessing websites on the IWF list.

Dangerous Dogs Act

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in *(a)* England and Wales and *(b)* London have been prosecuted under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 in each year since it was passed. [68261]

Mr. Byrne: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of people have been prosecuted under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 for England and Wales, and London, from 1992 to 2004, is shown in the following table.

Court statistics for 2005 will be available in autumn 2006.

Number of people proceeded against at magistrates courts for offences under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 in London, 1992 to 2004[1]

Offence description	*Statute*	*[2]1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*
Owner or person In charge allowing dog to be dangerously out of control in a public place injuring any person.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(1).	65	94	68	53	29	35	46
Owner or person in charge allowing dog to enter a non-public place and injure any person.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(3)	9	4	5	4	4	5	5
Breeding or breeding from a fighting dog.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec1(2)(a)	9	2	0	1	2	1	0
Selling, exchanging, offering, advertising or exposing for sale a fighting dog.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec1(2)(b)	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Giving or offering to give a fighting dog.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec1(2)(c)	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Allowing a fighting dog to be in a public place without a muzzle or a lead.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(2)(d)	103	39	15	11	6	5	4
Abandoning, or allowing to stray, a fighting dog.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec1(2)(e).	9	7	8	2	2	1	0
Possession, without exemption, of a Pit Bull Terrier, Japanese Tosa or other designated fighting dog.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(3)	100	93	31	20	10	9	13
Owner or person in charge allowing dog to be dangerously out of control in a public place, no injury being caused.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(1)	70	67	50	31	21	24	15
Owner or person in charge allowing dog to enter a non- public place causing reasonable apprehension of injury to a person.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(3).	7	10	0	3	1	0	0

Number of people proceeded against at magistrates courts for offences under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 in London, 1992 to 2004[1]

Offence description	*Statute*	*[2]1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*
Failing to give up a dog for destruction or having custody of a dog while disqualified.	Badgers (further protection) Act 1991 Sec.1. Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec. 4(8). Protection of Badgers Act 1 992 Sec. 13.	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
Total		375	318	178	125	76	80	83

Offence description	*Statute*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Owner or person In charge allowing dog to be dangerously out of control in a public place injuring any person.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(1).	45	53	58	59	63	64
Owner or person in charge allowing dog to enter a non-public place and injure any person.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(3)	1	3	2	2	4	2
Breeding or breeding from a fighting dog.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec1(2)(a)	0	1	1	6	0	1
Selling, exchanging, offering, advertising or exposing for sale a fighting dog.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec1(2)(b)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Giving or offering to give a fighting dog.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec1(2)(c)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Allowing a fighting dog to be in a public place without a muzzle or a lead.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(2)(d)	1	2	4	2	1	1
Abandoning, or allowing to stray, a fighting dog.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec1(2)(e).	2	0	0	0	0	0
Possession, without exemption, of a Pit Bull Terrier, Japanese Tosa or other designated fighting dog.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(3)	9	3	2	1	1	1
Owner or person in charge allowing dog to be dangerously out of control in a public place, no injury being caused.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(1)	19	28	29	16	19	13
Owner or person in charge allowing dog to enter a non- public place causing reasonable apprehension of injury to a person.	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(3).	2	2	1	0	3	0
Failing to give up a dog for destruction or having custody of a dog while disqualified.	Badgers (further protection) Act 1991 Sec.1. Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec. 4(8). Protection of Badgers Act 1 992 Sec. 13.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		79	92	97	86	91	82

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Offence code for Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 were introduced to the court proceeding database from 1 January1992.

DNA

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans are in place to integrate the National DNA Database with other national forensic and intelligence databases; and if he will make a statement. [68463]

Mr. Byrne: The National DNA Database currently has a link to the police national computer (PNC) to enable the police to tell whether someone arrested for a recordable offence has provided a DNA sample on a previous occasion. The national fingerprint system, IDENT1, is also connected to the PNC, but not directly to the National DNA Database. It is planned to pass limited information from IDENT1 to the NDNAD via the PNC in order to link records, contributing to PNC record integrity, without major integration of the systems.

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidelines he has given to chief constables on the manner in which they should exercise their discretion whether to destroy DNA samples. [47730]

Mr. Byrne: Home Office circular 25/2001 states that, when an individual is cleared of an offence, samples taken as evidence during an investigation may be retained, but that they may only be used for the purposes of prevention and detection of crime, the investigation of an offence, the conduct of a prosecution or, since April 2005, for the purposes of identifying a deceased person.

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) issued guidelines on 31 January 2006 to all chief officers on the exercise of their discretion to destroy DNA samples and remove the DNA profile from the national DNA database in exceptional circumstances. These guidelines will help to ensure national consistency.

The codes of practice (D) relating to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 give guidance on when retained samples may be used and the procedures for destruction.

The only time samples would be used is if a match were shown between an individual's DNA profile and that recovered from a crime scene.

Domestic Violence

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of calls to the police for assistance in *(a)* Southend-on-Sea, *(b)* Essex, *(c)* the Metropolitan police area of London and *(d)* England and Wales were to incidents of domestic violence in each of the last 10 years. [64990]

Mr. Byrne: The Home Office does not routinely collect data on calls to the police for assistance and does not have the figures for England and Wales.

Essex police and the Metropolitan police service (MPS) have been able to provide force level statistics on the number and percentage of calls made to their command and control systems which were incidents of domestic violence.

	MPS total incidents	*MPS total DV incidents*	*MPS percentage of all incidents which were DV*	*Essex total incidents*	*Essex total DV incidents*	*Essex percentage of all incidents which were DV*
2005-06	3,432,510	122,768	3.6	451,770	13,173	2.9
2004-05	3,334,654	126,824	3.8	441,061	12,057	2.7
2003-04	3,301,165	112,959	3.4	441,737	10,669	2.4
2002-03	3,198,604	96,020	3.0	446,118	9,690	2.2
2001-02	3,337,871	86,675	2.6	453,058	10,057	2.2
2000-01	3,309,264	77,523	2.3	—	—	—
1999-2000	3,654,682	78,515	2.1	—	—	—

Driver Prosecutions

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions there have been of motorists who have driven through red lights in *(a)* England and Wales and *(b)* Northamptonshire in the last 12 months. [68958]

Mr. Byrne: 2005 data will be available early in 2007.

Europol

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is his Department's policy to support proposals *(a)* to fund Europol directly from the EU budget, *(b)* to strengthen its mandate, *(c)* to increase the number of permanent staff at Europol and *(d)* to give the European Parliament a role in its supervision and management; and if he will make a statement. [69447]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The future of Europol is currently being examined within a 'Friends of the Presidency Group.' All member states, the commission and Europol itself are represented on the group. It will report to the JHA Council in June.

The Government believe that Europol should have at its disposal the resources required to achieve its aims. The permanent staff of Europol has recently increased by 47 and the Government would look at any future bids for more staff in light of the business case for them.

Intelligence Database

Natascha Engel: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what procedures *(a)* Government Departments and agencies and *(b)* local authorities with independent prosecuting authority for particular criminal offences use to forward details of (i) convictions, (ii) cautions and (iii) intelligence on possible criminals to (A) the Criminal Records Bureau and (B) the police national computer; what amendments to these procedures are proposed in relation to National Intelligence Database; and if he will make a statement. [68448]

Mr. Byrne: Government Departments and any other agency, including local authorities, with independent prosecuting authority for particular criminal offences are required to notify the police service in the area in which the offence was committed of any intention to prosecute such an offence. The police service enters details of such prosecutions onto the police national computer (PNC). Final disposals from courts are entered onto the PNC by the police, regardless of who is the prosecuting authority. The only exceptions to this are Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs and the Royal Military Police who update their own cases on to PNC.

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) has access to PNC conviction information as part of the disclosure process. In the event of an enhanced disclosure request, the CRB would also cause an inquiry to be made with the local police force who would consider whether or not it is relevant to disclose additional information. This may be non conviction information or intelligence. Guidance is available as to considerations prior to disclosure of such information.

The police national database, to be delivered by the IMPACT Programme, will facilitate the sharing of operational information between forces by giving authorised officers access to a data repository comprising copies of records held in individual force systems. The details of amendments to procedures with CRB in relation to this are still to be determined.

Juvenile Detention

Dr. Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the Government's policy is on the detention of children and babies for immigration and asylum purposes; and if he will make a statement. [71114]

Mr. McNulty: Unaccompanied minors are not detained other than in one very limited circumstance:

where, exceptionally, it is necessary to detain a child while alternative care arrangements are made and, then, normally just overnight.

Families with children may be detained in the following circumstances: initially, whilst their identities and basis of claim are established; where there are reasonable grounds for believing that they will fail to comply with the conditions of temporary admission or release; or to effect removal. In addition, families whose asylum claims appear to be capable of being decided quickly may be detained as part of a fast-track process.

Mobile Phone Driving Prosecutions

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been prosecuted for driving while using a mobile telephone in the last 12 months in Northamptonshire. [68933]

Mr. Byrne: 2005 data will be available early in 2007.

Mobile Phone Thefts

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will make a statement on the operation of the Mobile Phones (Re-Programming) Act 2002; what recent representations he has received about the operation of this Act; if he will place in the Library copies of such representations; and whether he plans to *(a)* amend and *(b)* repeal this Act; [69146]

(2) what steps he *(a)* has taken and *(b)* plans to take to reduce the theft of mobile phones; and if he will make a statement. [69147]

Mr. Byrne: Action to address mobile phone theft is a key element in the Government's programme to reduce robbery. The Street Crime Initiative has helped develop a strong and successful partnership between Government, industry and police which has led to several key actions being delivered.

These include a database of stolen and lost mobile phones that can be blocked on any network and providing funding, with the Metropolitan police, for the National Mobile Phone Crime Unit to focus specific operations on reducing mobile phone theft.

The Government also introduced the Mobile Telephones (Re-programming) Act 2002 which was welcomed by the police and industry alike. The purpose of the Act was to support the industry and the police in ensuring that stolen phones could not be further used by thieves.

According to National Mobile Phone Crime Unit statistics, from January 2004 to December 2005 there have been over 400 individual police operations. A number of custodial sentences and fines have resulted from the legislation.

Following representations from the industry and the police the Government have sought to strengthen the provisions in the Act, by introducing an amendment to the Violent Crime Reduction Bill to make it an offence to offer or agree to re-programme a mobile phone.

Copies of representations have been placed in the Library. The Government will keep this legislation under review to ensure its effectiveness.

In addition to public information and awareness campaigns, the Government intend to further strengthen the partnership with the mobile phone industry and the police to build on these measures and ensure that mobile phone theft remains a priority for action.

Non-emergency Situations

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer given by the hon. Member for Salford (Hazel Blears) on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 322W, on non-emergency situations, if he will take steps to ensure that the criteria for deciding whether *(a)* drug taking, *(b)* drunken behaviour, *(c)* harassment and *(d)* intimidation should be treated as (i) emergency and (ii) non-emergency situations are established by Ministers. [67696]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member for Birmingham, Yardley to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Member for Salford (Hazel Blears) on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 322W.

Police

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to publish his Department's police restructuring proposals following the recent consultations; and if he will make a statement. [48618]

Mr. Byrne The former Home Secretary (Mr. Clarke) announced on 3 March his intention to initiate amalgamations in the West Midlands, North-East, North-West regions and Wales.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 8 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1598W, on police, whether the statistical series of deaths during or following police contact produced by his Department's Police Leadership and Powers Unit will now *(a)* cease, *(b)* be taken over by the Independent Police Complaints Commission or *(c)* continue to be produced by his Department and be accessible via links on the Commission's website. [67535]

Mr. Byrne: Responsibility for the collation, analysis and publication of deaths during or following police contact passed to the Independent Police Complaints Commission with effect from 1 April 2005. Figures published on such deaths will be a matter for the Commission. Links to published figures will be accessible via the Home Office website.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers are planned to be deployed in each basic command unit in the Staffordshire police force area in *(a)* 2006, *(b)* 2007 and *(c)* 2008. [68360]

Mr. Byrne: Deployment of police officers in Staffordshire to basic command units and to other specialist units is an operational matter for the chief constable, subject to the resources that are available.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers were deployed in each basic command unit of the Staffordshire police force area in *(a)* 1987, *(b)* 1992, *(c)* 1997, *(d)* 2001, *(e)* 2004 and *(f)* 2005. [68361]

Mr. Byrne: Figures for police officers have been collected only by basic command unit (BCU) since March 2002. The available information is given in the following table.

The number of police officers deployed in each basic command unit (BCU) level of the Staffordshire police force area[1]

Basic command unit	*31 March 2004*	*31 March 2005*
Chase	419	416
North Staffordshire	301	299
Stoke on Trent	587	585
Trent Valley	392	429

[1] This table contains full-time equivalent figures that have been rounded to the nearest whole number, due to rounding there may be an apparent discrepancy between the totals and sums of the constituent items. Figures include police officers on maternity/paternity leave.

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers were deployed in Doncaster, North in *(a)* 1984, *(b)* 1994 and *(c)* 2004. [68405]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 4 May 2006]:* Figures relating to the number of police officers are collected by police force area and have only been collected at basic command unit (BCU) level since March 2003. Figures for Doncaster, North are not collected centrally.

As at 31 March 2004, there were 549 full-time equivalent (including those on career breaks or maternity/paternity leave) police officers in the Doncaster BCU.

Mr. Fraser: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria were used by his Department for adopting the deadline of 23 December for submitting final proposals on police restructuring. [38868]

Mr. Byrne: The former Home Secretary (Mr. Clarke) chose 23 December as the deadline for submitting final proposals because it provided sufficient time for the development of options.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether more crime data will be held centrally if constabularies are merged. [67083]

Mr. Byrne: The restructuring of the police service is not expected to result in more recorded crime data being collected centrally.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance he has issued on the fitting of front-line police vehicles with satellite navigation systems; and what percentage of such vehicles in each police force have been fitted with such devices. [68910]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* The fitting of satellite navigation systems to front-line police vehicles is currently a local operational issue for police forces and we do not issue guidance from the Home Office. As a result we no not have data on the number of vehicles which have been fitted with such devices.

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to ensure that the funding arrangements proposed for setting up the all-Wales police force meet the requirements of the local government finance acts. [67829]

Mr. Byrne: Any order made under section 32 of the Police Act 1996 amalgamating the four Welsh police forces would apply relevant local government finance acts to the combined police authority at the point at which it was established.

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the size was of the Metropolitan police force before the British Transport police were brought into it. [68131]

Mr. Byrne: There has been no transfer of functions or staff from the British Transport police (BTP) to the Metropolitan Police Service.

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many officers of the British Transport police are stationed within the area of North Wales police. [69432]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many officers of the British Transport police are regularly deployed on the Merseyrail rail network. [69434]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions the North Wales police helicopter was launched for operational reasons in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [69369]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Prison Governor-Grade Promotion

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* temporary and *(b)* permanent governor-grade promotions within the Prison Service are being funded by the (i) central budget and (ii) local establishment budget; on what basis the decision was taken in each case as to where the funding should come from; and if he will make a statement. [69415]

Mr. Sutcliffe: All governor grade promotions are paid for by Prison Service areas, heads of groups (outside of establishments) or by establishment budgets. There are no central budget arrangements for promotions of governor grades whether on a temporary or substantive basis.

Public Disorder

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in Lancashire were given on the spot fines for being drunk and disorderly under age in the last 12 months. [66485]

Mr. Byrne: Provisional data from the Penalty Notices for Disorder (PND) database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform shows that, in the Lancashire police force area in 2005, 410 penalty notices for disorder were issued to persons aged 16 and 17 for the offence of "being drunk and disorderly". This is the most recent 12-month period for which complete data are available. An additional 84 notices were issued to juveniles aged 14 and 15 as a part of the Juvenile PND pilot in Lancashire during the same period.

Public Service Agreements

Nick Herbert: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress his Department is making towards the Spending Review 2004 Public Service Agreement Target 2, on crime and anti-social behaviour and the criminal justice system; and if he will make a statement. [67856]

Mr. Byrne: The spending review 2004 set the following Public Service Agreement Target (PSA) for the Home Department:

PSA 2 Reassure the public, reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour and building confidence in the criminal justice system without compromising fairness.

The former Home Secretary (Charles Clarke) published progress made against these targets in the Autumn Performance Report of December 2005 (CM6707), and the latest assessment of progress, in the Departmental Report for 2005-06 which will be published in May.

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/ho-targets-autumn-report-05

Sex Offenders

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people are listed on the Register of Sex Offenders; and for how many such people a current residential address is not known to the police. [67661]

Mr. Coaker: As at 31 March 2005 (the latest point for which figures are available) there were 28,994 registered sex offenders in the community across England and Wales. One of the requirements of registration is that offenders notify to the police a home address and any other address where more than seven days a year are spent, as well as any changes to this information. Moreover, if an offender claims to be homeless or otherwise of 'no fixed abode' then they must provide the address or location of a place in the UK where they can be regularly found. Failure to supply that information, or supplying false information, is an offence punishable by up to five year's imprisonment.

Sex Tourism

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps are being taken by his Department to prevent sex tourism by British citizens, with particular reference to that involving children. [68227]

Mr. Coaker: We have reduced the period of time that registered sex offenders are allowed to spend overseas without notifying the police. Now, all registered sex offenders are required to notify the police of any foreign travel of three days duration or more. The police will use that information to decide whether it is necessary to take any action to prevent travel. That action can include applying for foreign travel orders, which we introduced in the Sexual Offences Act 2003. The orders can be sought where the police consider that the offender poses a risk of serious sexual harm to children under 16 in an overseas country.

Since 1997, we have been able to prosecute in the British courts those who have offended against children overseas. In brief, if an act is an offence in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and constitutes an offence in the country where it was committed, then the offender can be convicted and punished for their crimes in this country on their return.

We are currently reviewing our policy and legislation relating to travelling sex offenders and will be examining whether the law needs to be strengthened further to better protect children overseas.

Speeding Offences

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether defendants charged with speeding offences face potentially higher fines if they choose to appear in court; and if he will make a statement. [68667]

Mr. Byrne: The maximum fine for a person convicted of speeding is set at level three, currently £1,000. The court will decide the exact amount, taking into account the offender's means and ability to pay. If the offender is offered and accepts a fixed penalty, this is set at £60.

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what evidence defendants are entitled to receive in relation to penalties or prosecution for speeding offences; if he will take steps to include information which would enable the defendant to make a time over distance calculation of their speed; and if he will make a statement. [68673]

Mr. Byrne: Suspected offenders will be told that they or a vehicle of which they are the registered keeper have been detected committing a speeding offence. The provision of further information is a matter for individual chief officers of police. Some send a photograph of the vehicle with the notice of intended prosecution. Guidance from the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) is that the registered keeper or person named by the keeper as driver at the time of the alleged offence should be allowed to view photographic evidence on request. If a case went to court, the prosecution would have to furnish the evidence to support the proceedings and relevant material would be disclosed under the provisions of the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996.

Suicides/Infanticide

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females (i) were found guilty of and (ii) pleaded guilty to complicity in or assisting (A) a suicide and (B) infanticide in (1) Southend on Sea, (2) Essex, (3) the Metropolitan police area of London, (4) Hertfordshire and (5) England and Wales in each year since 1983. [64753]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is provided in the following table.

Number of defendants convicted at the Crown court for 'Infanticide' and 'aiding suicide' in selected police force areas and England and Wales, 1983 to 2004[1]

	Metropolitan police		*Hertfordshire*		*Essex*		*Southend on Sea*[2]		*England and Wales*	
	Guilty plea	*Conviction*	*Guilty plea*	*Conviction*	*Guilty plea*	*Conviction*	*Guilty plea*	*Conviction*	*Guilty plea*	*Conviction*
Infanticide										
1983	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	9
1984	1	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	7
1985	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
1986	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9
1987	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
1988	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	4	4
1989	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	3
1990	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
1991	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7
1992	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
1993	—	2	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	5
1994	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
1995	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2
1996	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	4
1997	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	3
1998	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
1999	2	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	8
2000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
2001	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	5
2002	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
2003	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2004	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Aiding suicide										
1983	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	3
1984	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
1985	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1986	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1987	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
1988	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
1989	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	5
1990	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8
1991	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
1992	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
1993	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
1994	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
1995	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	1	2
1996	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2
1997	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	4
1998	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	3
1999	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
2000	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2

Number of defendants convicted at the Crown court for 'Infanticide' and 'aiding suicide' in selected police force areas and England and Wales, 1983 to 2004[1]

	Metropolitan police		*Hertfordshire*		*Essex*		*Southend on Sea*[2]		*England and Wales*	
	Guilty plea	*Conviction*	*Guilty plea*	*Conviction*	*Guilty plea*	*Conviction*	*Guilty plea*	*Conviction*	*Guilty plea*	*Conviction*
2001	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
2002	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	4
2003	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2
2004	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	3

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis.
[2] Shows the number of convictions which originated from South East Essex petty sessional area.

Uninsured Drivers

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what proportion of drivers prosecuted in each of the last five years for driving while uninsured had six to eight penalty points on their driving licence. [68869]

Mr. Byrne: Information is not available in the detail required.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful prosecutions of uninsured drivers there have been in each year since 1997. [68871]

Mr. Byrne: Available information from 1997 to 2004 (latest available) is given in the following table.

The figures given in the table are taken from the Home Office publication "Offences relating to motor vehicles, England and Wales, Supplementary tables". Copies are available in the Library.

Data for 2005 will not be available till early 2007.

Number of proceedings at magistrates courts for offences of using motor vehicle uninsured against third party risks[1] *by outcome, England and Wales, 1997-2004*

			Number of offences	
	Total proceedings	*Proceedings discontinued*[2]	*Charges withdrawn/ dismissed*	*Total findings of guilt*[3]
1997	396,912	16,462	122,173	257,689
1998	390,074	14,806	117,650	256,974
1999	393,469	14,798	143,460	234,830
2000	391,659	12,191	114,180	264,874
2001	388,297	11,682	108,361	266,757
2002	410,963	12,709	107,729	289,064
2003	447,267	12,060	110,309	323,374
2004	441,819	10,051	107,717	322,816

[1] Offences under the Road Traffic Act 1988 s. 143(2).
[2] Also includes discharges under section 6 of the Magistrates' Courts Act 1980.
[3] Includes findings of guilt at the Crown Court.
Note:
Coverage and recording practice affecting the statistics: (A) It is known that for some police force areas the reporting of court proceedings, in particular those relating to summary motoring offences, may be less than complete. (B) Since 1990, due to the delays in implementing new counting procedures, corrective action on non-keying errors was reduced resulting in deterioration in the quality of data on summary motoring proceedings.

Yarl's Wood

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will publish a response to the report by the Children's Commissioner on his visit to the Yarl's Wood immigration removal centre on 21 October 2005. [70862]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer given on 25 April 2006, *Official Report*, column WA13.

Youth Crime

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assistance is being given to Staffordshire constabulary by his Department to tackle incidents of youth crime and antisocial behaviour in Tamworth constituency; and if he will make a statement. [68359]

Mr. Byrne: Staffordshire youth offending service has a legal duty to and works closely with Staffordshire police and other partner agencies in preventing and tackling youth crime and antisocial behaviour in Staffordshire. This includes partnership around the priority and other prolific offenders strategy, on which the youth offending service leads in respect of the prevent and deter strand. Staffordshire youth offending service has established a prevention team which will be working very closely with the police, district and borough councils, the voluntary sector and schools to identify and work with young people who are at high risk of committing crime and antisocial behaviour.

The respect action plan is central to the Government's drive to go broader, deeper and further on antisocial behaviour by tackling its root causes; preventing it occurring in the first place for example by ensuring better parenting provision and family support while not letting up on stopping anti-social behaviour that blights many communities.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Child Contact Orders

Tim Loughton: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many parents with custody of their children have been prosecuted for contempt of court in relation to a breach of child contact orders in each of the last five years. [69357]

Ms Harman: A contempt of court can arise within family proceedings in a variety of circumstances and it is not possible to identify the number of cases in which failure to comply with a contact order leads to the matter being dealt with as a contempt of court.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many child contact orders have returned to court due to alleged breaches in each of the last five years. [69381]

Ms Harman: This information is not held centrally and to obtain it would incur disproportionate cost. However, an analysis of a sample of court files published in the Green Paper "Children's Needs and Parents' Responsibilities" indicated that there were repeat applications in respect in half of the cases concerned and that a third of these repeat applications arose from breaches of contact orders.

Civil Servants (Overseas Visits)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what costs were incurred by her Department as a result of sending civil servants on overseas visits in each of the last 10 years. [46289]

Bridget Prentice: Total overseas travel costs for civil servants for the Department, which includes the Court Service, the Public Guardianship Office and the Department for Constitutional Affairs Headquarters, are set out in the following table:

Period	*Amount (£)*
2005-06	164,632
2004-05	154,368
2003-04	172,631
2002-03	145,257
2001-02	96,251
2000-01	153,737
1999-2000	103,449
1998-99	110,774

There has been an increase in travel costs since 2002-03, because of the increased responsibilities of the Department.

Information on previous years is not readily available.

All civil service travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the civil service management code, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

Community Courts

Mr. Allen: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent progress has been made in establishing community courts; and if she will make a statement. [70213]

Ms Harman: There are currently two community justice projects—the Community Justice Centre, North Liverpool and the Salford Community Justice Initiative. Both of which were launched at the end of last year.

We will consider the lessons learned from the Liverpool and Salford projects and work with local agencies to determine ways the concept can be applied elsewhere.

Coroners' Officers

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the role of Coroners Officers. [69995]

Ms Harman: Coroners officers perform a vital investigative and administrative role for their respective local coroner. My oral statement to Parliament on 6 February, and the accompanying briefing note, outlines the proposals for change in the coroners' system more broadly.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps her Department is taking to assist the coroners' service with its workload following the increase in the number of reported deaths in 2005; and if she will make a statement. [69996]

Ms Harman: Resourcing of coroners services is a local responsibility.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans she has to reform the work of coroners officers. [69997]

Ms Harman: The Government plan to reform the coroners' system as a whole. My oral statement to the House of Commons on 6 February, and the accompanying briefing note, outlines the proposals for change. A draft Bill, for scrutiny, will be published shortly.

Corporate Hospitality

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs on how many occasions she has accepted corporate hospitality in the last 12 months. [67522]

Ms Harman: None. Paragraph 5.28 of the ministerial code sets out the rules on the registration of hospitality.

County Court Judgment Records

Mr. Todd: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the implications for competitiveness of the restriction to a single third-party distributor of information based on county court judgment records. [67795]

Ms Harman: No such assessment has been made.

The 'Registrar' is a statutory function established by the Register of Judgments, Orders and Fines Regulations 2005. Registry Trust Ltd., which is a non-profit making company, kept the Register of County Court Judgments for the Department, under the terms of a contract, since 1986. Following a review of the service in 2002 to 2004 and subsequent consultation, the Department concluded that the contract for the keeping of the register should be put out to tender from time to time.

To ensure continuity of the provision of the register service and a smooth implementation of new regulations (which include the provision of new data in the register on unpaid fines), the Department decided in the short-term to negotiate a revised contract with Registry Trust Ltd. They have been re- appointed as Registrar to run the Register of Judgments, Orders and Fines until 2009.

We will be reviewing the options for the longer term in 2007, taking into account competitiveness issues. We currently expect to hold a competition in 2008 for the post-April 2009 contract.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether she has conducted a survey of users of county court judgment records to obtain their views on the value of such records. [67799]

Ms Harman: The Department carried out a review of the service and method of service delivery of the Register of County Court Judgments in 2003 prior to public consultation. This included research among users of county court judgment records of the use to which records are put, their current and future value and sought views on how the service could be improved.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent assessment she has made of the accuracy of county court judgment records; what plans her Department has to recover the cost of improvement from the users of the records; and if she will make a statement. [67800]

Ms Harman: An audit of the accuracy of the county court judgments recorded in the Register of County Court Judgments was carried out in 2004. This advised the drafting of amendments to the Civil Procedure Rules, the objective of which is to improve the accuracy of the data supplied to the courts by parties on issue of a claim. The cost to the courts of implementing the requirements of the amended Civil Procedure Rules is to be recovered from Registry Trust Ltd. through the charges raised by the Department for the supply of judgment records.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the items of departmental property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47688]

Bridget Prentice: The Department has had two 15-inch flat screen monitors reported as lost in the last 12 months. The total value of this loss to the Department was £1,143.

Departmental Entertainment

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much was spent on entertainment by her Department in 2004-05; and how much of that sum is accounted for by *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation. [50886]

Bridget Prentice: It is not possible to list the entertainment costs spent by the Department broken down by *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation without incurring disproportionate cost.

However, total expenditure on entertainment for the Department, which covers costs for the Court Service, the Public Guardianship Office and DCA Headquarters in 2004-05 is £78,097.

All expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety that is based on principles set out in Government Accounting.

Magistrates

Dr. Vis: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what training in diversity issues is compulsory for *(a)* sitting and *(b)* new magistrates. [68122]

Ms Harman: For *(a)*, sitting magistrates, the Judicial Studies Board has included diversity within the Magistrates' National Training Initiative (MNTI 2) competence framework. This framework contains a number of knowledge and performance elements requiring magistrates to demonstrate an understanding of, among other things, "Diversity and fair treatment issues, including the use of non-discriminatory language" and "The potential impact of your background and personal prejudices on decision making". Sitting magistrates are regularly appraised against these competences.

For *(b)*, new magistrates, they must complete induction training before being allowed to sit. Diversity is a part of this programme. Following induction training, new magistrates undertake mentored sittings to identify any further training needs, using the MNTI 2 competence framework. Any needs so identified are addressed at local level. The new magistrate is first appraised after sitting for 12 to 18 months, and thereafter further training follows as for sitting magistrates.

Members of Parliament Judges

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the hon. Members who are serving *(a)* Crown court recorders and *(b)* circuit judges. [70088]

Ms Harman: Circuit judges are disqualified from membership of the House. Although the Department does not keep a central list of Members of Parliament who hold current appointments as Recorders, our records show that the following Members of Parliament hold that office:

E H Gamier Esq. QC
H J Malins Esq. CBE
R G Marshall-Andrews Esq. QC.

Sentencing Policy

Dr. Vis: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps are taken to minimise the discrepancies in sentencing practices between magistrates courts. [68121]

Ms Harman: The Sentencing Guidelines Council promulgates guidelines to enable all criminal courts to approach the sentencing of offenders from a common starting point to promote consistency in sentencing. All courts are required to take the guidelines of the Sentencing Guidelines Council into account when sentencing offenders and have to give reasons for departing from them in any particular case. Discrepancies in sentencing in all criminal courts are therefore minimised through the use of these guidelines. Currently magistrates courts use the Magistrates Courts Sentencing Guidelines issued in 2004 by the Magistrates Association but these are to be replaced by guidelines produced by the Sentencing Guidelines Council. Appealing against sentence to the Crown court is another mechanism for ensuring consistency of sentencing in the magistrates courts. Consistency in sentencing is further promoted through the publication of judgments on appeals to the Court of Appeal from the Crown court.

Staff Development

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the total cost was of *(a)* staff away days and *(b)* staff team building exercises in her Department in each of the last three years. [69029]

Bridget Prentice: The cost of *(a)* staff away days and *(b)* staff team building exercises in the Department in each of the last three years is not separately identifiable within the Department's accounts without incurring disproportionate costs.

The Department is committed to providing access to training for staff and developing them to their full potential.

Tribunals Service

Dr. Cable: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the estimated net cost is of establishing the Tribunals Service in each of the five financial years from 2006-07. [65714]

Ms Harman: The latest estimated cost of operating the Tribunal Service for the first five years from 2006-07 is:

	£ million Cost
2006-07	300
2007-08	297
2008-09	307
2009-10	315
2010-11	325

The first two years reflects a £15 million efficiency baseline saving in each year from the total cost of running the tribunals separately. The cost of the final three years includes the £15 million a year baseline saving but does not take into account any further efficiency to be identified within the Tribunals Service. The final three years include cost increases due to assumptions of pay awards at the current levels of judicial and staff salary costs and inflation but makes no further assumptions as to targets or further savings or efficiencies.

Voter Registration

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much the Government spent in *(a)* 2005 and *(b)* 2006 on campaigns to increase voter registration, including grants to local authorities. [70605]

Bridget Prentice: In 2005, the Government spent £2,132 on the launch of the London-based campaign to raise awareness of the need to register. In 2006, the Government spent £192,571 on this "1824 Collective" campaign which promoted awareness of voter registration amongst London's "urban youth" using the creative concept of an urban music collective to appeal to 18-24 year olds.

During 2006 the Government will also provide grants totalling £90,600 to seven English local authorities to explore new methods of encouraging young people to register to vote through working with youth organisations and further and higher education institutions.

HEALTH

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment has been made of which at-risk groups would benefit from screening for abdominal aortic aneurysm; [67436]

(2) what plans she has to introduce screening for abdominal aortic aneurysm. [67437]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The United Kingdom national screening committee (NSC) has advised that screening for men aged 65 for abdominal aortic aneurysms can be recommended in principle subject to the two critical issues of ensuring appropriate configuration and to deliver high quality treatment services and providing information and support to enable men to make an informed choice about whether to be screened.

Ministers have noted the advice of the NSC and further detailed work is in progress.

Adverse Drug Reactions

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the online adverse drug reaction report information analyses for the use of the general public will be updated from the January 2004 materials; and if she will make a statement. [69645]

Andy Burnham: Reports of suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) are collected by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the commission on human medicines (CHM) through the spontaneous reporting scheme, the yellow card scheme. Approximately 19,000 reports of suspected ADRs are reported to the MHRA/CHM through this scheme each year by health professionals and patients.

The MHRA are committed to making drug safety information derived from the yellow card scheme as accessible as possible. To this end, in January 2005 the MHRA published aggregated, anonymised data summarising the suspected ADRs reported for all medicines on its website. At initial publication this information comprised reports received up to January 2004.

In September 2005 the information was updated to June 2005 and this is the information currently available online. A further update of the information to bring it up to March 2006 is in progress and will be in place by the end of May.

The MHRA is currently implementing a major upgrade of the drug safety monitoring database and data reporting systems. This upgrade includes a review of the presentation of aggregated drug safety information with a view to making the information easier to interpret.

Subsequent to this redesign, the MHRA will update the adverse drug reaction data on a three-monthly cycle.

Anaesthetics

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the supply of *(a)* dental anaesthetic and *(b)* anaesthetics used in hospitals in relation to expected demand in 2006; [68323]

(2) what recent assessment she has made of the supply of anaesthetic to the NHS from Dentsply; what action she is taking to meet shortfalls in supply; and if she will make a statement; [68324]

(3) whether consideration is being given *(a)* to supplementing 2.2ml cartridges of dental anaesthetic with 1.8ml cartridges and *(b)* to licensing the latter. [68325]

Andy Burnham: Departmental officials have met with the two companies who manufacture dental cartridges for the United Kingdom market. Deproco has increased its production to meet the predicted shortfall in the market created by the temporary absence of Dentsply, and is making regular weekly supplies. Based on historic demand the Department's assessment is that these should be sufficient for all dental sectors.

Dentsply is seeking approval from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) for a new production site, and in the meantime has obtained MHRA approval to supply a limited amount of 1.8 millilitre (ml) cartridges. The Chief Dental Officer has written to dentists and issued a statement on the Department's website to explain the supply issues and advise dentists not to stockpile.

Companies may take the commercial decision to enter the dental anaesthetic market with 1.8ml or 2.2ml cartridges. As with other medicines, these products must be licensed by the MHRA.

Bowel Cancer

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many faecal occult blood kits had been *(a)* ordered and *(b)* received by 29 March in preparation for the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme; [63429]

(2) how many individuals she expects to receive faecal occult blood kits as part of the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme by 31 December. [63428]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The first order of 100,000 testing kits has been made with the supplier. We estimate that between 100,000 and 120,000 men and women will be screened in 2006-07.

Dr. Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme will be extended to Durham. [68128]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The bowel cancer screening programme will be rolled out across the whole of England over the next three years.

Five programme hubs across England will invite men and women to participate in the screening programme, send out the faecal occult blood (FOB) testing kits, interpret kits and send results out.

The first of the five programme hubs will be established in Rugby. The national cancer screening team are currently assessing where the other programme hubs will be located and announcements will be made as soon as possible.

Ninety to 100 local screening centres will provide endoscopy services for the 2 per cent. of men and women who have a positive FOB test result.

Strategic health authorities (SHAs) were asked to bid last August for their local endoscopy units to become local screening centres as part of the first wave of the programme in 2006-07. Similar exercises will take place for the second wave in 2007-08 and the third wave in 2008-09. It is up to SHAs to decide where local screening centres should be located for the benefit of their own populations.

We intend that all five programme hubs will be established, and around 14 local screening centres will be operating, out of a total of 90 to 100 for full national coverage, by March 2007.

Breast Screening

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects the mobile breast screening unit to visit Great Dunmow; and what the date was of its last visit. [68412]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the breast screening programme at St. Margaret's hospital, Epping; how many women are waiting to be examined; and for how long each has been waiting. [68415]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is for primary care trusts to commission services to meet the needs of the populations that they serve. However, I understand that the breast screening service in West Essex, based at St. Margaret's hospital, Epping, was suspended between November 2004 and January 2006.

Screening resumed at the end of January 2006 with a limited service initially with a phased implementation plan to expand the service from one mobile unit to two units later this year.

The data as to the number of women waiting to be examined are not held centrally.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the catchment area is for breast screening for Broomfield Hospital, Chelmsford. [68416]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Colchester and Chelmsford breast screening services cover Mid Essex Hospital (of which Broomfield hospital is a part), and Essex Rivers catchment areas and therefore offer a screening service to approximately 83,000 women living in Chelmsford, Maldon, Witham, Braintree, Halstead, Colchester and Tendring.

Cancer

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on her Department's Cancer Plan. [68830]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Cancer Plan set out our 10-year strategy for cancer services in England. We are now almost six years into the plan and are focusing on delivering its commitments.

Progress reports on the NHS Cancer Plan were published in 2001, 2003 and 2004, which showed considerable successes and improvements in cancer services in England, while acknowledging that more remains to be done.

Additionally, in March 2005 the National Audit Office published their review of the NHS Cancer Plan. Their review acknowledged the significant improvements in the management and provision of cancer services since the publication of the NHS Cancer Plan and the good progress already made against the major targets.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the five most common causes of lung cancer are in England. [68831]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The greatest risk factor for causing lung cancer is smoking tobacco, which causes 90 per cent. of cases of lung cancer in men and 80 per cent. of cases of lung cancer in women.

Other risk factors include exposure to industrial carcinogens, such as asbestos, exposure to radon gas and its decay products, and air pollution.

Scarring from previous lung disease has been related to increased risk, but would account for a very small proportion of lung cancer cases. Smoking tobacco remains by far the most important risk factor.

Cannabis-based Medicine

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency on the granting of product approval of cannabis-based medicine. [64764]

Andy Burnham: My right hon. Friend, the then Minister of State (Jane Kennedy) had some contact with the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) on the issue of approval of cannabis-based medicinal products from time to time. The MHRA also provided periodic briefing documents on the progress of one marketing authorisation application as background information in support of a variety of parliamentary questions related to cannabis- based medicinal products.

Chernobyl

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment has been made of the possible health effects in England of radioactive fallout from Chernobyl in respect of incidences of *(a)* thyroid cancer, *(b)* other solid cancers, *(c)* leukaemia, *(d)* non-cancer diseases and *(e)* genetic diseases. [68112]

Caroline Flint: Following the Chernobyl reactor accident in 1986 preliminary assessments of the radiation doses were carried out by the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB, now part of the Health Protection Agency (HPA)). In particular, NRPB carried out a study for the European Commission (EUR 11523—a preliminary assessment of the radiological impact of the Chernobyl reactor accident on the population of the European Community) which was published in 1988. This included estimates of the risks of radiation-induced thyroid cancers and total fatal cancers in the population of the European Commission.

The Chernobyl accident was also included in the NRPB study (NRPB-R276) which considered the risks of leukaemia and other cancers in Seascale from all sources of ionising radiation exposure, published in 1995. Since this time, NRPB has not carried out any further assessments of possible health effects from the Chernobyl accident. However, the NRPB has commented on other papers in the public domain, for example in the response to the "Report of the Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters" which is available on the HPA's website at: www.hpa.org.uk/radiation/publications/misc_publications/nrpb_response_to_cerrie_report.htm.

A paper by Dolk et al in 1999 considered the impact of Chernobyl on the prevalence of congenital abnormalities in 16 regions in Europe (Int J Epidemiol 28: 941-8) and found no detectable impact in Western Europe. The effect of the Chernobyl accident on thyroid cancers was also considered in a paper and editorial in volume 37 of the European Journal of Cancer in 1991.

Class A Drugs

Mr. Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures she is taking to increase the number of residential rehabilitation places available for those addicted to class A drugs. [70208]

Caroline Flint: The Government recognise that residential rehabilitation has a key role to play in ensuring that we have a comprehensive range of treatment services available to meet the needs of drug misusers.

The National Treatment Agency's treatment effectiveness strategy, launched last year, identifies residential rehabilitation as one of the most effective ways of meeting the needs of drug misusers with complex needs.

I hope to be able, in the near future, to announce what resources will be available to commissioners and partners to support the improvements in both quality and capacity we are committed to ensuring.

Correspondence

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will reply to the letters from the hon. Member for Vale of York of 30 March and 18 April on breast screening; and if she will make a statement on the status of breast screening at St. Margaret's hospital, Epping. [68631]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Replies were sent to the hon. Members on 4 May.

It is for the primary care trust to commission services to meet the needs of those communities that they serve.

Dentistry

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether there is a local resolution procedure available to dentists in dispute with primary care trusts over the new dental contract. [69841]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Primary care trusts (PCTs) and dental contractors have a duty to try and resolve any dispute locally before it is referred to the National Health Service Litigation Authority. This duty is set out in Schedule 3, Part 7, of The National Health Service (General Dental Services Contracts) Regulations 2005 (SI 2005/3361) and in Schedule 3, Part 7 of The National Health Service (Personal Dental Services Agreements) Regulations 2005 (SI2005/3373). It is good practice for PCTs to have established a local disputes procedure to deal with such matters.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists were available to NHS patients in the Chichester district on 1 April, or the latest date for which figures are available. [65271]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As at 31 December 2005, there were 58 NHS dentists with a general dental services (GDS) or personal dental services (PDS) contract within Chichester parliamentary constituency. A dentist with a GDS or PDS contract may provide as little or as much NHS treatment as he or she chooses and has agreed with their primary care trust. Information concerning the amount of time dedicated to NHS work by individual GDS or PDS dentists is not centrally available.

Information on the number of dentists who have signed the new contract is not available centrally. We do however have some provisional information that covers contracts. A contract may be for more than one dentist so cannot be broken down further to individual dentist level.

Provisional management estimates show that in Western Sussex primary care trust (PCT):

	Number	*Approximate UDA[1] value*	*Percentage UDAs*	*Number signed without dispute*	*Number signed in dispute*	*Percentage disputes*
Contracts signed	23	175,753	—	11	12	52.2
Contracts still in discussion	1	1,022	—	—	—	—
Contracts rejected	2	956	0.5	—	—	—

[1] Units of dental activity.

Notes:

1. Data include all notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS, received by the NHS Business Services Authority, up to 23 March 2006. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period, e.g. data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS.
2. Dentists consist of principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts have been excluded.
3. The postcode of the dental practice was used to allocate dentists to specific geographic areas. Constituency areas have been defined using the Office for National Statistics all fields postcode directory.
4. Data on the number of dentists working only in private practice are not held centrally.

PCTs are working with dentists to resolve as many disputes as possible locally.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding her Department has provided to *(a)* East Hull and West Hull primary care trust and *(b)* the NHS for dental services in each year since 1997. [65466]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not available in the format requested. The table shows ringfenced funding provided to primary care trusts (PCTs) which is guaranteed for three years.

PCT	*2003-04 gross costs (2006-07 prices) (£)*	*2006-07 gross budget (£)*	*Increase (percentage)*
Eastern Hull	6,222,135.36	6,833,900	9.8
West Hull	7,812,165.04	8,300,214	6.2

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* dentists and *(b)* dental practices in the Eastbourne Downs Primary Care Trust area have (i) signed and (ii) not signed the new NHS contract. [65499]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of dentists who have signed the new contract is not available centrally. We do however have some provisional information that covers contracts. A contract may be for more than one dentist so cannot be broken down further to individual dentist level.

Provisional management estimates show that in Eastbourne Downs Primary Care Trust (PCT):

	Estimates
Contracts signed	
Number	39
Approximate units of dental activity (UDA) value	232,661
Contracts still in discussion	
Number	3
Approximate UDA value	1,757
Contracts rejected	
Number	6
Approximate UDA value	13,600
Percentage UDAs	5.5
Contracts signed	
Number signed without dispute	38
Number signed in dispute	1
Percentage disputes	2.6

Note:
The information provided is not validated. It represents a snapshot of the position in early April.

A contract may be for either a practice or an individual dentist.

PCTs are working with dentists to resolve as many disputes as possible locally.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Portsmouth *(a)* were registered with dentists who have not signed and *(b)* are registered with dentists who have signed the new NHS contract for dentistry. [66433]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of dentists who have signed the new contract is not available centrally. We do however have some provisional information that covers contracts, contract may be for more than one dentist so cannot be broken down further to individual dentist level.

Provisional management estimates show that in Portsmouth City Primary Care Trust (PCT):

	Estimates
Contracts signed	
Number	30
Approximate units of dental activity (UDA) value	283,111
Contracts still in discussion	
Number	0
Approximate UDA value	0
Contracts rejected	
Number	4
Approximate UDA value	26,273
Percentage UDAs	8.5
Contracts signed	
Number signed without dispute	14
Number signed in dispute	16
Percentage disputes	53

Note:
The information provided is not validated. It represents a snapshot of the position in early April.

PCTs are working with dentists to resolve as many disputes as possible locally.

The figures show that the majority of national health service dentists in Portsmouth have accepted the new NHS contract and as a consequence the loss is relatively minimal. The PCT will use the funding available to purchase additional UDAs from other interested dentists in the short term to seek to maintain levels of dentistry.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists who have signed the new NHS dental contract have given notice that they intend to resign from that contact. [66712]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Under the new dental contract, as under the old arrangements, dentists are required to give three months' notice of giving up a national health service contract.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the targets are for units of dental activity for 2006-07, broken down by primary care trust. [64982]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has not set targets for primary care trusts for units of dental activity.

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in North West Cambridgeshire have *(a)* signed and *(b)* not signed the new contract for NHS dentists. [66927]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of dentists who have signed the new contract is not available centrally. We do however have some provisional information that covers contacts. A contract may be for more than one dentist and so cannot be broken down further to individual dentist level.

The table shows the number of contracts for national health service dentists that have been signed in the North West Cambridgeshire area.

Primary care trust (PCT)	*Contracts signed*	*Contracts rejected*
South Peterborough PCT	11	3
Huntingdonshire PCT	24	4

Source:
Data collected from strategic health authorities.

Diabetes

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 23 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2108-09W, on diabetes, what criteria she used in making the decision not to refer all insulin products used in the UK to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. [67698]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's clinical guidelines on the management of both type one and type two diabetes conclude that the majority of studies indicate that both human and animal insulins are equally effective and report no significant differences in hypoglycaemic episodes and glycaemic control between the insulin of human and animal chemical structures.

I understand that the choice of insulin is influenced by other factors such as delivery systems and cultural preferences, and so the decision to use one or other of the insulin types rests entirely with the physician, in consultation with the patient.

Diagnostic Scans

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the performance of Alliance Medical Ltd. in providing diagnostic scans in the NHS; and if she will make a statement; [70809]

(2) what aspects of performance her Department examines when carrying out *(a)* weekly, *(b)* monthly and *(c)* annual assessments of the performance of Alliance Medical Ltd. in providing diagnostic scans in the NHS. [65109]

Andy Burnham: Alliance Medical Ltd.'s contract performance is reviewed by a combination of the weekly and monthly activity reports. The aspects of performance that are assessed include the volume of scans, number of patients contacted and booked, report dispatch times, patient satisfaction, referrer satisfaction, cancellations and quality of radiological reporting. These are collected on a monthly basis. Weekly data are also collected on the number of scans performed at each site visited.

In addition, the clinical aspects of the service have been assessed through joint Departmental and Royal College of Radiologists clinical audits. Each audit compared performance of the Alliance Medical Ltd. service with that of the NHS. The second audit was published on 11 May 2006 and on the Royal College of Radiologists' website at: www.rcr.ac.uk/docs/radiology/pdf/MR_CG_Audit_April2006.pdf.

Embryonic Stem Cells (Teeth)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what research has been *(a)* funded and *(b)* carried out by her Department on the use of embryonic stem cells to develop human teeth; and if she will make a statement; [70095]

(2) what her policy is on the use of stem cells to grow human teeth; and if she will make a statement. [70096]

Andy Burnham: The Department is not funding research into stem cells for creating replacement teeth. The Government believe that stem cell research offers enormous potential to deliver new treatments, including the improved reconstructive dental surgery for those who have suffered severe injury or cancer.

To date, the published scientific evidence has not established which types of stem cells will be the most useful for human therapies. Therefore, following the UK stem cell initiative report in 2005, the Government have announced up to £100 million for all forms of stem cell research in 2006 to 2008.

Foster Review

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the Foster Review of non-medical health regulation is expected to be published; and how much time she expects to make available for consultation about its recommendations. [69257]

Andy Burnham: We will publish our decisions on the review of non-medical professional regulation and on the chief medical officer's review of medical revalidation and related subjects in due course. We will identify any matters requiring consultation and announce the duration of such consultation.

GP Contract

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the ability of *(a)* GP practices and *(b)* primary care trusts to fund (i) the purchase of new buildings and (ii) the rental of premises under the new GP contract; and if she will make a statement. [69683]

Ms Rosie Winterton: General practitioner practices should seek the agreement of their primary care trust (PCT) on plans to move to new practice premises. Irrespective of the new general medical services contract, general practitioner practices have always had the ability to lease rented premises or borrow capital to fund new-build premises. In turn, primary care trusts and their predecessor bodies have the ability to consider funding agreed associated revenue costs from their resource allocations.

Health Professionals' Councils

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost was to public funds of the *(a)* General Osteopathic Council, *(b)* General Chiropractic Council and *(c)* Health Professions Council in (i) 2004-05 and (ii) 2005-06. [69258]

Andy Burnham: No money was paid to these organisations, which are self-funded through registrants' subscriptions, with the exception of £1,465.40 paid to the General Chiropractic Council in 2005-06 for the cost of room hire and catering.

Herceptin

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of Herceptin at treating early stage breast cancer; [67806]

(2) when she expects the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to issue its guidelines on the prescription of Herceptin to patients with early stage breast cancer. [67964]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is not the role of the Department to assess the effectiveness of treatments.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Authority in the United Kingdom and the European Medicines Agency (EMEA) for the European Union (EU) consider the safety and efficacy of treatments. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) considers the clinical and cost effectiveness of certain licensed treatments for use in the national health service.

In February 2006, Roche applied to the EMEA to extend its licence indication for Herceptin to include adjuvant treatment of early breast cancer. At the end of April, the EMEA's committee for medicinal products for human use recommended that Herceptin be approved for this indication. The next stage in the regulatory process is for the European Commission to evaluate this recommendation with a view to issuing marketing authorisation in the EU. A decision is expected in a few weeks.

Herceptin for early stage breast cancer has already been referred to NICE. The appraisal is proceeding, through the new fast track process for single technology appraisals, in parallel with the licensing process. NICE has indicated that guidance could be available in July, subject to licensing.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice she has received from the national cancer director on the merits of prescribing Herceptin to treat early stage breast cancer. [67807]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The views of the national cancer director are taken into account when submissions and briefings are put to Ministers on cancer-related issues although these are not always specifically identified. In addition, the national cancer director may take the opportunity to provide Ministers with advice or views on specific issues during the course of meetings. A detailed record of these discussions will not always be taken.

In relation to Herceptin, the national cancer director has made the Secretary of State aware of the reasons why oncologists specialising in breast cancer have found the preliminary findings of recent trials so encouraging. For example:

the studies were large trials, involving over 12,000 women, and appeared to have been conducted to a high standard;

the findings in relation to disease free survival from all of the studies were remarkably consistent adding to the robustness of the data;

both the HERA trial (carried out in Europe) and the combined American trial (NSABP B31 and NCCTG N9831) had reported significant benefits in distant recurrence free survival which could be an early surrogate for improved overall survival in breast cancer trials;

in general the absolute benefits of adjuvant therapies are small in the early years but increase over time;

the benefits of Herceptin are additional to those seen with standard adjuvant therapies;

the cardiac side-effects of Herceptin were well recognised and experience suggested that they were manageable and were outweighed by the benefits of Herceptin.

However, he has also made clear that the data is immature and no-one can therefore be certain of the long term benefits or harms of using Herceptin to treat early breast cancer.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients in England have applied to be treated with Herceptin for early stage breast cancer and are awaiting funding. [67808]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not collect information on the numbers of patients applying for specific treatments and awaiting funding decisions by their primary care trusts.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether primary care trusts in England may refuse to prescribe Herceptin to patients with early stage breast cancer on the grounds of its cost; [67962]

(2) whether primary care trusts in England have been given written guidance on the circumstances under which it is acceptable to refuse to prescribe Herceptin to patients with early stage breast cancer. [67963]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Primary care trusts (PCTs) do not make prescribing decisions. It is for individual clinicians, in discussion with a patient, to decide whether or not it is suitable to prescribe a specific drug. PCTs may need to be involved to decide whether to support the clinician's decision and supply the drug at NHS expense. PCTs need to take a range of factors into account, including local factors, when considering the funding of drugs and other treatments.

Guidance has not been issued to primary care trusts in England on the circumstances under which it is acceptable to refuse to prescribe Herceptin to patients with early stage breast cancer. However, the national cancer research institute (NCRI) has produced a United Kingdom clinical guideline on the use of Herceptin for early breast cancer. This provides useful information to those considering prescribing Herceptin for this indication in advance of a decision on licensing and the publication of National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidance. The NCRI guidance was brought to the attention of PCTs via Issue 300 of the chief executive's bulletin published on 13 January 2006.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost is to each primary care trust in England of a course of Herceptin for patients with early stage breast cancer. [67971]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data are not held on the cost to individual primary care trusts (PCTs) of any particular treatment.

The cost of Herceptin for the treatment of early stage breast cancer is estimated to be in the region of £20,000 per patient per year. The cost per PCT would depend on the number of women diagnosed with HER2+ early stage breast cancer in each PCT for whom Herceptin might be appropriate.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what European drug prescription agencies have issued guidelines on the prescription of Herceptin to patients with early stage breast cancer. [68038]

Andy Burnham: Herceptin is a centrally authorised product across the European Union (EU). This means that, rather than each country's licensing body assessing the safety and efficacy of this drug, it is assessed by the European Medicines Agency (EMEA)—which has representation from each member state's licensing body. The regulatory indication approved by the EMEA applies to all member states.

Herceptin currently has an EU-wide licence for use treating advanced breast cancer and an application is currently being processed by the EMEA to extend this licence to include the adjuvant treatment of early stage breast cancer. At the end of April, the EMEA's committee for medicinal products for human use recommended that Herceptin be approved for this indication. The next stage in the regulatory process is for the European Commission to evaluate this recommendation with a view to issuing marketing authorisation in the EU. A decision is expected in a few weeks.

The Department does not hold up-to-date information about what, if any, guidance bodies elsewhere in Europe may have issued about use of Herceptin for early stage breast cancer prior to a decision on licensing. This information can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Home Treatment

Mr. Havard: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make extra funding available for new technologies that are designed to treat wounds outside the hospital setting. [50520]

Andy Burnham: For any new appliance to be prescribed on the national health service by a general practitioner, it must be listed under Part IX of the Drug Tariff. A listing on Part IX is only possible following a successful application from the appliance manufacturer. This involves consideration of its effectiveness compared to other products, its impact on quality of life, suitability for prescribing in primary care, and price. On listing there are agreed arrangements for funding.

If the appliance manufacturer wishes to make an application to place their product on Part IX of the Drug Tariff, they should contact the prescription pricing division of the Business Services Authority.

The Government are also working closely with industry to facilitate the introduction of beneficial new medical technologies into the NHS and social care system.

Insulin Supplies

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what contingency plans have been made by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* Wockhardt UK to ensure that supplies of animal insulins are sufficient to enable their continued and widespread use when Novo Nordisk supplies are no longer available; [69613]

(2) what alternative sources of animal insulins are under consideration from outside the UK to supply the needs of UK users in the event of Wockhardt UK experiencing further difficulties of production and supply; and if she will make a statement. [69614]

Andy Burnham: The Department is in regular contact with Wockhardt. The company is currently enhancing its production capacity. It is working towards building contingency stocks for each of its insulin presentations. It is also taking steps to identify a contract manufacturer as a back-up in the event of problems at its current manufacturing site.

The Department is aware of other possible suppliers of animal insulin elsewhere in the world, but it is up to individual companies to decide where they market their products. The Department is not aware of any companies from outside the United Kingdom (UK) who plan to market animal insulin in the UK.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what proportion of insulin products in use in the UK have been fully assessed for their *(a)* comparative clinical and cost-effectiveness and *(b)* long-term safety and efficacy by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence; and if she will make a statement; [69646]

(2) if she will refer all insulin products to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) for a comparative clinical and cost-effectiveness and long-term safety and efficacy evaluation with a request that NICE develops standard guidance on the use of insulins; and if she will make a statement. [69647]

Andy Burnham: All licensed insulins have been fully assessed and found to satisfy the regulatory requirements for quality, safety and efficacy. The safety of human insulins in clinical practice is continually monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and the European Medicines Agency.

Clinical guidelines produced by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence on the management of both type one and type two diabetes conclude that the majority of studies indicate that both human and animal insulins are equally effective and report no significant differences in hypoglycaemic episodes and glycaemic control between the insulin of human and animal chemical structures.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much it costs the NHS Purchase and Supply Agency to buy one presentation of *(a)* Hypurin Bovine Isophane and *(b)* Levemir insulin. [69648]

Andy Burnham: The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency does not currently contract for these two products. The price that national health service trusts in England pay is the published list price less wholesaler discount which would normally be around 11 per cent.

Medical Practitioners

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the annual suicide rate of medical practitioners in each year since 1998 in England; and if she will make a statement. [51904]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not available in the format requested. Information on the number of deaths and proportional mortality ratios for suicide and undetermined injury in medical practitioners (persons aged 20 to 74) in England and Wales in each year since 1998 is shown in the table.

Proportional mortality ratios[1] for suicide and undetermined injury[2] in medical practitioners[3] persons aged 20-74, England and Wales, 1998-2004[4]

		95 per cent. confidence interval		
	Proportional mortality ratio	*Lower confidence interval*	*Upper confidence interval*	*Number of deaths*
1998	181	(106	290) *	17
1999	198	(115	317) *	17
2000	293	(183	443) *	22
2001	234	(145	357) *	21
2002	198	(121	305) *	20
2003	201	(117	322) *	17
2004	210	(127	328) *	19

* Statistically significant (95 per cent. confidence intervals not overlapping 100).

[1] All deaths from suicide = 100.

[2] Data selected using the international classification of diseases ninth revision (ICD-9) codes for deaths from 1998 to 2000 and international classification of diseases tenth revision (ICD-10) codes for death from 2001 onwards. The codes used are as follows: ICD-9—E950-E959, E980-E989 excluding E988.8 ICD-10—X60-X84, Y10-Y34 excluding Y33.9 where the verdict was pending.

[3] Occupations selected using the standard occupational classification (1990) for the years 1998 to 2000 and the standard occupational classification (2000) for the years 2001 to 2004. The codes used are as follows: Standard Occupational Classification (1990)—220 medical practitioners Standard Occupational Classification (2000)—2,211 medical practitioners.

[4] Data are for occurrences of deaths in each calendar year.

Source:
Office for National Statistics.

Medicines Review Processes

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment has been made of the potential effect on costs of ensuring patient compliance with dosing regimens and effective medicine review processes. [69579]

Andy Burnham: No specific overall assessment has been made of the potential effect on costs of ensuring patient compliance with dosing regimes and effective medicine review processes. However, evidence shows that up to 50 per cent. of prescription medicines for long-term conditions are not being taken as intended, and that adverse reactions to medicines are implicated in 5 to 7 per cent. of hospital admissions.

A number of factors would need to be taken into account in making such an assessment. Through improved compliance, patients may benefit more from their treatment, both in terms of length and quality of life. More medicines may be prescribed, but those that are prescribed would be less likely to be wasted. Better management of a patient's condition may reduce the need for more specialist care, including admission to hospital. The provision of effective medication review processes would also have costs in terms of service delivery, for example through payments under the quality and outcomes framework for general medical services or fees to community pharmacists for medicine usage reviews.

Mental Health Services

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* early intervention teams and *(b)* assertive outreach teams have been (i) closed and (ii) reduced due to financial deficits in mental health services in the last 12 months. [69437]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not routinely collect information about local service reconfigurations or the reasons for them. Such decisions are for primary care trusts to make in consultation with local health partners and in accordance with assessment of the needs of the local population.

Data on mental health teams are collated through the Durham adult mental health service mapping. The January 2006 data will be available at the end of May.

National Blood Service

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) to what use the National Blood Service premises in the Midlands will be put after services provided there are moved to Bristol; and what the estimated cost is of converting the building for new use; [69628]

(2) what measures she has put in place to ensure that provision of blood to patients in the Midlands is not adversely affected by the closure of National Blood Services in Birmingham; and if she will make a statement. [69629]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A key factor in the successful delivery of NHS Blood and Transplant's (NHSBT) activities is implementation of its estate strategy. As part of its estate strategy the National Blood Service (NBS), an operating division of NHSBT, has proposed the development of a new site at Filton, Bristol.

To build this new centre in the most cost-effective way, NBS proposes to consolidate some services into the new Filton site from centres in Birmingham, Southampton and Plymouth. These services are those which do not need to be close to the patient, such as blood processing and testing. The NBS will ensure that this has no adverse effect on patients across the Birmingham and South West area.

The NBS does not propose to close any centres, including the Birmingham centre. It will continue to provide critical services from Birmingham. For example, the centre will continue to have a local blood bank to meet orders for blood. This will ensure that there is no adverse impact on patients around Birmingham.

The NBS centre in Birmingham will require development, even after these changes, to ensure that those services which remain in Birmingham are provided from buildings which are fit for purpose. A number of options are being considered.

NHS Dispensing Contractors

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the Government will publish their response to the consultation paper 'Proposals to simplify the reimbursement arrangements for NHS dispensing contractors' and if she will make a statement. [65512]

Andy Burnham: Due to the large number and technical nature of the proposals consulted on in this paper, it is intended to proceed with the issues raised in the consultation individually. The first announcement, covering changes to the zero discount arrangements, was published on the Department's website on 25 April. Decisions and announcements covering further proposals will be made in due course.

A summary of the responses received to this consultation document is also available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk.

NHS Finance

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what financial penalties are applied to *(a)* NHS trusts and *(b)* strategic health authorities for (i) running continuing deficits and (ii) overspending in a single financial year; and what assessment she has made of the impact of such penalties on patient care. [68133]

Andy Burnham: Under the cross-Government resource accounting and budgeting (RAB) regime, national health service organisations carry forward their year-end level of over or under-spending. The carry-forward is based on the total deficit or surplus at the end of the year, which will reflect overspending in-year as well as spending in previous years.

For 2005-06, the NHS Bank has developed an incentive scheme whereby the level of overspending carry-forward into 2006-07 is subject to an uplift of 10 per cent. The carry-forward regime and the NHS Bank incentive scheme are operated at strategic health authority (SHA) level. SHAs have discretion over how they apply it to their organisations.

The level of carry-forward and the NHS Bank incentive scheme will be factored into the financial planning for 2006-07. The plans for 2006-07 have not yet been agreed by the Department.

All areas of the country will continue to see improvements in patient care in 2006-07.

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the financial recovery plan for health trusts in London will be in place; and what measures have been adopted to ensure that it will be fair and transparent. [69533]

Andy Burnham: The five strategic health authorities (SHAs) in London are responsible for ensuring that those trusts that need financial recovery plans have produced plans that are fair and transparent. From 1 July 2006, the new London SHA will take over this responsibility.

The Department is working with the SHAs to finalise the financial plan for the national health service for 2006-07.

To support the work of the SHAs in their work with specific trusts and primary care trusts, the Secretary of State announced the establishment of turnaround teams in a written ministerial statement on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 37WS. The teams comprise experts with a mix of commercial and NHS turnaround skills.

Local turnaround teams are agreeing a tailored package of support with the organisations facing the largest challenges and with their SHA. This will help them to achieve financial balance and provide services more efficiently. The teams will support the chief executive of the organisation. The chief executive remains accountable for the financial performance, establishing financial recovery plans and measures to ensure they are fair and transparent..

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the timetable is for the NHS financial recovery plan; and whether those organisations which have been asked to reduce spending will receive a clear indication of how funding levels will be restored over an agreed period. [69534]

Andy Burnham: The Department is working with the strategic health authorities (SHA) to finalise the financial plan for the national health service for 2006-07. The plan will deliver financial balance across the NHS in 2006-07. SHAs are supporting trusts and primary care trusts in producing robust local plans which will have locally agreed timetables.

All organisations need to fulfil their statutory financial duties which include ensuring that income and expenditure is in balance. Where there are local agreements to create a financial reserve fund, the SHA will also ensure these agreements are fair.

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether guidance has been issued to London health organisations seeking financial support under the financial recovery plan on *(a)* the actions they must take and *(b)* the consequences of not complying. [69535]

Andy Burnham: The planning framework for the national health service is set out in National Standards Local Action which was issued in July 2004 and covers the period 2005-06 to 2007-08. The Department has issued specific guidance for 2006-07 called "The Operating Framework for 2006-07" and a follow up letter from the Acting Chief Executive of the NHS was issued on 10 May. There has been no specific guidance to organisations in London from the Department.

Palliative Care

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the future of palliative care services at the Frenchay site of North Bristol NHS Trust. [70985]

Caroline Flint: Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire strategic health authority reports that the plans for the redevelopment of the Frenchay site as a community hospital include the retention of the present unit for palliative care.

Primary care trusts are responsible for commissioning and funding services for their resident population, including palliative care. We have set out in "Our health, our care, our say" a programme of action that will deliver increased choice to all patients at the end of life about where they are cared for. We will be working with key stakeholders in taking this forward.

Patient Packs

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she has taken to establish a means of standardising patient packs; and if she will make a statement. [68040]

Andy Burnham: We are not convinced that it is for the Government to tell manufacturers what pack sizes they should produce. Further, any European Community law implications of such a measure would need to be considered. In any event, standardisation of sizes of packs manufactured in the United Kingdom would not solve the problem of pack size variety, as packs imported from other European Union countries could be of any size.

A consultation on simplification of reimbursement arrangements for national health service dispensing contractors was issued last year. This included measures designed to further promote patient pack dispensing. We are currently considering responses to this consultation.

Pharmacy Contracts

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* support and *(b)* guidance she has issued to pharmacists in Portsmouth to develop medicine utilisation reviews under the new pharmacy contract; and if she will make a statement. [68472]

Andy Burnham: This is a matter for determination by the local primary care trust (PCT) and I am advised there are a number of local initiatives under way or being developed.

The Department has issued national guidance to all PCTs on medicines use reviews (MURs), which PCTs may use in assisting pharmacists in the development of a successful MUR service. A patient information leaflet about the service has been made available to pharmacies, which will assist pharmacists in explaining the service to their patients.

Premature Births

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much her Department has spent on research into premature births in each year since 1996; and how much she plans to spend in each of the next five years. [62886]

Andy Burnham: The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Innovation.

The Department funds research to support policy and to provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the national health service. The policy research programme in particular supports the national perinatal epidemiology unit. Much of the unit's work on the compromised foetus and baby focuses on or is linked to preterm birth.

Spend by the MRC on projects related to premature birth and by the Department's national research programmes is shown in the table.

£ million

	MRC	*Department of Health*
1996-97	[1]—	0.9
1997-98	0.9	0.7
1998-99	0.8	0.7
1999-2000	1.2	0.8
2000-01	1.9	0.8
2001-02	1.6	0.8
2002-03	2.7	0.6
2003-04	2.3	1.1
2004-05	[1]—	0.7
2005-06	[1]—	1.0

[1]Not available.

Notes:

1. The full cost of several large cohort studies where the premature birth component of the study is relatively small is included in these figures. 2. Total national perinatal epidemiology unit funding and the part (2005-06) cost of one health technology assessment programme project.

In addition, the MRC supports a large portfolio of reproductive tract research and underpinning reproductive medicine and paediatric research.

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is currently devolved to and managed by national health service organisations. Details of individual projects including a number concerned with premature birth are available on the national research register at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

The MRC and the Department plan to continue to invest in this area of research.

Prescription Charges

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements are in place for patients who are unable to pay for prescriptions but are not eligible for free prescriptions. [50449]

Andy Burnham: Those that do have to pay prescription charges may be entitled to help under the NHS Low Income Scheme. They can apply by completing an HC1 form. These are available from Jobcentre Plus offices or by phoning on 0845 850 1166.

Alternatively, people can purchase a four-month prescription pre-payment certificate which will save them money if they anticipate requiring more than five prescription items during the four months. A 12-month certificate is also cost-effective if the patient requires 14 items or more in a year.

Prescription Medicines

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if the UK Government will encourage the European Commission to support changes in regulations to enable pharmaceutical companies to provide information directly to patients about prescription medicines; and if she will make a statement. [67953]

Andy Burnham: Clear and relevant information is vital if patients are to use medicines safely and effectively. The provision of information about medicines is a key to increasing appropriate access to, uptake of and safe use of medicines. It is also vital to support people in making informed choices about prescribed medicines with their health professional, which in turn improves patient compliance and health outcomes.

Under current United Kingdom (UK) and European law, pharmaceutical companies may already provide non-promotional information directly to patients and the public about prescription medicines. We do not consider that any changes to regulations are needed to facilitate this in the UK but are working with European colleagues to ensure there is a common understanding and application of European Union law.

Strattera

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated into side effects of the drug Strattera; and if she will make a statement. [69394]

Andy Burnham: Clinical trials data submitted by the marketing authorisation holder (MAH) for Strattera (atomoxetine) was evaluated at the time of licensing to ensure that it met appropriate standards of safety, quality and efficacy to support its use in the treatment of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Since the marketing of Strattera, the Independent Scientific Advisory Committee, the Commission on Human Medicines (CHM), and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) have kept its safety under close review. As new data have emerged, product information for prescribers and patients has been updated and advice has been issued.

In February 2006, the MHRA led a European review of the risks and benefits of Strattera and sought advice from the CHM and an expert working group whose membership included those with expertise in child and adolescent psychiatry and lay representation. Doctors and patients were informed of the following conclusions of this review:

overall the balance of risks and benefits of Strattera in the treatment of ADHD in children and adolescents remains positive;

prescribers should be reminded that Strattera should be initiated only by and under the supervision of a specialist;

warnings on the risk of seizures and electrocardiogram QT prolongation (abnormal heart rhythm) should be included in the product information; and

the current warnings in the product information about the risk of liver disorders and suicidal thoughts and behaviour accurately reflect the available data.

Full guidance on prescribing and the use of Strattera, including possible side effects, is provided in the product information for prescribers (the Summary of Product Characteristics) and patients (Patient Information Leaflet).

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has recently published a technology appraisal on methylphenidate, atomoxetine and dexamfetamine for the treatment of ADHD. During the development of this appraisal NICE was fully informed about the European review and the available data on the safety and efficacy of atomoxetine in the treatment of ADHD.

The MAH was also requested to put in place a risk management plan for Strattera, which includes the conduct of new research to better characterise and further investigate its safety profile.

A copy of the report on the risks and benefits of Strattera has been placed in the Library.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health from what point in an individual's treatment her Department calculates the waiting time for an NHS in-patient operation. [70897]

Andy Burnham: The waiting time for a national health service in-patient operation is taken from the point at which a consultant decides that the patient needs to be admitted for treatment, to the date upon which the patient is actually admitted to hospital.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what date she expects the Government to meet their target for nobody to wait more than six months for an in-patient operation in the NHS. [70933]

Andy Burnham: The national health service does now have an operating standard of six months for in-patient admission. Data collected by the Department show that there have been very few breaches of this standard since it was introduced in December 2005. Therefore, it is considered that the Government's in-patient target has been and continues to be achieved.

However, any breaches of the waiting time standards are unacceptable and the Department will continue to work closely to support the small number of NHS organisations where patients are waiting over six months.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of people who are waiting for an NHS in-patient operation and who have been informed they will have to wait more than six months. [70990]

Andy Burnham: The national health service now has a maximum waiting time of six months for in-patient admission. Any breaches of this waiting time standard are unacceptable and the Department will continue to work closely to support each NHS organisation where this is an issue. No estimate has been made of whether the very small number of patients who may at risk of having to wait longer than the standard have been informed.

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people waited more than six months for a hospital appointment in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2006 in (i) Swindon and (ii) England. [69043]

Andy Burnham: In March 1997, 283,866 patients were waiting more than six months for hospital admission in England and 4,671 patients were waiting more than six months for hospital admission in the area covered by Wiltshire Health Authority.

In March 2006, 199 patients were waiting more than six months for hospital admission nationally and no patients were waiting more than six months for hospital admission in the area covered by Swindon Primary Care Trust.

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average length of time was for which patients in *(a)* England and *(b)* Dorset waited for dialysis during 2005. [68307]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There was no average length of time in England for which patients requiring dialysis waited for treatment in 2005. The national service framework for renal services notes that because the progression of chronic kidney disease is frequently slow clinicians can often predict the point when the person will need to start renal replacement therapy (RRT), which consists of haemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis or transplantation.

Professional consensus is that the optimal time required to prepare a patient and their carers for RRT is around one year. This is why good practice suggests that those with established renal failure requiring dialysis have timely and appropriate surgery for vascular or peritoneal dialysis access to improve outcomes, minimise complications and maximise longevity of the access site. However, research shows that a third of people present less than a month before requiring RRT, and the outcomes for this group are less good than for those who present earlier.

If someone presents as an emergency or it is not possible to establish mature access before dialysis is required an intravenous catheter can be inserted for dialysis at extremely short notice, usually into a vein deep in the patients neck.

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients in England requiring a form of dialysis were not able to obtain that form of dialysis during 2005. [68309]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national service framework for renal services notes that the total number of people receiving renal replacement therapy (RRT) has been taken as a proxy measure for the prevalence of established renal failure (ERF). However it is generally agreed that in addition there will be people in the general population with ERF which has not been diagnosed and whose need for RRT has not been recognised. People who have been identified as requiring dialysis receive it, on an emergency basis if necessary. Research shows that a third of people present less than a month before requiring RRT.

RRT includes transplantation, haemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis. Data on the numbers of people requiring dialysis are not collected or held centrally. Data from the most recent national survey of renal units, commissioned by the Department from the renal registry of the Renal Association, show that in December 2002, 11,789 patients in England were receiving haemodialysis; 4,605 peritoneal dialysis, and 14,104 people had a transplant in the year ending December 2002.

For some patients with established renal failure, who are suffering from other, terminal, conditions, haemodialysis may not be an appropriate treatment, as it can add to the distress of these patients without extending life. These patients should be presented with the option of a properly managed palliative care plan.

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effects on kidney patients of being unable to obtain dialysis within a short time after this treatment is recommended by a consultant. [68310]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national service framework for renal services notes that because the progression of chronic kidney disease is frequently slow clinicians can often predict the point when the person will need to start renal replacement therapy (RRT). Professional consensus is that the optimal time required to prepare a patient and their carers for RRT is around one year. This is why good practice suggests that those with established renal failure requiring dialysis have timely and appropriate surgery for vascular or peritoneal dialysis access to improve outcomes, minimise complications and maximise longevity of the access.

Research shows that a third of people present less than a month before requiring RRT, and the outcomes for this group are less good than for those who present earlier. If someone presents as an emergency an intravenous catheter can be inserted for dialysis, usually into a vein deep in the patient's neck.

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in the Mid Essex Hospital Trust area missed their appointments in the last year for which figures are available; and what the estimated cost was to the Trust of these missed appointments. [69842]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of missed first outpatient appointments reported by Mid Essex Hospitals National Health Service Trust in 2004-05 was 5,590 and for the first three quarters of 2005-06, the trust reported 4,646.

Information is not held centrally as to the cost of missed appointments.

Source:

Primary care and activity analysis

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in the Mid Essex Hospital Trust area had their appointments cancelled by the Trust *(a)* once, *(b)* twice, *(c)* three times and *(d)* more than three times in the last year for which figures are available. [69843]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she plans to publish the principles and definitions which will underpin the delivery of the 18-week patient pathway. [69610]

Andy Burnham: The principles and definitions underpinning the delivery of the 18-week patient pathway were published on 10 May 2006 in the publication, "Tackling Hospital Waiting: The 18-week Patient Pathway." An implementation framework is available in the Library and on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/13/46/69/04134669.pdf

TREASURY

Consultants

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the companies which were paid consultancy fees by his Department in 2005-06; how much each was paid; and what each of the companies was used to accomplish. [69699]

John Healey: A table setting out the amounts paid in 2005-06 by the Treasury to companies and partnerships, recorded as consultancy spending, has been placed in the Library of the House. Information on what each supplier was used to accomplish could be provided only at disproportionate cost, and in some cases would be commercially prejudicial.

Departmental Budget

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much of the budget for his Department remained unspent in the 2005-06 financial year. [70550]

John Healey: The Public Expenditure Out-turn White Paper (PEOWP), due to be presented to Parliament before the summer recess in July, will provide provisional out-turn figures for 2005-06 public expenditure for all Departments, including underspends against departmental expenditure limits and administration costs limits. The Treasury's own resource accounts are also due to be presented to Parliament before the summer recess, and will show the audited out-turn against voted expenditure.

Departmental Consultations

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many public consultations his Department undertook in the last 12 months; and what the cost was *(a)* in total and *(b)* of each consultation. [70551]

John Healey: A list of the public consultations undertaken by the Treasury since 2000 is available on the Department's website http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/consultations_and_legislation/consult_fullindex.cfm. Seventeen consultations have been launched since 1 April 2005. The Treasury's accounting system does not record the cost of public consultations separately from other administration costs, so the cost of those consultations, either individually or in aggregate, could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many free air miles have been accrued by senior civil servants in his Department on official business in each of the last three years; and how they were used. [70557]

John Healey: I refer to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) on 17 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 717W.

Electorate (Wales)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many electors there were in each ward of *(a)* the Vale of Clwyd and *(b)* Denbighshire in each of the last 10 years. [70191]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, 15 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your question regarding the number of electors in each ward in (a) the Vale of Clwyd and (b) Denbighshire in each of the last 10 years. (70191)

The latest available Welsh ward electorate counts are for December 2005, and the electorate counts for the last available 10 years (1996 to 2005) are shown in the attached tables. Table 1 includes wards within the parliamentary constituency of the Vale of Clwyd. Table 2 for the local authority of Denbighshire, includes wards for the whole of the parliamentary constituency of the Vale of Clwyd (as included in Table 1) and also wards which are within part of the parliamentary constituencies of Clwyd South and Clwyd West.

The ward electorate counts are for parliamentary electors, including attainers. Local government electorate counts are not available at ward level. Thus the figures in Table 1 and Table 2 do not sum to the combined count of Parliamentary or local electors referred to as 'total electorate', for Vale of Clwyd and Denbighshire in reply to your previous parliamentary question Official Report [illegible] 49, column 450 of 11 May 2006.

It should be noted that the number of people eligible to vote is not the same as the resident population aged 18 and over. There are numerous reasons for this. For example not everyone who is usually resident is entitled to vote (foreign citizens from outside of the EU and Commonwealth, prisoners, etc. are not eligible),

some people do not register to vote and people who have more than one address may register in more than one place. Further, there is inevitably some double counting of the registered electorate as electoral registration officers vary in how quickly they remove people from the registers after they have moved away from an area or after they have died. These factors have a differential impact from area to area.

Table 1: Parliamentary electors for Vale of Clwyd 1996-2005

Ward name	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Bodelwyddan	1,262	1,312	1,378	1,402	1,335	1,417	1,387	1,391	1,415	1,523
Denbigh Central	1,391	1,365	1,384	1,329	1,275	1,262	1,164	1,301	1,310	1,310
Denbigh Lower	3,092	3,118	3,162	3,187	3,162	3,201	3,211	3,231	3,325	3,373
Denbigh Upper/Henllan	2,503	2,524	2,536	2,467	2,431	2,385	2,275	2,368	2,376	2,416
Dyserth	1,903	1,881	1,898	1,846	1,809	1,902	1,741	1,766	1,815	1,867
Llandyrnog[1]	956	967	969	976	1,490	1,539	1,560	1,572	1606	1,619
Prestatyn Central	2,661	2,692	2,715	2,681	2,635	2,659	2,550	2,598	2664	2,666
Prestatyn East	2,979	3,028	3,045	3,010	2,937	3,013	2,883	2,881	3006	3,073
Prestatyn Meliden[2]	1,546	1,564	1,567	1,553	1,451	1,507	1,444	1,481	1518	1,538
Prestatyn North	4,037	4,104	4,106	4,114	3,980	4,004	3,896	4,141	4408	4,495
Prestatyn South West	2,643	2,626	2,608	2,551	2,493	2,481	2,502	2,556	2638	2,625
Rhuddlan	3,053	3,116	3,179	3,210	3,127	3,202	2,679	2,724	2760	2,808
Rhyl East	3,711	3,668	3,768	3,677	3,502	3,595	3,486	3,552	3620	3,735
Rhyl South	3,029	3,014	2,997	3,002	3,030	2,995	2,895	2,943	3005	3,013
Rhyl South East	4,979	4,987	5,039	4,989	4,880	5,192	5,208	5,511	5672	5,707
Rhyl South West	3,812	3,734	3,726	3,699	3,662	3,607	3,205	3,433	3534	3,567
Rhyl West	3,481	3,549	3,602	3,428	3,000	2,761	2,464	2,457	2777	2,960
St. Asaph East	1,384	1,314	1,303	1,307	1,295	1,329	1,313	1,319	1,320	1,323
St. Asaph West	1,307	1,290	1,270	1,248	1,116	1,178	1,155	1,179	1,282	1,288
Trefnant	1,469	1,482	1,488	1,489	1,375	1,444	1,420	1,440	1,486	1,502
Tremeirchion	1,173	1,185	1,166	1,183	1,126	1,176	1,199	1,214	1,237	1,236
Total	52,371	52,520	52,906	52,348	51,111	51,849	49,637	51,058	52,774	53,644

[1] Llandyrnog ward also falls within Clwyd West parliamentary constituency, data for the whole ward are shown. Part of Llanynys ward in Denbighshire merged with Llandyrnog in 2000.
[2] Prior to 2000 this ward name was Meliden.
Notes:
1. Data for years up to and including 2000 relate to 16 February, data for 2001 and subsequent years relate to 1 December.
2. Parliamentary electors are those people who are entitled to vote in parliamentary elections at Westminster and who meet the residence qualification. These include overseas voters but exclude Peers and European citizens.
Source:
Office for National Statistics

Table 2: Parliamentary electors for Denbighshire 1996-2005

Ward name	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Bodelwyddan	1,262	1,312	1,378	1,402	1,335	1,417	1,387	1,391	1,415	1,523
Corwen	1,860	1,805	1,807	1,795	1,696	1,774	1,699	1,702	1,762	1,807
Denbigh Central	1,391	1,365	1,384	1,329	1,275	1,262	1,164	1,301	1,310	1,310
Denbigh Lower	3,092	3,118	3,162	3,187	3,162	3,201	3,211	3,231	3,325	3,373
Denbigh Upper/Henllan	2,503	2,524	2,536	2,467	2,431	2,385	2,275	2,368	2,376	2,416
Dyserth	1,903	1,881	1,898	1,846	1,809	1,902	1,741	1,766	1,815	1,867
Efenechtyd[1]	977	973	965	988	1,222	1,231	1,231	1,209	1227	1,236
Llanarmon-yn-Ial/Llandegla	1,935	1,989	2,021	2,034	1,771	1,777	1,768	1,794	1847	1,857
Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd/Llangynhafal[2]	1,116	1,123	1,095	1,085	1,128	1,168	1,123	1,119	1,144	1,156
Llandrillo	881	849	882	894	864	877	864	875	907	922
Llandyrnog	956	967	969	976	1,490	1,539	1,560	1,572	1606	1,619
Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd/Gwyddelwern[3]	1,837	1,816	1,851	1,870	1,709	1,749	1,748	1,731	1772	1,798
Llangollen Rural[4]	1,850	1,861	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Llangollen	2,686	2,657	3,056	3,059	2,896	2,949	2,956	2,993	3,047	3,114
Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch	1,133	1,110	1,138	1,116	1,431	1,462	1,410	1,443	1,472	1,478
Llanynys[5]	894	892	901	902	?	?	?	?	?	?
Prestatyn Central	2,661	2,692	2,715	2,681	2,635	2,659	2,550	2,598	2,664	2,666
Prestatyn East	2,979	3,028	3,045	3,010	2,937	3,013	2,883	2,881	3,006	3,073
Prestatyn Meliden[6]	1,546	1,564	1,567	1,553	1,451	1,507	1,444	1,481	1,518	1,538
Prestatyn North	4,037	4,104	4,106	4,114	3,980	4,004	3,896	4,141	4,408	4,495
Prestatyn South West	2,643	2,626	2,608	2,551	2,493	2,481	2,502	2,556	2,638	2,625
Rhuddlan	3,053	3,116	3,179	3,210	3,127	3,202	2,679	2,724	2,760	2,808
Rhyl East	3,711	3,668	3,768	3,677	3,502	3,595	3,486	3,552	3,620	3,735
Rhyl South	3,029	3,014	2,997	3,002	3,030	2,995	2,895	2,943	3,005	3,013
Rhyl South East	4,979	4,987	5,039	4,989	4,880	5,192	5,208	5,511	5,672	5,707

Table 2: Parliamentary electors for Denbighshire 1996-2005

Ward name	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Rhyl South West	3,812	3,734	3,726	3,699	3,662	3,607	3,205	3,433	3,534	3,567
Rhyl West	3,481	3,549	3,602	3,428	3,000	2,761	2,464	2,457	2,777	2,960
Ruthin	4,150	4,115	4,111	4,069	3,974	3,957	3,935	4,001	4,062	4,082
St. Asaph East	1,384	1,314	1,303	1,307	1,295	1,329	1,313	1,319	1,320	1,323
St. Asaph West	1,307	1,290	1,270	1,248	1,116	1,178	1,155	1,179	1,282	1,288
Trefnant	1,469	1,482	1,488	1,489	1,375	1,444	1,420	1,440	1,486	1,502
Tremcirchion	1,173	1,185	1,166	1,183	1,126	1,176	1,199	1,214	1,237	1,236
Total	71,690	71,710	70,733	70,160	67,802	68,793	66,371	67,925	70,014	71,094

[1] Part of Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd/Gwyddelwern merged with Efenechtyd in 2000.
[2] Prior to 2002 this ward name was Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd.
[3] Part of Llanarmon-yn-lal/Llandegla merged with Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd/Gwyddelwern in 2000.
[4] Llangollen Rural merged with Llangollen in 1998.
[5] Part of Llanynys merged with Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch and rest of Llanynys merged with Llandyrnog in 2000.
[6] Prior to 2000 this ward name was Meliden.

Notes:
1. Data for years up to and including 2000 relate to 16 February, data for 2001 and subsequent years relate to 1 December.
2. Parliamentary electors are those people who are entitled to vote in parliamentary elections at Westminster and who meet the residence qualification. These include overseas voters but exclude Peers and European citizens.

Source:
Office for National Statistics

EU Budget

Mr. Brady: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is his Department's policy to veto any proposed EU tax arising from the 2008-09 review of the EU budget. [71128]

Ed Balls: The Government believe that taxation is a matter for member states to determine at a national level. The UK has made clear that there are absolutely no plans to impose a harmonised tax on its citizens.

Portland PR

Lynne Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what meetings officials in his Department have had with representatives of the public relations company Portland PR; what contracts Portland PR has with his Department and agencies for which he has responsibility; and what the nature of the contract is in each case. [70046]

John Healey: According to our records, there have been no meetings between Treasury officials and representatives of Portland PR in the past year. Neither the Treasury nor its agencies have any contracts with Portland PR.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what changes have been made since 1997 to the Valuation Office Agency's *(a)* powers and *(b)* policy on revaluing, re-assessing or re-classifying a domestic hereditament or composite hereditament after a material change to a property. [62285]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The powers of a listing officer or valuation officer, employed by the Valuation Office Agency, to revalue, re-assess or re-classify a domestic hereditament following a material change to a property have not changed since 1997.

The alteration of non-domestic rating lists by valuation officers is subject to regulatory control. The powers of valuation officers to alter rating lists, including the non-domestic parts of composite hereditaments, were amended with effect from 1 April 2000 by the Non-Domestic Rating (Alteration of Lists and Appeals)(Amendment)(England) Regulations 2000 and the Non-Domestic Rating (Alteration of Lists and Appeals)(Amendment)(Wales) Regulations 2000, which restricted the effective date of list alterations in respect of material changes of circumstance. Further amendment of valuation officers' powers has been made by the Non-Domestic Rating (Alteration of Lists and Appeals)(England) Regulations 2005 and the Non-Domestic Rating (Alteration of Lists and Appeals)(Wales) Regulations 2005 and the Non-Domestic Rating (Material Day for List Alterations)(Amendment)(England) Regulations 2005 in respect of rating lists compiled on or after 1 April 2005 which allow valuation officers to alter rating lists, including in entries for composite hereditaments, in respect of material changes of circumstances with effect from the day the circumstances changed.

The interpretation of the power of a listing officer to increase the council tax band applicable to a dwelling following a material increase and a relevant transaction of the dwelling was changed in July 2002 in the light of two Scottish Court of Session decisions that the sale of a part share in a dwelling is not a relevant transaction. .

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* VO 7746 and *(b)* VO 7747 letters were issued by the Valuation Office Agency in (i) England and (ii) Wales in the most recent year for which figures are available. [62286]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

No record is kept of the number of these letters issued.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many domestic properties in England have photographs allocated to the address by the Valuation Office Agency as part of their council tax valuation records. [62288]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

Of the 22 million domestic property records in England, some 2.5 per cent. (549,000) have a photograph or photographs attached.

Voter Registration

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate the Office for National Statistics has made of the level of voter registration for local elections in England in each year since 1997. [70689]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 15 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question about what estimates the Office for National Statistics has made of the level of voter registration for local elections in England in each year since 1997. (70689)

I refer you to the Official Report No. 149 column 450 of 11 May 2006. The answer provided here gives the 'proportion of the estimated usual resident population who have registered to vote'; this is the closest possible approximation to the information you have requested.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Domestic Violence

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what discussions she has had with ministerial colleagues on improving the services offered to women seeking refuge from domestic violence in Kingston upon Hull North. [69757]

Meg Munn: As Deputy Minister for Women and Equality, I sit on the inter-ministerial group for domestic violence (chaired by my hon. Friend Baroness Scotland of Ashtal) which performance-manages the cross-Government National Domestic Violence Delivery Plan by reviewing progress at quarterly meetings. This is the mechanism for improving the services offered to women seeking refuge from domestic violence nationally.

The Government office for Yorkshire and the Humber ensures that the National Domestic Violence Delivery Plan is disseminated and considered by all regional and local stakeholders.

Hull Domestic Abuse Partnership is a new multi-agency team including representatives from the police, health, housing and social services. It provides a one-stop service for women in the city seeking refuge from domestic violence and is working to improve services to victims.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of services available to children who have been involved in domestic violence in Kingston upon Hull North. [69758]

Meg Munn: As Deputy Minister for Women and Equality, I sit on the inter-ministerial group for domestic violence (chaired by my hon. Friend Baroness Scotland of Ashtal), which performance-manages the cross-Government National Domestic Violence Delivery Plan by reviewing progress at quarterly meetings. This is the mechanism for improving the services available to children who have been involved in domestic violence.

The Government office for Yorkshire and the Humber ensures that the National Domestic Violence Delivery Plan is disseminated and considered by all regional and local stakeholders.

Currently, services available to children who have been involved in domestic violence (DV) in Kingston upon Hull include:

Generic provision, support and access to information is available through the Children's Services Family Resource Centres and the council's internet service.

Hull pilot for the early identification of risk indicators of DV in private and public law proceedings is an initiative in a response to Section 120 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. Its purpose is to alert the court, in cases of DV, at the earliest opportunity in order that an early assessment of risk indicators can be made and developed. The Hull Domestic Abuse Project (DAP) will carry out these assessments. It is the intention to roll the pilot out across the courts in the Humber region.

Hull children's fund provides resources for direct work with young children who are resident in the Women's Aid refuge and also on an outreach basis.

NSPCC specialist staff are working with young males who have experienced or witnessed DV.

The NSPCC, NCH, Barnados and Women's Centres across Hull are also providing support services to affected children.

Women's Aid and the women's services also carry out work within the local primary and secondary schools raising awareness and discussing safety issues around DV.

Women's Aid provides refuge facilities for families.

The Hull DAP also carries out Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC's) on a six-weekly basis. This serves the purpose of identifying high-risk victims and enables the sharing of information within a multi-agency setting to take place in order to give further support.

Pay Reviews

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality for what reasons the Government have adopted a voluntary approach to pay reviews. [69853]

Meg Munn: We believe that the voluntary approach is the best way to achieve lasting change through working alongside the business community, employers, trade unions and the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) to promote equal pay reviews. We supported Opportunity Now's recent Benchmarking Report which contains case studies, advice, action plans and recommendations on how employers can address gender equality and diversity in the workplace, including tackling the gender pay gap. We also support an equal pay panel of experts, led by the TUC.

The Women and Work Commission's independent report 'Shaping a Fairer Future', recently examined the merits of mandatory equal pay reviews in addressing the gender pay gap but did not recommend a regulatory approach.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

EU Market Abuse Directive

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the effect on the costs to British industry of the replacement of the existing anti-market abuse legislation with the EU market abuse directive. [69927]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The market abuse directive (MAD) provides for a common approach to market abuse issues in an increasingly integrated financial services market in Europe. The Treasury published a regulatory impact assessment together with the regulations implementing the MAD. Copies of the assessment were placed in the Library of the House and it is available on the EU financial services section of HM Treasury's website.

CABINET OFFICE

Voluntary and Community Organisations

Tom Levitt: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what steps she is taking to support the work of voluntary and community organisations. [70204]

Edward Miliband: I have been appointed as Minister for the Third Sector by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister to focus on developing stronger policy, support and investment in the Third Sector.

There are increased numbers of volunteers and there are also increased levels of Government investment in the promotion of both volunteering and charitable giving. On 8 May my right hon. Friend the Chancellor and I launched "V", a charity to encourage young people into volunteering.

Today the Government launched a Cross-Cutting Policy Review which will look at how we can ensure the role of Third Sector organisations in contributing to the social and economic regeneration of the country.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Leader of the House on how many occasions *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his office stayed overnight in (i) five star, (ii) four star and (iii) three star hotels in each of the last three years. [69642]

Mr. Straw: The Office of the Leader of the House does not regularly hold information on the star rating of each individual hotel.

Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year; this information includes accommodation costs. This information can be found on the Cabinet Office website at:

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/propriety_and_ethics/ministers/

David Simpson: To ask the Leader of the House what discounts are available in relation to hotel accommodation used by *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his office. [69644]

Mr. Straw: No special discounts are available to civil servants and special advisers within the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons, other than the 'HM Government Hotel Programme' from Intercontinental Hotels Group, open to all Government Departments.

Accommodation used by my staff is booked on need and a best value for money basis.

Personal Computers

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Leader of the House how many personal computers are allocated to hon. Members. [69436]

Mr. Straw: Members are entitled to a combination of up to five loaned PCs and laptops. If aggregated therefore, Members could request up to 3,230 PCs and laptops. Not all Members request their full allowance. To date, Members have requested and received 2,206 PCs and 642 laptops. For those Members who require more equipment, they can purchase additional equipment of the same make via Parliament with Parliament's own software pre-configured and installed.

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Leader of the House how much has been paid in *(a)* salary, *(b)* travelling expenses, *(c)* subsistence allowance and *(d)* removal expenses to special advisers in his private office in each of the last five years. [69149]

Nigel Griffiths: Since 2003, the Government have published on an annual basis the names and overall cost of special advisers and the number in each pay band. Information on special advisers prior to 2003 was provided at regular intervals and this information is available in the Library of the House.

No removal expenses have been paid to special advisers in the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons during the last five years.

Details on travel and subsistence costs for special advisers is set out in the table.

	Travel	£ *Subsistence*
2005-06	7,714	30
2004-05	8,534	0
2003-04	721	0
2002-03	121	0
2001-02	n/a	n/a

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Child Protection Checks

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what child protection checks a teacher is expected to undergo; and what procedure is used for such checks in the case of an individual who is working *(a)* in a number of different schools, *(b)* in different local authorities, *(c)* in the private as well as public sector and *(d)* in another occupation or vocation with children or vulnerable adults. [70263]

Mr. Dhanda: The Department's guidance, "Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children and Young Persons", provides comprehensive advice on the pre-appointment checks employers should undertake on teachers and other prospective employees. This includes previous employment checks, criminal record bureau (CRB) checks, a List 99 check and, for people who are to be employed as teachers, checks to confirm their teaching status.

For individuals working in a number of schools where the local authority is the same, and it is the local authority who is the employer, as long as checks were carried out at the time of the first appointment and there is no gap in employment, further checks should not be necessary. Where employers are different or a gap has occurred each employer must satisfy themselves of an individual's suitability by conducting new checks.

Under the new vetting and barring scheme, legislation for which is currently before Parliament in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Bill, a person or organisation who employs a teacher will be required to check that the teacher is subject to monitoring in relation to their work with children by the scheme, and is not barred from working with children. The duty on the employer to check applies regardless of whether the teacher is working in an independent or maintained school and regardless of whether another employer has already made a check. An employer can fulfil their duty to check by obtaining written confirmation from a supply agency that the agency has made the check.

For a non-teaching position, working with children or vulnerable adults in a registered setting, a CRB check is also required. As part of this the Protection of Children Act (PoCA) and Protection of Vulnerable Adults (PoVA) lists will be checked and it will record if an individual is barred from this type of work.

Children's Database

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the timetable is for the completion of the national children's database. [69350]

Beverley Hughes: The information sharing index will aid more effective prevention and early intervention as a tool to support practitioners to improve outcomes for children, and is therefore a key element of the Every Child Matters programme. The planned timetable for the implementation of the index ensures that it will be delivered in a practical and realistic way. The key elements are:

From the summer of 2006, local authorities will begin a readiness assessment process, involving all relevant local partners. This assessment process will ensure that local areas will be ready to receive the index when it is made available to them. At that time, we will also have the results of the data matching trials which will inform our data sourcing and deployment plans and provide better information about the quality of key data sources and the nature of the task, both locally and nationally, to best ensure that the index data will be of good quality.

During the summer and autumn of 2006, there will be a public consultation on draft regulations and statutory guidance to be made under section 12 of the Children Act 2004, which will govern the operation of the index.

Subject to the will of Parliament, we expect regulations to be in force by early 2007.

From late spring or early summer of 2007, we will have created initial records for each child in England, drawn from key national data sources.

The first index release, which will include those initial records, will be deployed to a first wave of local authorities by the summer of 2007.

The index will be rolled out progressively so that, by the end of 2008, it will be available in all local authorities in England.

We will provide funding and support to local authorities for them to manage local implementation of the index.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding his Department has allocated to the establishment of a national data list for all children in the UK; and how much has been spent to date. [69349]

Beverley Hughes: On 8 December 2005, I announced the Government's plan to implement a fully operational information sharing index in all areas of England by the end of 2008. This will enable practitioners delivering services to children to identify and contact one another easily and quickly, so they can share relevant information about children who need services.

The estimated set-up costs are £224 million over the next three years. This includes the costs of adapting existing systems that will supply the data to the index and ensuring that data are accurate; adapting the day-to-day systems used by practitioners so they can access the index from those systems; introducing robust arrangements to ensure security, and training staff to use the index properly.

Estimated operating costs, thereafter, will be £41 million per year. Most of this will pay for the additional staff needed to ensure the ongoing security, accuracy and audit of the index.

To date, approximately £8.5 million has been spent since the start of the feasibility phase of the index project in February 2004.

Departmental Campaigns

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost was of each information campaign run by his Department since 1997. [69524]

Bill Rammell: Expenditure details from the Department's central advertising and public budget, are not held by specific information campaign; however the total advertising and promotional work is shown in the following table:

	Expenditure (£ million)
1997-98	11.0
1998-99	13.4
1999-2000	9.9
2000-01	14.6
2001-02	11.7
2002-03	14.1
2003-04	15.5
2004-05	12.5
2005-06[1]	9.4

[1] Final accounts for this financial year have still to be closed and this is our total expenditure so far.

Financial information for any other advertising and promotional work from outside of the central marketing team could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Departmental Publications

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the departmental publications sent to teachers since May 1997; and what the cost was in each case. [68625]

Jim Knight: A list of departmental publications sent automatically to schools between 2002 and 2005 is detailed in the following table. Where a publication has been sent to all primary and all secondary schools it will appear in the table for both primary and secondary schools. The Department does not keep distribution lists of publications sent to all schools prior to 2002.

The cost of distribution for publications automatically sent to all schools was c. £300,000 per annum. However, the Department ceased automatic mailings of publications to schools in England on a phased basis between April and December 2004. Discussions with head teachers, and detailed research, showed that schools wanted to be able to choose the printed publications they needed, when they needed them, and to be able to order multiple copies.

The online ordering system enables schools to choose whether to download electronic copies or order the paper-based publications they need at the right time for them and in the multiples they require. This system is linked directly to the fulfilment service and an existing telephone ordering line. A fortnightly email service to schools informs them of new and important publications.

This has resulted in schools being able to order a wider variety of publications from the Department, putting schools in direct control of what they receive, and when they receive it.

Annex A: Publications sent by the Secretary of State to all schools in England in 2002-03

Timing/title	*Primary and/or secondary*
September	
Criminal Records Bureau checks Letter from Secretary of State	Both
School teachers' pay and conditions	Both
Spectrum	Both
School performance tables KS2	Primary
September Infant class count	Primary
KS3 Framework: ICT capability	Secondary
School and college performance tables	Secondary
Revised guidance on disapplication of the curriculum at KS4	Secondary
Target-setting at KS3	Secondary
September pupil count	Secondary
October	
Spectrum	Both
Further Literacy support file	Primary
Building on improvements	Primary
Secretary of State's letter KS2 results	Primary
Secretary of State's letter KS3 results	Secondary
November	
Spectrum	Both
Release of School Finance Pack	Both
KS3 Year 9 Booster—Maths	Secondary
KS3 Year 9 Booster—Science	Secondary
KS3 Year 9 Booster—English	Secondary
December	
Annual school census 2002	Both
Spectrum	Both
New funding system for LEAs	Both
2002 Performance tables: How to obtain PIN details	Both
Criminal Records Bureau: Managing the demand for disclosures	Both
Extended schools: Providing opportunities for all	Both
Child care in extended schools	Both
Early Years headcount	Primary
January	
Languages for all: Languages for life	Both
Spectrum	Both
National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy refresher pack	Primary
Sure Start	Primary
KS2 Letter from Stephen Twigg	Primary
February	
Time for Standards	Both
Letter regarding e-communications	Both
Building Schools for the Future	Both
Spectrum	Both
14-19 outcome pack	Secondary

Annex A: Publications sent by the Secretary of State to all schools in England in 2002-03

Timing/title	*Primary and/or secondary*
A new specialist system	Secondary
Transforming secondary education	Secondary
KS3 targets	Secondary
March	
Survey of absences in schools	Both
Spectrum	Both
Early Years headcount	Primary
Write Here Write Now	Primary
National non-statutory specification: Careers education and guidance	Secondary
April	
Notification of move to e-payment system	Both
Spectrum	Both
12th Youth Cohort study	Secondary
May	
Spectrum	Both
Excellence and Enjoyment	Primary
June/July	
Threshold payments poster	Both
Safeguarding children from abuse	Both
Spectrum	Both
Additional mailings to schools of a particular kind (section 38 (2)(a)(2))	
October	
Secretary of State letter to special schools	Both (Special)
January	
Code of practice: School admissions	Both (VA/Foundation)
Code of practice: Appeals	Both (VA/Foundation)
School admissions: Your new rights	Both (VA/Community)
February	
Management guide for third year: KS3 Strategy	Both (Special) Secondary (Middle schools)

Publications sent by the Secretary of State to all schools in England in 2003-04 (section 38 (2)(a)(1))

Timing/title	*Primary and/or secondary*
September	
Implementation Review Unit poster	Both
Implementation Review Unit leaflet	Both
Data collection by type—SEN	Both
School teachers' pay and conditions	Both
Travelling to school flyer on sustainable school transport	Both
Guidance under S133 Education Act 2002	Both
Spectrum	Both
Education Maintenance Allowance leaflet	Secondary
Principles underpinning organisation of 16-19 provision	Secondary

Publications sent by the Secretary of State to all schools in England in 2003-04 (section 38 (2)(a)(1))

Timing/title	*Primary and/or secondary*
October	
Pupil Achievement Tracker	Both
Performance management support pack	Both
Research topic paper on impact of parental involvement in children's education	Both
Spectrum	Both
November	
Spectrum	Both
Speaking, Listening and Learning pack	Primary
Direct communication with young people	Secondary
KS3 Strategy: Targeting Level 5 and above: Teaching responses to reading	Secondary
KS3 Strategy: Year 9 booster kit—English	Secondary
KS3 Strategy: GCSE booster pack	Secondary
Future of Higher Education: Changes to student finance	Secondary
December	
Spectrum	Both
January	
Bullying: A charter for action	Both
We're a community here	Primary
Spectrum	Both
February	
Removing barriers to achievement	Both
Spectrum	Both
Statutory changes to KS4	Secondary
March	
Drugs: Guidance for schools	Both
Drugs: Guidance for schools (summary)	Both
Spectrum	Both
A day with Dad	Both
Write Here, Write Now	Primary
KS3 parents' evening pack	Secondary
EMA application forms	Secondary
14-19 Reform: Interim progress report	Secondary
April	
Pupil participation guidance—Working Together: Giving young people a say	Both
Spectrum	Both
National Primary Strategy: Progression in phonics	Primary
Performance pay progression	Both
May	
Spectrum	Both

Publications sent by the Secretary of State to all schools in England in 2003-04 (section 38 (2)(a)(1))

Timing/title	*Primary and/or secondary*
Excellence and enjoyment: Learning and teaching in the primary years	Primary
June/July	
Spectrum	Both
Additional mailings to schools of a particular kind	
June	
Letter regarding changes in reporting arrangements	Secondary (Specialist schools)

Publications sent by the Secretary of State to all schools in England in 2004-05

The Department did not send any publications to all schools in 2004-05.

Departmental Staff (Post-Retirement Age)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what opportunities exist for people to work beyond retirement age in his Department. [69040]

Mr. Dhanda: In the Department, people outside the senior civil service who continue to meet the normal standards of fitness and efficiency can choose to retire at any time from age 60-65. We currently do not allow anyone to stay on beyond age 65. However, we are reviewing our age retirement arrangements in line with the provisions of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 that came into effect from 1 October. A small project board is considering more fully the implications and opportunities offered by the regulations, before a decision is taken on the extent to which our age retirement arrangements can become more flexible, without impacting adversely on our operational and business needs.

Education and Inspections Bill

Ms Butler: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which organisation conducted the racial equality impact assessment of the Education and Inspections Bill; and if he will make the assessment available on his Department's website. [70360]

Jim Knight: The Race Equality Impact Assessment on the Schools White Paper, "Higher Standards, Better Schools for All", and the subsequent Education and Inspections Bill was carried out by relevant officials within the Department for Education and Skills, which is in accordance with guidance from the Commission for Racial Equality.

The assessment was published on the Department's website on 28 February, the day of Bill introduction, and can be found at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/educationandinspectionsbill/

EU Students (Loan Default)

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate he has made of the number of EU-domiciled students who may receive loans for study at a UK higher education institution and then default on repayment of those loans. [65275]

Bill Rammell: We estimate that around 42,000[1,2] EU students studying at English HEIs will be eligible for loans for fees. Because these loans are new, there are no historic data to help model behaviour, but—based on the propensity of home students to take out maintenance loans—we have assumed that 80 per cent. of EU students will take out a fee loan.

The rate of repayment of loans depends on graduates' income, and the cost to Government of making the loans is dominated by a subsidy of the rate of interest. The notion of arrears is different from a commercial loan where repayments are predetermined in value and made to a fixed timetable. Nevertheless, the cost, which for EU loans is estimated to be around £30 million [2,3], includes a factor which reflects late payment.

The SLC has well-established mechanisms for recovering loans from students who move abroad and we are confident that these will enable us to effectively collect repayments from EU students from April 2007.

We are continuing to ensure that all students are fully aware that the Student Loans Company (SLC) has the power to trace them and enforce their debt in other countries. The SLC will use this power as necessary to ensure that all students repay what they owe.

[1] rounded to the nearest 1,000.

[2] Figures are steady state in AY 2006/07 terms.

[3] assuming a RAB charge of 33 per cent.

Euro (UK Entry)

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures have been taken by his Department as part of preparations to UK entry to the euro; and what the cost was. [68626]

Bill Rammell: The Department has established a Project Board to oversee preparations within the Department for a possible future changeover to the euro. It also maintains regular links with the HM Treasury Euro Preparations Unit. In line with central guidance, the requirement to consider euro compatibility is built into all major programmes and projects, although any costs relating to meeting this requirement are not separately identified.

European Parliament Recommendation

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what his policy is on implementing European Parliament Recommendation 2006/143/EC, on further European Co-operation in Quality Assurance in Higher Education. [68635]

Bill Rammell: There is much good work concerning higher education quality assurance being undertaken under the auspices of the intergovernmental Bologna Process, which involves 45 countries with the objective of creating a European higher education area. I welcome the recommendation as a contribution towards closer European cooperation in this field, for which primary responsibility rests with higher education institutions themselves in this country. We are working with others as part of the Bologna Process to consider the practicalities of implementing a register of quality assurance agencies in Europe.

Exclusion (Black Children)

Ms Butler: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether safeguards have been adopted to ensure that black children will not be disproportionately affected by the exclusion policies in her Department's White Paper. [68736]

Jim Knight: The White Paper commitments are being implemented largely through provisions in the Education and Inspections Bill, which were subject to a full Race Equality Impact Assessment. A copy of this is available in the Library. Guidance on exclusion also emphasises the importance of race equality awareness throughout the exclusion process.

Although exclusion of Black children fell by half between 1997/98 and 2003/04, they are still excluded at around twice the rate for White children. We have an action plan in place to address these disproportionate levels of exclusion, which will also have an impact on Black children and parents affected by the White Paper proposals. This plan includes: ensuring that equality issues are embedded in key policy areas; sharing good practice with local authorities and recommending that they take specific actions, such as analysing exclusions data and taking remedial action if appropriate; and targeting individual local authorities where data show particularly high disproportionality, with support to reduce it.

The reasons for the existing over-representation of some minority ethnic groups in the exclusions figures are complex. We are currently undertaking a Priority Review to establish the reasons for this disparity and what further can be done to reduce it.

Faith Schools

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many maintained faith schools have been closed in each year since 1997, broken down by faith. [70859]

Jim Knight: The information is given in the following table.

Year closed	*Church of England*	*Catholic*	*Church of England/ Catholic*	*Church of England/ Methodist*	*Methodist*	*Jewish*	*Congregational Church*	*Total*
1997	24	8	1	—	1	—	—	34
1998	7	14	—	—	—	—	—	21
1999	15	12	—	3	—	—	—	30
2000	26	7	—	—	—	—	—	33
2001	20	21	—	—	—	1	—	42
2002	24	19	—	—	1	—	—	44
2003	31	6	1	—	1	—	1	40
2004	27	14	—	—	—	—	—	41
2005	33	18	—	—	—	1	—	52
2006	4	1	—	—	—	—	—	5
Totals	211	120	2	3	3	2	1	342

These include cases where the closed school was directly replaced by another school, sometimes on the same site. This might occur where, for example, a school was replaced by an Academy or a school with different religious character or none; and where two or more schools amalgamated to form a single school (such as infant and junior schools amalgamating to form primary schools, or as part of a wider reorganisation).

Financial Education Initiatives

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what initiatives her Department and its non-departmental bodies support to promote *(a)* financial education, *(b)* financial advice, *(c)* financial inclusion and *(d)* financial capability; which organisations are involved in delivering each initiative; and how much funding is provided to each by (i) her Department and its non-departmental public bodies, (ii) other Government Departments, (iii) the private sector and (iv) the voluntary sector. [66580]

Bill Rammell: The Department is strengthening financial education as part of our 14-19 reforms. Financial capability education will be taught more explicitly in the new functional mathematics component of GCSE mathematics. Functional mathematics will also form part of the core of the new 14-19 specialised Diplomas. These initiatives support existing opportunities in Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), Citizenship, Business Studies and Careers Education for improving young people's understanding of financial issues. We have worked with QCA to offer schools new units of work to support financial capability education, available at www.qca.org.uk/pshe.

The Department's "Skills for Life" Strategy has provided in excess of £3 million since 2001 to fund a financial literacy programme, which is run on behalf of the Government by the Basic Skills Agency (BSA). We have allocated £60 million a year for the three academic years from September 2005 to support a new focus on enterprise education in all secondary schools in England. We work with the Personal Finance Education Group (PREG) to develop and disseminate resources materials to support teachers in the classroom. The Department is also working closely with the Financial Services Authority (FSA) to ensure that its work supports the educational aspects of the National Strategy for Financial Capability.

Foreign Language Teaching

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps his Department is taking to promote co-operation in foreign language teaching between secondary and primary schools. [70877]

Jim Knight: Many secondary schools support language learning in primary schools by sharing teacher expertise, resource and use of facilities. In April 2006 the Department provided additional funding of £30,000 to every existing Specialist Language College and suggested a proportion of the funding be used to support the development and delivery of language learning programmes in primary schools. In addition £49.5 million will be distributed among all local authorities during the financial years 2006-07 and 2007-08 to support the implementation of languages at Key Stage 2. The Department suggested part of this funding could be used to develop links between primary and secondary schools to support programmes. In October 2005 the Department launched the Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages which contains guidance for schools on progression of language learning within Key Stage 2 and into Key Stage 3.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of students at primary school are being taught foreign languages. [70878]

Jim Knight: The Department does not collect data on the proportion of pupils studying a language in primary schools. However, a "Headspace" survey undertaken by Education Guardian and EdComs in 2005 indicated that 56 per cent. of primary schools are now planning or already implementing primary language learning programmes, compared with 46 per cent. in an earlier "Headspace" survey.

Information Provision

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to her answer of 23 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 543W, what estimate she has made of the cost of providing the information. [68755]

Bill Rammell: The Department does not hold this information centrally and to compile the information from over 100 business units would incur costs well in excess of the disproportionate cost threshold.

Key Worker Funding

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what criteria are used to determine the eligibility of teachers for key worker funding for affordable homes. [66039]

Jim Knight: The Department for Communities and Local Government has overall responsibility for setting the criteria individuals must satisfy in order to qualify for funding for affordable homes. Within those criteria, Sponsor Government Departments select the eligible groups for individual sectors. For the education sector, the Department for Education and Skills recommends that teachers with Qualified Teacher Status working in the maintained sector can apply for assistance. Full details of qualifying criteria can be found in Annex B of the Capital Funding Guide on the Housing Corporation's website www.housingcorp.gov.uk.

Lecturers (Salaries)

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average salary was for a lecturer in further education in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* the latest year for which information is available. [66874]

Bill Rammell: The average salary for full-time further education lecturers in England was £23,770 in March 1997 and £29,640 in March 2004, the latest information available. This represents a 24.7 per cent. increase compared to a cumulative inflation rate of 15 per cent. for the same period.

Muslim Colleges

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether his Department issues guidance to Muslim colleges in England on content of courses for those who wish to become imams; and if he will make a statement. [65770]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* For courses provided in publicly-funded Further Education Colleges and Higher Education Institutions, quality and standards are assured through independent inspection. With our support, the HE sector's Equality Challenge Unit has issued guidance to institutions on dealing with hate crimes and intolerance on campus. The Centre for Excellence in Leadership (CEL) for the FE system has also published the Faith Community Tool Kit. This provides an excellent source of information and advice to help leaders across the learning and skills sector to engage effectively with learners and staff from multi-faith communities. It draws out the valuable contribution people's beliefs can bring to their work, workplace or learning.

Nursery Places

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many nursery and crèche places are provided for people working in his Department; what charges are made for the provision of such services; and what other facilities are provided for the children of employees of his Department. [67360]

Mr. Dhanda: The Department is committed to quality child care support for staff and provides a range of options which consists of the following:

Fifty nursery places on its Runcorn and Sheffield sites. In Runcorn; parents pay £16.90 per day and receive a departmental subsidy of £6.80 per day. In Sheffield, parents pay £16.50 and receive a departmental subsidy of £6.50 per day;

Pre-school age child care vouchers which are payable for 48 weeks per year and are valued at £20 per week for Runcorn, Sheffield and Darlington staff and £30 per week for London staff. These amounts are pro-rated for part-time staff. Currently, 154 parents received these vouchers;

School age vouchers, introduced from 1 May 2006, which replaced departmental play scheme subsidy previously paid to staff, on all sites. These vouchers are paid monthly, London staff receive £38 per month and staff on other sites receive £32 per month, pro-rated for part-time staff. These vouchers offer parents greater flexibility and choice. Responses to a recent child care survey indicate that the introduction of the new school age voucher will provide financial support for over 350 school age children. This compares favourably to the 130 children previously supported under the subsidised play scheme arrangements; and

In addition, a Childcare Salary Sacrifice scheme was introduced on 1 May 2006. This will enable staff to make savings on tax and national insurance contributions related to child care costs. As the scheme is new, applications are currently being processed and take-up figures are currently unavailable.

Oxbridge Students

Patrick Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of students attending *(a)* Oxford and *(b)* Cambridge universities in the last year for which figures are available previously attended a (i) state grammar school and (ii) maintained school. [62709]

Bill Rammell: The latest available information from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) showing the previous school type of students obtaining places in 2005 is shown in the table. The figures are limited to students who applied to full-time undergraduate courses via UCAS, so they do not therefore cover part-time students or those full-time students who apply directly to Oxbridge.

UK domiciled students accepted to full-time undergraduate courses via UCAS, autumn 2005

	Cambridge university		*Oxford university*	
Previous school type:	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Grammar	358	12.9	279	10.1
Other maintained schools	922	33.2	809	29.3
Independent	1,141	41.1	1,290	46.7
FE college/other	355	12.8	384	13.9
Total known	2,776	100.0	2,762	100.0
Unknown[1]	95	—	88	—
Total	2,871	—	2,850	—

[1] Not all students provide details of their previous school.

Source:
Universities and Colleges Admissions Services (UCAS).

Playing Fields Disposal

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate has been made of the likely total capital receipts from disposal of playing fields associated with private finance schemes in the secondary school sector in England at 2006 prices; what the total area of such playing fields is; and if he will make a statement. [70802]

Jim Knight: There have been seven applications approved that involve the sale of school playing fields which are capable of forming at least a small sports pitch, and which are associated with private finance schemes in the secondary school sector in England. The total area of these fields amount to 115,575 square metres and the expected capital receipt is around £24.5 million. Other proceeds from disposals, if approved, will depend on the value of the land at the time the application is made.

Prison Education

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many of the recommendations of the Seventh Report from the Education and Skills Committee for Session 2004-05 on Prison Education have *(a)* been met, *(b)* had no action taken in respect of them and *(c)* been rejected; and if he will make a statement. [66549]

Phil Hope: In June 2005, the Government responded comprehensively to the Education and Skills Select Committee report.

The Government already had substantial plans to take action on many of the recommendations contained in the Select Committee's report, and many of these would fall into a category 'action taken in response'. Our most recent analysis shows that action is being taken in response to 27 of the recommendations; 18 have been met; and there were four where the Committee's recommendation did not call for any

action. For six of the recommendations the necessary action is under way but long-term, making the term 'met' less easy to measure.

The Government made clear in their response that they did not agree with six of the recommendations. We rejected the Committee's assertion (recommendation 6) that no over-arching strategy was in place, although we have since published the Green Paper "Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment" on which we are still consulting; although we agree that offenders with special needs should be supported, we do not necessarily agree that the introduction of special educational needs coordinators and learning support assistants to every adult prison is the right solution (recommendations 11 and 12); we see no case for guaranteeing prisoners an entitlement to learning and skills that is greater than the entitlements available for the general population (recommendation 14); progress made in recent years in improving learning and skills in prisons addresses the Committee's points in recommendation 20; and, although the Government did not believe at the time of their response that the proposal to equalise pay across all activities was practical, we are consulting on this matter through the Green Paper (recommendation 47).

Recruitment

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on recruitment, search and selection agencies in each of the last five years. [68342]

Mr. Dhanda: The information requested is not collected centrally in the format requested and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Any external recruitment campaign within the Department is based on business need and each case is considered separately. Where the services of search and selection agencies are required, agreed criteria and support delivery are drawn from the Cabinet Office Central Framework Agreement.

Redundancies

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* support staff in (i) primary and (ii) secondary schools he estimates will be made redundant in (A) 2006-07 and (B) 2007-08 as a result of falling rolls; and if he will make a statement. [67405]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* The number of teachers needed over time will vary from one area to another and schools and local authorities will need to decide how they manage numbers of teacher and support staff posts on the basis of anticipated local needs. In many cases there will be no need for redundancies because natural wastage and reduced numbers of newly-qualified teachers will play an important part in managing staff numbers.

To help schools and local authorities who will need to manage the effects of falling rolls we have published a web-based toolkit which offers a range of practical advice and guidance. The toolkit can be found at www.teachernet.gov.uk/fallingrolls.

As far as teachers are concerned, the Department's supply modelling has allowed for falling rolls by reducing the number of teacher training places in 2005/06 for both primary and secondary teaching. However, overall judgments on the number of teachers required also depend on other factors such as those leaving and returning to the profession and this will vary from one area to another. Because of these factors and local variations, teacher numbers have continued to rise. On a full time equivalent basis, their numbers rose by 3,500 to 435,400 in England in January 2006.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much has been spent on redundancy costs in his Department and its agencies in each year since 1997. [70500]

Mr. Dhanda: There have been no redundancies in the Department but we have run a series of voluntary early release schemes. The total costs to my Department arising from the provisions of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme since 1997 were as follows:

Financial year	*Total cost to DfES (£ million)*
1997-98	5.145
1998-99	2.73
1999-2000	4.237
2000-01	4.06
2001-02	6.142
2002-03	5.57
2003-04	2.54
2004-05	18.95
2005-06	14.95
Total	64.324

School Drinks

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what criteria his Department uses to assess the suitability of drinks for sale in schools; and what drinks have been assessed as unsuitable in the last three years. [69810]

Jim Knight: Later this month we intend to announce, in response to recommendations from the School Meals Review Panel and the School Food Trust, a full suite of new standards, which will incorporate standards for drinks available at lunch and other times of the day. The School Food Trust plans to publish good practice guidance to assist with the implementation of the standards.

The 'Healthy School Lunches' guidance, published by DfES, contains the Secretary of State's expectation that drinking water should be made available to all pupils every day, free of charge. In addition the 'Healthy Living Blueprint' includes guidance on both the importance of drinking water and how schools can increase their pupils' consumption.

School Statistics

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of children *(a)* are in receipt of free school meals, *(b)* have special educational needs and *(c)* are from ethnic minority families in each local authority. [68783]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 10 May 2006]:* The information requested has been placed in the House Libraries.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many governing boards of failing schools have *(a)* resigned and *(b)* been asked to resign in the last five years. [69801]

Jim Knight: The Department does not collect information on resignations by the governing bodies of failing schools. However, proposals to replace a governing body by a temporary interim executive board require the Secretary of State's approval. Such approval has been given for 32 schools since the relevant legislation came into force in September 2002.

Sex Education Packs

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance the Department issued to schools on the use of the teachers' sex education packs *(a)* Beyond a Phase and *(b)* Taking Sex Seriously; and how many (i) secondary and (ii) primary schools are using such packs, broken down by local education authority area. [70418]

Mr. Dhanda: These resources are not funded or endorsed by the Department for Education and Skills and we do not collect data on the use of materials by schools.

The Department issued guidance in 2000 which outlined the statutory responsibility on head teachers and governors to protect their pupils from inappropriate teaching and materials. The guidance advises governors and head teachers to discuss with parents and take on board any concerns raised on sensitive materials to be used within the classroom.

Staff Discipline

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in his Department have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* dismissed for (i) inappropriate use of the internet while at work and (ii) using work telephones to access premium rate numbers in each of the last five years. [67999]

Mr. Dhanda: The Department allows personal use of the internet and e-mail outside normal working hours. Staff are warned that internet access may be monitored and misuse may lead to disciplinary action. Staff are also reminded of the policy each time they log on to the Department's network and must indicate that they accept the policy before log-in can be completed.

New monitoring software, introduced in 2003, prevents staff from accessing any inappropriate site, and records any attempted access. All access to premium rate numbers are barred.

The information requested over the last five calendar years is as follows:

	Internet abuse		*Premium rate numbers*	
	Disciplined	*Dismissed*	*Disciplined*	*Dismissed*
2005	4	1	?	?
2004	1	1	?	?
2003	3	?	?	?
2002	5	3	?	?
2001	19	5	?	1

Student Internet Access

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to increase the use of internet access by students in their homes using high speed mobile technology following the recent Budget announcement; and if he will make a statement. [70518]

Phil Hope *[holding answer 12 May 2006]:* Budget 2006 announced £10 million revenue funding over 2006-08 specifically to provide internet connectivity to supplement the £50 million capital announced in Budget 2005 to put computers into the homes of the most disadvantaged secondary school pupils. This £60 million funding will support around 100,000 families and we expect the funding to be allocated shortly.

Student Loans

Nick Herbert: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether interest has always accrued on a student loan from the moment the loan is paid out. [70092]

Bill Rammell: Yes.

Teachers

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of teachers completed training but did not enter the profession in each of the last five years. [68603]

Jim Knight: The following table shows the number of teachers known to have completed training in England for each of the last five years for which data are available from the Teachers Pension Scheme. It also shows the proportion of qualifiers who had not entered teaching in England or Wales by March of the following year and the proportion of qualifiers with no known teaching service to March 2004.

Year of qualification	Qualifiers recorded on Teachers Pension Scheme	Percentage who had not entered teaching by March of the following year	Percentage without any teaching service by March 2004
1999	24,200	22	8
2000	21,810	20	8
2001	21,810	20	8
2002	23,040	20	11
2003	25,180	20	20

Figures exclude those qualifying through employment-based routes.

Since 1990, the pattern for entry to teaching has been that about 20 per cent. do not enter in the year after they qualify. This falls substantially in the second year with between 8 and 10 per cent. not entering teaching service in the long term; the figures for the 2003 qualifiers are expected to follow this historical pattern and fall to a similar level.

These statistics take account only of teachers who are part of the Teachers Pension Scheme. While the coverage is good in the maintained sector, it is patchier in, for example, independent schools and further or higher education. Therefore the true proportion of qualified teachers with no service is expected to be lower.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of teachers left the profession before retirement age in each of the last five years. [68604]

Jim Knight: There is no set retirement age for teachers. Many teachers retire at age 60 but some retire earlier, for example on actuarially reduced terms, and some choose to retire later.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent assessment he has made of the quality of the teaching of *(a)* science and *(b)* mathematics in secondary schools. [68641]

Bill Rammell: The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools 2004/05 states that the teaching of science is good or better in nearly three quarters of secondary schools, and that the teaching of mathematics is good in two thirds of lessons in secondary schools.

Telephone Advice Lines

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many telephone advice lines his Department and its non-departmental public bodies support; how many telephone advisers each employs; and how much funding is provided by *(a)* his Department and its non-departmental public bodies, *(b)* other Government departments, *(c)* the private sector and *(d)* the voluntary sector. [66585]

Mr. Dhanda: The Department for Education and Skills does not have the requested information readily available and therefore an answer to this question could be given only at disproportionate cost.

Temporary Classrooms

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools are using temporary mobile classroom accommodation in each region; and if he will make a statement. [67404]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* Data supplied to the Department by local education authorities in 2003 showed the following numbers of primary and secondary schools using temporary mobile classrooms:

	Primary	Secondary
East Midlands	639	175
East of England	911	194
London	475	139
North East	119	42
North West	357	138
South East	1,128	323
South West	891	184
West Midlands	668	202
Yorkshire and The Humber	470	122

Central Government capital support for investment in schools has increased from under £700 million in 1996-97 to £5.8 billion this year and will rise further to over £6.3 billion by 2007-08. Progress is being made year by year in improving the quality of the school building stock. The bulk of schools capital is now allocated by formula to authorities and schools so that they can address their local priorities, including the replacement of decayed temporary accommodation, on which we have set a high priority. Given the high levels of funding, authorities have the opportunity to replace temporary classrooms where they are considered to be unsuitable.

Modern, high quality mobile or demountable classrooms provide a good environment for teaching and learning where there is short-term need. They might, for instance, be needed to cope with a short-term increase in pupil numbers, or where extensive remodelling or rebuilding of permanent accommodation means providing temporary accommodation on the school site, rather than transporting children elsewhere.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils he expects to be taught in temporary classrooms in Milton Keynes at the start of the 2006-07 academic year. [68139]

Jim Knight: The local authority advises that a total of 450 pupils are expected to be housed in temporary classrooms at schools in Milton Keynes at the start of the 2006-07 academic year.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils are being taught in temporary classrooms in Milton Keynes, broken down by school. [68140]

Jim Knight: The Milton Keynes local authority advises that a total of 450 pupils are currently housed in temporary classrooms at the following schools:

	Number
Bradwell Village	50
Caroline Haslett	50
Green Park	50
Olney Infants	50
Lord Grey	100
The Walnuts	20
White Spire	30
Sir Frank Markham	100

Not all of the pupils' time during the school day will be spent in these classrooms.

Transient Homes

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent steps he has taken to improve cross-border co-operation between the Department and the Welsh Assembly Government in tracking children from transient homes; and if she will make a statement. [66939]

Beverley Hughes: We recognise the importance of effective mechanisms for ensuring that appropriate information can follow children with additional needs when they move between England and Wales.

To this end, my officials are working with the Welsh Assembly Government on the establishment of data standards to support appropriate information transfer between English and Welsh local authorities.

The ability of agencies in England to receive, store and transfer such information will also be enhanced by the information sharing index to be established under section 12 of the Children Act 2004, following my announcement of 8 December 2005. The index will provide an important tool to support better communication and closer working among practitioners working in children's services by enabling them to identify who else is involved with a child. It will help ensure continuity of support when children and families move from one area to another by enabling services in their new area to identify which services they were receiving in their old area. My officials will continue to liaise with officials of the Welsh Assembly Government as the index is implemented.

In relation to children on the child protection register, when such a child moves to another local authority area in England and Wales, the authority where the child has been living must notify the receiving local authority of the child's move. The receiving local authority should convene a child protection conference within 15 working days of being notified of the move.

University Degrees

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people gained a doctorate in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005, broken down by subject; and what each figure is as a percentage change from the equivalent figures in 1995. [69576]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* The latest information is given in the following tables. A new method of allocating students to subjects was introduced in 2002/03, which means that figures for this and later years are not comparable with those for earlier years. The tables therefore show 1994/95 compared with 2001/02, and 2002/03 compared with later years.

Doctorates awarded at English higher education institutions

Subject	1994/95	2001/02	Percentage change 1994/95 to 2001/02
Medicine and dentistry	430	855	+99
Subjects allied to medicine	250	500	+100
Biological sciences	900	1415	+57
Veterinary sciences	30	50	+67
Agriculture and related subjects	170	185	+9
Physical sciences	1,245	1,315	+6
Mathematical sciences	195	285	+46
Computer science	160	235	+47
Engineering and technology	1,130	1,325	+17
Architecture, building and planning	75	80	+7
Social, economic and political studies	440	820	+86
Law	65	110	+69
Business and administrative studies	185	350	+89
Librarianship and information science	25	30	+20
Languages	330	545	+65
Humanities	310	565	+82
Creative arts and design	55	155	+182
Education	155	450	+190
Combined subjects	120	135	+13
Dormant students[1]	1,975	2,350	+19
Total	8,245	11,750	+43

Subject[2]	2002/03	2003/04	Percentage change 2002/03 to 2003/04	2004/05	Percentage change 2002/03 to 2004/05
Medicine and dentistry	1,165	1305	+12	1300	+11
Subjects allied to medicine	615	650	+6	675	+10
Biological sciences	1,905	1,990	+4	2,005	+5
Veterinary sciences	45	40	-13	55	+20
Agriculture and related subjects	150	185	+22	150	-2
Physical sciences	1,815	1,890	+4	1,925	+6
Mathematical sciences	320	355	+12	365	+14
Computer science	285	370	+31	425	+49
Engineering and technology	1,710	1,765	+3	1,705	0
Architecture, building and planning	125	140	+12	165	+35
Social studies	1,095	1,115	+2	1,170	+7
Law	220	160	-27	165	-24
Business and administrative studies	455	445	-3	485	+6
Mass communication and documentation	50	60	+24	65	+28
Languages	750	710	-5	730	-3
Historical and philosophical studies	690	725	+5	740	+7
Creative arts and design	290	220	-24	240	-17
Education	570	570	-1	590	+3
Combined subjects	20	70	+214	?	-86
Total	12,270	12,765	+4	12,950	+6

[1] Dormant students are those who are not actively following a course of study in the year in which they are awarded their qualification. [2] In 2002/03, the method used to allocate students to subject categories was changed, the main effect of which was to increase the number of students who were allocated to specific subject groups and decrease those who were allocated to the combined subject category. For 2002/03 and later years dormant students have been allocated to specific subjects rather than classified separately. *Note*: Figures are rounded to the nearest 5. ? indicates greater than 0 and less than 3. *Source*: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

University Education

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people went to university, broken down by *(a)* sex and *(b)* age, in each year since 1976. [66040]

Bill Rammell: The latest available information is given in the following table. Comparable figures for earlier years are not available centrally.

UK-domiciled undergraduates[1] studying at HEIs in Great Britain (including the Open University)

		of which:			
	Total	Male[2]	Female[2]	Under 21	21 and over
1979/80	638,835	395,835	243,000	311,410	327,425
1980/81	662,160	409,100	253,060	328,180	333,980
1981/82	693,385	423,800	269,585	346,625	346,760
1982/83	718,315	431,875	286,440	359,400	358,910
1983/84	738,395	439,080	299,315	364,060	374,335
1984/85	745,345	437,785	307,560	365,400	379,950
1985/86	763,765	439,730	324,030	361,850	401,915
1986/87	790,760	448,830	341,930	358,925	431,835
1987/88	806,945	454,715	352,230	363,680	443,265
1988/89	830,645	461,010	369,635	367,980	462,665
1989/90	876,580	476,280	400,305	388,345	488,240
1990/91	933,455	498,080	435,375	414,010	519,445
1991/92	1,024,020	539,300	484,720	453,540	570,480
1992/93	1,131,870	583,985	547,885	488,670	643,200
1993/94	1,228,990	625,765	603,220	516,180	712,810
1994/95	1,307,835	647,875	659,960	531,295	776,540
1995/96	1,410,955	674,435	736,520	535,875	875,080
1996/97	1,460,265	679,085	781,180	549,010	911,250
1997/98	1,476,680	675,780	800,900	575,135	901,545
1998/99	1,501,290	677,000	824,290	600,560	900,735
1999/00	1,504,730	668,105	836,625	617,210	887,520
2000/01	1,528,540	670,865	857,675	621,800	906,740
2001/02	1,557,995	677,590	880,405	626,990	931,000
2002/03	1,609,780	688,285	921,495	635,290	974,490

UK-domiciled undergraduates[1] studying at HEIs in Great Britain (including the Open University)

			of which:		
	Total	*Male*[2]	*Female*[2]	*Under 21*	*21 and over*
2003/04	1,666,445	716,910	949,540	645,305	1,021,145
2004/05[3]	1,701,080	724,520	976,560	655,015	1,046,065

[1] Full-time and part-time students.
[2] Includes estimates for the gender split of Open University students for the years prior to 1988/89, and estimates for the gender split of a small number of students in the years 1990/91 to 1993/94.
[3] Includes provisional estimates for HE students in further education colleges.
Note:
Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5, so components may not sum to totals.
Source:
Universities Statistical Record (USR), the Open University, and the Education Departments of England, Scotland and Wales for the years up to 1993/94; Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), Learning and Skills Council, Scottish Executive, and Welsh Assembly for 1994/95 and later years.

University Maintenance Grants

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many nationals from other EU countries he expects to be eligible to claim university maintenance grants when directive 2004/38/EC comes into force; and if he will make a statement. [66134]

Bill Rammell: We estimate that around 6,000 EU nationals studying full-time in English institutions, who have not satisfied the existing provisions as migrant workers or self-employed persons, could in principle be eligible to claim maintenance support (consisting of loans and grants) in the 2006/07 academic year as a result of changes we have made following the ECJ ruling in the Bidar case. It is therefore expected that the majority of additional EU nationals who will be eligible to claim maintenance support in 2006/07 would have been eligible even if directive 2004/38 had not come into force. We anticipate the directive will add a small number of people to those who are already eligible to claim maintenance support.

Vulnerable Children

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps his Department is taking to address the issue of children *(a)* in local authority care and *(b)* on the Child Protection Register going missing; and what information his Department collects from local authorities to assist in the work in each case. [68794]

Mr. Dhanda: The Department of Health published "Children Missing from Care and Home—a guide to good practice" in November 2002. This was issued, along with Circular LAC (2002)17 under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, making the guidance a requirement for local authorities. This guidance includes information about responding to individual children who have been missing from their care placement and about the need for services in each area to follow a strategic approach to ensure consistent management of missing from care incidents.

Information about children missing from their agreed placement for more than 24 hours by local authority may be found on the Department's website at: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/VOL/v000646/index.shtml

The revision of "Working Together to Safeguard Children" was published in April 2006. Section 11.64 of this document includes advice about the steps to be followed where children who are the subjects of child protection plans go missing. This document may be found at http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/safeguarding/workingtogether/

Information about children subject to child protection plans who go missing is not collected centrally.

White Papers

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many White Papers were published by his Department in 2005; and if he will make a statement. [68246]

Mr. Dhanda: 14 White Papers were published within the Command Papers series in 2005. These are detailed in the following list:

Command number	*Title*
6452	Parental Separation: Children's Needs and Parents' Responsibilities
6462	Draft Children (Contact) and Adoption Bill
6476	14-19 Education and Skills
6483	21st Century Skills: Achievement and Challenge
6522	Departmental Report
6562	The Government's Response to the Seventh Report from Education and Skills Committee of Session 2004-05

Command number	Title
6583	The Government Reply to the Report from the Joint Committee on the Draft Children (Contact) and Adoption Bill
6594	The Government's Response to the Environmental Audit Committee's Report on Environmental Education
6599	The Government's Response to the House of Commons Education and Skills Committee Report—National Skills Strategy: 14-19
6610	The Government's Response to the House of Commons Education and Skills Committee Ninth Report Session 2004-05
6629	Youth Matters
6677	Higher Standards, Better Schools for All—More Choice for Parents and Pupils
6702	Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment
6719	Autumn Performance Report

Working Together

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will place in the Library the responses to his Department's public consultation on Working Together to safeguard children; if he will list responses which sought the rejection of the Bichard Inquiry recommendation regarding disclosure of details of sexual activity by minors when coming into contact with health professionals; and if he will make a statement. [66908]

Mr. Dhanda: The Department published an analysis of the responses to the public consultation on 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and the Government's response on 22 March. I will arrange for copies to be placed in the Library.

There was overwhelming support from respondents for the Government to issue new, clearer guidance for professionals on when to share information with social services and the police to protect sexually active children from harm and abuse, in line with the recommendation in the Bichard Inquiry Report.

Nine out of 245 respondents to the consultation disagreed or strongly disagreed that the Government should attempt to set out a clearer policy for professionals including the health service and youth workers on when to share information with social services and the police to protect sexually active children from harm and abuse, and 23 out of 235 respondents disagreed that there was a case for information (including confidential information) always being shared in some circumstances.

The guidance contained in 'Working Together' on sharing information about underage sexual activity recognises professionals' need to balance their duty of confidentiality to young people who access sexual services with the need to safeguard sexually active under-16-year-olds. 'Working Together' sets out a framework to help professionals judge when to share information on this issue.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Beacon Scheme

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment she has made of the impact of the Beacon Scheme. [70090]

Mr. Woolas: The Beacon Scheme plays an important role in recognising excellent public service and in helping organisations to improve.

Research on the impact of the Beacon Scheme has been carried out since the first round of the scheme by Warwick Business School. Full details of published research can be found on the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) website at: www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1137250.

A recent review of the scheme was also carried out by the independent advisory panel on Beacon Councils at the request of Ministers in October 2004. The Government's response to their recommendations was published in July 2005 and can be found on the DCLG website at: www.odpm.gov.uk/beaconcouncils.

Over the last year 90 per cent. of authorities have either applied for beacon status or sought to learn from a beacon and research by Warwick found that over the first five rounds, 79 per cent. of those attending beacon open days made positive changes as a result.

Business Rates

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much the *(a)* average business rates bill in England and *(b)* total net revenue from business rates in England was in each year since 1997-98; and what his estimate is for (i) 2005-06 and (ii) 2006-07. [66446]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The average business rates bill in England and total net revenue from business rates in England in each year from 1997-98 to 2004-05, and estimates for 2005-06 and 2006-07, are shown in the following table.

	Total net revenue (£ million)	Average business rates (£)
1997-98	11,030	6,796
1998-99	11,342	7,016
1999-2000	11,315	6,998
2000-01	13,430	8,264
2001-02	14,223	8,714
2002-03	14,857	9,071
2003-04	15,000	9,137
2004-05	15,319	9,301
2005-06	16,505	9,997
2006-07	17,629	10,601

Churches (Planning)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether churches require planning permission to erect a cross within the curtilage of their church property. [60131]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Notices and other forms of advertisement which relate to any religious institution or religious event are permitted, subject to certain conditions and limitations. Whether the erection of a religious symbol such as a cross in the grounds of a church comes within the scope of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) Regulations 1992 depends on its size. Memorials are exempt from control.

Civic Forums

Mike Penning: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total annual budget is of regional government's civic forums; if he will list the civic forums that have been established; and if he will make a statement. [68501]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Government have not established any regional civic forums, nor am I aware of any being established by the voluntary regional assemblies that have been designated to undertake certain specific tasks.

Code of Conduct (Parish Councils)

Mike Penning: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the number of parish councillors who have resigned in response to the introduction of the code of conduct; and how many seats are vacant. [68505]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

We have made no such estimate. There is no evidence to suggest that parish councillors resigned over the introduction of the code of conduct, which the National Association of Local Councils supports. Information is not held centrally on the number of vacant parish council seats.

Colchester Borough Council

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the National Audit Office has calculated a final liability for Colchester borough council for its investigation into the 2003-04 accounts; when Colchester borough council will be charged for this amount; and if he will make a statement. [68907]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

This is an operational matter for the Audit Commission. I shall ask the chief executive to write to the hon. Member and to ensure the answer is made available in the Library of the House.

Community Land Trusts

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what measures the Government are taking to encourage the development of community land trusts; and if she will make a statement. [69749]

Yvette Cooper: We are always interested in new initiatives that help encourage active citizenship and that deliver more affordable housing where it is needed. English Partnerships is currently developing a pilot Community Land Trust to deliver affordable housing on public sector land at Cashes Green, Stroud. We will closely monitor developments there to help determine whether this model is effective and good value for money.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what opportunities exist for people to work beyond retirement age in his Department. [69056]

Angela E. Smith: I have been asked to reply

The normal retirement age for staff is 60. Staff below the senior civil service have the right to work up to the age of 65. Staff in the SCS may seek agreement to work up to the age of 65. In exceptional circumstances the Department may invite staff to work beyond 65, up to a maximum age of 70, to meet a particular business need.

Discrimination

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what discussions she has had with ministerial colleagues on ensuring that measures to prevent discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation in the provision of goods and services are consistent with laws preventing religious discrimination. [68785]

Meg Munn *[holding answer 12 May 2006]:* Discussions are ongoing about the interaction between the proposed new regulations and the provisions in part 2 of the Equality Act and the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, both in

terms of the current consultation paper 'Getting Equal: Proposals to Outlaw Sexual Orientation Discrimination in the Provision of Goods and Services' and the wider Discrimination Law Review.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps she is taking to ensure that future measures to prevent discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation will not prevent *(a)* bed and breakfast and *(b)* other accommodation providers from providing accommodation only for married couples. [68786]

Meg Munn *[holding answer 12 May 2006]:* A consultation paper 'Getting Equal: Proposals to Outlaw Sexual Orientation Discrimination in the Provision of Goods and Services' was published on 13 March, setting out the Government's proposal for the regulations and seeking the views of interested parties on their proposed shape and coverage. As set out in the consultation, we are proposing that the regulations would apply to providers of bed and breakfast and other accommodation, so the providers of such accommodation would not be able to offer accommodation only to married couples.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what measures to prevent discrimination in the provision of goods and services on grounds of sexuality are being considered by her Department. [68787]

Meg Munn *[holding answer 12 May 2006]:* A consultation paper 'Getting Equal: Proposals to Outlaw Sexual Orientation Discrimination in the Provision of Goods and Services' was published on 13 March, setting out the Government's proposal for regulations and seeking the views of interested parties on their proposed shape and coverage. As set out in the consultation, the Government propose to lay regulations that will be subject to affirmative resolution after the summer recess.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what representations she has received from Christian *(a)* bed and breakfast and *(b)* other residential establishments on possible future measures to prevent discrimination on the grounds of sexuality in the provision of goods and services. [68951]

Meg Munn *[holding answer 12 May 2006]:* A consultation paper 'Getting Equal: Proposals to Outlaw Sexual Orientation Discrimination in the Provision of Goods and Services' was published on 13 March, and has already elicited responses on a variety of questions. All views submitted in response to the consultation will be considered so that these can be taken into account when the regulations are drafted. The consultation period will close on 5 June 2006 and in line with Cabinet Office guidelines the Government aim to publish a formal response to the consultation within 12 weeks of this date. This response will include a list of the non-confidential responses received and a summary of the views expressed in these responses.

Energy Efficient Homes

Ed Balls: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people in *(a)* England and *(b)* West Yorkshire are receiving council tax rebates for improving the energy efficiency of their homes. [69467]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

English Regional Chambers

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much the Government have allocated to the English regional chambers in relation to the transfer of responsibilities from the regional housing boards. [70653]

Yvette Cooper: We have set aside up to £850,000 additional grant in 2006-07 to support the regional chambers in carrying out the regional housing secretariat functions they have inherited from the regional housing boards. We expect other regional partners (for example, the Housing Corporation) to continue to contribute—whether financially or in kind—to the process.

EU Directive 2002/91/EC

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will publish a regulatory impact assessment for the implementation of EU directive 2002/91/EC. [70651]

Yvette Cooper: The technical provisions in Articles 3 to 6 of EU directive 2002/91/EC, the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, have been implemented through an amendment of the Building Regulations. I have placed a copy of the final Regulatory Impact Assessment associated with this amendment in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

There is a three-year derogation period within the Directive to apply fully the procedural provisions in Articles 7 to 10. We are developing a phased programme of implementation and a Regulatory Impact Assessment for this which will be published in due course.

Fire Safety

Ms Barlow: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if the Minister with responsibility for the fire service will meet the fire service, representatives of the business community and the insurance industry to discuss fire safety and prevention. [70280]

Angela E. Smith: Yes, it is my intention to meet with all key stakeholders, both internal and external, as and when appropriate. I understand that my predecessor met with representatives of the business community

and the insurance industry at a meeting of the Business and Community Safety Forum on 3 May 2006.

Fire Service

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many hoax telephone calls were made to the fire brigade in *(a)* England, *(b)* the North East and *(c)* the Tees Valley in each year since 1997. [71091]

Angela E. Smith: The number of hoax telephone calls made to the fire and rescue service (FRS) is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The following table shows the number of malicious false fire alarms attended by the FRS in each year since 1997 in:

(a) England;

(b) North East;

(c) Cleveland FRS (data for areas below FRS level are not available. Tees Valley is within Cleveland FRS area).

Malicious false fire alarm calls attended by the fire and rescue service, 1997 to 2004

	England	North East	Number Cleveland
1997	84,416	8,413	3,377
1998	70,040	7,206	2,764
1999	66,542	5,888	2,423
2000	60,082	4,824	2,237
2001	59,648	4,472	1,757
2002[1]	54,109	3,898	1,568
2003[1]	47,010	2,453	590
2004	39,139	1,799	394

[1] Including estimates for incidents not recorded during periods of industrial action in 2002 and 2003.

Source:
Fire and Rescue Service FDR3 returns to ODPM.

Housing

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether the Code for Sustainable Homes will apply to new buildings other than dwellings. [69729]

Yvette Cooper: The Code for Sustainable Homes currently covers only homes, not all buildings. The Government are considering a wider Code for Sustainable Buildings. However, the first priority is to complete the Code for Sustainable Homes in the light of consultation responses.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will make a statement on the provision of affordable housing in Torbay. [69874]

Yvette Cooper: Recognising the need for more affordable housing in Torbay, the Housing Corporation has allocated £11 million from its National Affordable Housing Programme for the Torbay housing market area for 2006-08, a 63 per cent. increase on investment in 2004-06. This is expected to provide around 270 additional affordable homes to rent or buy and demonstrates the Government's commitment to building new affordable homes for the current and next generation in Torbay.

Torbay council is currently consulting on issues and options for its core strategy planning document, the chief document in the local development framework, and we would expect this to include targets for the provision of affordable housing. We continue to encourage local authorities, registered social landlords and other key stakeholders to work together to meet the challenges of high housing need.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the average density is in dwellings per hectare of the average *(a)* detached property, *(b)* semi-detached property, *(c)* terraced property and *(d)* flat. [70696]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans his Department has to develop an electronic register of *(a)* licensed private rented stock and *(b)* licensed houses of multiple occupation. [66316]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Section 232 of the Housing Act 2004 requires every local authority to establish and maintain a register of licences granted under Parts 2 and 3, temporary exemption notices, and management orders under Part 4.

The information required to be included on the registers is prescribed by the Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 (SI Number 373).

As required by the Act, it is up to every local authority to ensure that they establish and maintain a register of the licences granted in their area.

It is not Government's intention to develop an electronic register of *(a)* licensed private rented stock and *(b)* licensed houses in multiple occupation. The Government have therefore left the format for the registers up to local authorities' discretion.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many and what proportion of vulnerable people were estimated to be living in non-decent homes according to the English Housing Conditions Survey, in each year since 1990, broken down by *(a)* owner-occupier, *(b)* private sector rented, *(c)* local authority, *(d)* housing association and *(e)* other housing. [68563]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The English House Condition Survey 2004: Headline report (ODPM, 2006) includes details of private sector vulnerable households living in homes that did not meet the decent homes standard in 1996, 2001, 2003 and 2004 (the years the survey was carried out).

The report is available on the ODPM website at www.odpm.gov.uk/ehcs. More detailed data for owner-occupiers, private tenants and social sector tenants (local authority and RSL tenants combined) are

provided in the English House Condition Survey Standard Tables (Table VNla) also on the website. The data for Standard Tables currently cover 2001 and 2003 only and will be updated along with the publication of more detailed findings from 2004 later this year.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people have participated in the key worker housing scheme in *(a)* Barnet and *(b)* London over the last five years, broken down by category of employment; and if he will make a statement. [67753]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

(a) 215 key workers have been helped in Barnet through the starter home initiative and key worker living since 2001.

Barnet	*Starter home initiative 2001 to 2004*	*Key worker living 2004 to 2006*	*Totals by sector*
Health	43	26	69
Education	57	57	114
Police	17	7	24
Prison	n/a	2	2
Probation	n/a	1	1
Local Authority	n/a	4	4
Other (includes social workers, prison/probation staff)	1	n/a	1
Total	118	97	215

(b) 8,405 key workers have been helped in London through the starter home initiative and key worker living since 2001.

London	*Starter home initiative 2001 to 2004*	*Key worker living 2004 to 2006*	*Totals by sector*
Health	1,821	1,355	3,176
Education	1,401	2,128	3,529
Police	662	628	1,290
Prison	n/a	83	83
Probation	n/a	33	33
Local Authority	n/a	127	127
Other (includes social workers, prison/probation staff)	167	n/a	167
Total	4,051	4,354	8,405

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what categories of employment are eligible as key workers for the purposes of the key worker housing scheme; if he will review the categories; and if he will make a statement. [67754]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

For the purposes of the Key Worker Living (KWL) programme, a key worker is defined as someone employed by the public sector in a frontline role in health, education or community safety delivering an essential public service where there are serious recruitment and retention problems. Within this broad definition, sponsor Government Departments and police and fire authorities specify the groups at which help should be targeted based on recruitment and retention issues in critical frontline services. The sector-specific eligibility criteria can be found in Annex B of the KWL Capital Funding Guide on the Housing Corporation's website (www.housingcorp.gov.uk). This is currently being updated and will be published in due course.

Eligibility for KWL is kept under regular review.

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact of negative subsidy on local authority housing revenue accounts; and if he will make a statement. [64171]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The impact of the positive and negative subsidy system on housing revenue accounts is redistributive. The balance of individual local authority housing revenue accounts is based on assumptions made by central Government, and means that some accounts are in surplus while others are in deficit. These assumptions bear no relationship to local rents or local authority decisions. The subsidy system allows surpluses in some local authorities' housing revenue accounts to be used to support other areas where there are deficits. In addition, the Government provide annually a further net contribution to the system of around £200 million, as total deficits are greater than total surpluses.

Edward Miliband: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people on average were living in *(a)* council and *(b)* housing association properties in (i) 1981, (ii) 1991 and (iii) 2001. [68293]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Census data show that the following numbers of people in England were living in *(a)* council and *(b)* housing association properties:

		Council	*Housing Association*
(i)	1981	12,866,808	753,110
(ii)	1991	8,545,180	1,154,570
(iii)	2001	5,970,845	2,677,873

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much social housing grant has been *(a)* allocated and *(b)* spent in each English region in (i) 2004-05 and (ii) to date in 2005-06. [55775]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The following table shows the amount of social housing grant allocated for each region through Regional Housing Boards. Allocations are approved for each scheme and represent the total grant for the life of a scheme regardless of what year the funds are expended. There is no direct comparison between allocations and spend in a particular year.

Region	Approved allocations 2004-05 (£ million)	Approved allocations to 2005-06 (provisional) (£ million)	2006-08 allocations value
East Midlands	66	68	166
Eastern	121	124	356
London	780	803	1,684
North East	38	38	82
North West	111	114	224
South East	270	277	744
South West	93	96	281
West Midlands	89	91	198
Yorkshire and Humberside	65	63	138
Grand Total	1,633	1,674	3,873

The following table shows the profile of expenditure between the two years of the 2004-06 Approved Development Programme.

Region	Expenditure 2004-05	Provisional expenditure 2005-06	£ million 2006-08 estimated expenditure
East Midlands	65	72	183
Eastern	137	132	331
London	700	741	1,791
North East	40	37	85
North West	110	117	248
South East	297	272	725
South West	86	93	277
West Midlands	103	85	172
Yorkshire and Humberside	60	62	128
Grand Total	1,598	1,611	3,941

Mr. Scott: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much the study of English housing cost in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [69279]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The cost of the survey of English housing in each of the last five years was as follows:

	Cost (£)
2001-02	854,360
2002-03	862,643
2003-04	884,858
2004-05	988,953
2005-06	1,030,000

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funding is available for initiatives to move people from temporary to permanent housing from within the 2006 to 2008 National Affordable Housing Programme in Tamworth; and if he will make a statement. [68369]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP) funds provision of affordable housing; 2006-08 funding has now been allocated. Two schemes in Tamworth received the full amount requested of £1,049,540. This will provide 28 new housing units which will assist moves from temporary to permanent accommodation. Two other schemes are expected to proceed under S106 agreements without NAHP funding and expect to provide a further 29 units.

Local Government

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what recent guidance her Department and its predecessor have given to local authorities on modernising local government structures; and if she will make a statement. [69954]

Mr. Woolas: We have not issued any such recent guidance to local authorities. We have been engaged in a wide-ranging debate about local governance, including the future of two-tier arrangements in the shire areas and will finalise our position at about the same time as the publication of the proposed White Paper later in the year.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether she has assumed the ministerial powers in the Local Government Act 2000 in relation to new arrangements for local governance. [69957]

Mr. Woolas: My right hon. Friend's responsibilities include those for the statutory framework for local governance in England.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the cost was of *(a)* monitoring, *(b)* reporting on and *(c)* collecting from local authorities mid-year updates in respect of the 2005-06 Annual Efficiency Statements efficiency reports. [70082]

Mr. Woolas: We do not hold the data requested for costs incurred by councils and central Government relating to the monitoring and reporting of efficiency statements. The principal work arising from the collection of statements is the review of their contents undertaken by personnel in the DCLG, other Government Departments and the Regional Centres of Excellence. This work helps those organisations to obtain a better understanding of the areas where councils are seeking and achieving efficiency gains, so support to councils can be better targeted.

In terms of collecting efficiency statements, local authorities are required to submit them through an online submission facility: the esd-toolkit. This allows all the data from councils' statements to be collated automatically at the deadline for submissions. For the 2005-06 Mid-Year Update efficiency statements, this was provided at no extra cost as part of an existing contract with the Improvement and Development Agency.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what funds were distributed to each London borough to increase efficiency in local government in each of the last three years. [70089]

Mr. Woolas: Funding to support efficiency in local authorities is distributed to nine Regional Centres of Excellence (RCEs). Each RCE has local governance arrangements reflecting authorities across the region.

Funding for individual projects, many of which operate across local authority boundaries, are decided by the RCE board. Since 2004-05, funding made available to the London RCE in relation to taking forward the Efficiency Agenda is as follows:

Receiving authority—London Regional Centre of Excellence

	Funding
Grant payable (2004-05) (million)	1.25
Grant payable (2005-06) (million)	1.65
Additional core funding (2005-06)	50,000
Workstream specific efficiency support (2005-06)	228,366.25
	100,000

Individual projects supported by the London RCE are listed at: http://www.lcpe.gov.uk/workstream sexemplars/List_of_Current_Projects.asp.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much debt write-off and gap funding for stock transfers has cost since 1997; what provision has been made for each of the next five years; and which budget line this expenditure comes under. [40834]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Housing debt is funded through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) subsidy system. Where a local authority transfers its housing to an RSL and the receipt it receives is not sufficient to repay the outstanding debt attributable to the housing, the Office will make a one-off payment where the debt is held with the Public Works Loans Board. The one-off payment is made to discharge the Office's continued liability, through the HRA, to pay subsidy on an authority's housing attributable debt that remains after transfer. Since 1997 the Office has repaid £1.787 billion of local authority debt (including early redemption fees) in this way. There is voted provision of £616 million per year from 2005-06 to 2007-08 for overhanging debt.

To date, the Government have paid £9.11 million as gap funding grant. £182 million has been made available over the 2004 Spending Review period for gap funding.

Overhanging debt is capital AME (Annually Managed Expenditure); gap funding is resource DEL (Departmental Expenditure Limit).

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funds have been collected from council tax in each London borough in each of the last eight years. [67009]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The amount of council tax collected, irrespective of the financial year to which it relates, in each London borough in each of the last eight years is shown in the following table.

£000

Inner London	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
City of London	1,571	1,830	2,091	2,280	2,551	2,644	3,843	3,761
Camden	50,506	58,740	60,660	60,840	65,780	69,600	79,391	84,222
Greenwich	42,630	46,802	48,267	50,108	52,074	56,861	63,872	67,007
Hackney	26,801	26,618	27,787	29,625	36,716	44,568	49,198	55,515
Hammersmith and Fulham	44,846	47,912	50,515	53,881	57,654	58,743	65,696	71,249
Islington	38,133	40,736	43,349	43,783	45,786	46,640	56,402	60,124
Kensington and Chelsea	42,781	45,354	49,832	49,102	55,316	64,412	73,695	81,067
Lambeth	41,908	42,931	46,740	46,401	58,396	65,919	78,272	86,032
Lewisham	41,976	43,267	46,284	52,070	57,426	62,481	70,024	74,848
Southwark	38,100	43,211	45,193	52,919	55,892	61,468	67,077	72,641
Tower Hamlets	21,742	23,978	27,478	31,839	34,662	38,699	45,387	49,908
Wandsworth	38,825	30,242	36,648	40,158	46,130	41,475	59,292	61,698
Westminster	28,980	31,866	34,074	36,137	41,036	44,996	58,041	64,851
Total Inner London	458,799	483,487	518,918	549,143	609,419	658,506	770,190	832,923
Outer London								
Barking and Dagenham	22,858	25,951	27,766	30,060	32,712	34,808	38,932	40,539
Barnet	75,680	83,756	87,787	97,072	103,031	108,870	131,787	140,587
Bexley	44,750	49,845	55,312	58,926	64,237	69,686	80,858	86,409
Brent	38,836	41,902	48,516	52,570	55,255	60,805	73,616	81,002
Bromley	68,076	71,584	78,385	86,353	97,867	105,146	115,261	123,536
Croydon	64,627	73,295	83,487	84,302	90,750	92,588	116,585	120,252

£000

Inner London								
Ealing	53,922	60,563	66,164	70,814	77,710	84,178	104,829	109,317
Enfield	53,461	57,529	63,150	67,115	75,117	82,041	96,419	103,830
Haringey	43,165	46,422	49,023	52,552	55,531	59,516	69,630	73,511
Harrow	46,560	51,503	55,675	60,842	67,748	72,747	89,279	92,538
Havering	49,577	54,880	59,243	66,473	72,568	79,367	91,935	97,404
Hillingdon	49,477	55,678	61,194	67,696	74,588	81,231	92,948	98,087
Hounslow	44,479	47,402	52,496	58,158	64,650	69,485	78,341	84,504
Kingston upon Thames	33,410	36,394	42,231	47,128	52,594	58,606	67,088	71,738
Merton	42,613	46,781	49,435	54,335	60,845	65,371	71,855	77,105
Newham	24,894	26,810	30,400	33,735	38,069	41,568	46,358	50,509
Redbridge	45,190	49,297	55,261	59,162	64,173	69,449	79,818	84,373
Richmond upon Thames	56,319	57,691	64,420	70,465	77,674	85,077	98,364	103,781
Sutton	39,166	43,716	47,441	50,690	55,524	61,623	68,499	75,210
Waltham Forest	44,685	44,065	46,192	49,544	53,829	57,988	65,351	70,115
Total Outer London	941,745	1,025,064	1,123,578	1,217,992	1,334,472	1,440,150	1,677,753	1,784,347
Total Greater London	1,400,544	1,508,551	1,642,496	1,767,135	1,943,891	2,098,656	2,447,943	2,617,270

London Borough of Havering

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what change in funds will result from the Annual Efficiency Statements 2005-06 Mid-Year Update for the London borough of Havering. [70071]

Mr. Woolas: There will be no change in the funding for the London borough of Havering as a result of the 2005-06 Mid-Year Update efficiency statements. One of the key elements of the local government efficiency agenda is that councils retain the resources released from their efficiency gains and can decide how they are to be reallocated.

The 2005-06 Mid-Year Update efficiency statement from Havering showed that it expected to have achieved £9.85 million efficiency gains by the end of 2005-06, which represents the release of real resources that could be used to improve local services or hold down council tax.

Lyons Inquiry

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when the Lyons Inquiry is next expected to publish *(a)* its research and *(b)* thematic reports. [70718]

Mr. Woolas: Sir Michael Lyons is leading an independent inquiry into local government. The timing of the publication of any papers is entirely a matter for him.

To date, the Lyons Inquiry has published two papers: a consultation paper and interim report on 15 December 2005 and a discussion paper on 8 May 2006, "National prosperity, local choice and civic engagement: a new partnership between central and local government for the 21st century".

Sir Michael is due to deliver his final report to Government at the end of this year.

Owner Occupation (Doncaster, North)

Edward Miliband: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many houses in Doncaster North were owner-occupied in *(a)* 1981, *(b)* 1991 and *(c)* 2001; and how many were owner-occupied on the most recent date for which figures are available. [68303]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Census data show the following number of homes to have been owner-occupied in Doncaster North in:

	Number
(a) 1981	16,865
(b) 1991	20,389
(c) 2001	22,575

2001 is the most recent date for which figures are available at constituency level.

Pensions

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government who is eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme whether or not directly employed thereby; and how contributions for these people are funded. [70729]

Mr. Woolas: A person may be a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) in England and Wales, if employed by a scheme employer, such as a county or borough council, or certain other bodies with historic links to local government, including certain schools or transport undertakings. In addition, specified employees of some 2,400 external bodies who

are contractually admitted to the LGPS are eligible for membership; many of these as a result of the contracting out of local authority services.

The LGPS is a funded scheme with 89 separately administered funds. The vast majority of employees pay contributions at the rate of 6 per cent. of salary; employers pay contributions at a rate determined by each pension fund actuary. Investment income in 2004/05 totalled £2.3 billion.

Planning

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the planning decisions that he has personally *(a)* refused and *(b)* approved during his tenure as the Secretary of State in charge of planning. [66254]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

A list of planning decisions approved and returned by the First Secretary of State since June 2002 has been placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful appeals have been brought against planning decisions made by Tamworth borough council in each year since 1997. [68370]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Records held by the Planning Inspectorate go back to 2000 only. The following table shows the number of planning appeals *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful and the total number of appeals decided relating to the local authority in each of the last six years. It is not possible to provide data before this date.

Tamworth borough council

	Decided	*(a) Allowed/ successful*	*(b) Dismissed/ unsuccessful*
2000	6	4	2
2001	8	3	5
2002	6	5	1
2003	8	2	6
2004	7	2	5
2005	14	3	11

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate the Government have made of the annual revenue to be raised in England from reformed section 106 agreements once planning gain supplement is introduced. [70706]

Yvette Cooper: The Government have proposed in their consultation paper "Planning-gain Supplement" that if a PGS was introduced the existing system of planning obligations would be scaled back to matters related to the development-site environment and affordable housing provision. No estimates can yet be made of the value that would be raised from scaled back obligations. The value of scaled back obligations would be dependent on a number of variables including the final policy, the future state of the land and development markets, the behaviour of developers and transitional arrangements.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will list the appeals which she has received against local authority refusals of planning applications by *(a)* J Sainsbury plc, *(b)* Tesco plc, *(c)* ASDA Stores Ltd, *(d)* WM Morrisons Supermarket plc and *(e)* Safeway plc since June 1997, stating in each case (i) whether the application was allowed on appeal, (ii) whether the decision followed the recommendation of the inquiry inspector, (iii) whether the proposed development was in a residential area, (iv) whether the application included planning permission for new homes and (v) whether lorry deliveries were expressly permitted between 10 pm and 7 am. [70260]

Yvette Cooper: I have placed in the Library of the House a table which lists appeals received against local authority refusals of planning applications by *(a)* J Sainsbury plc, *(b)* Tesco plc, *(c)* ASDA Stores Ltd, *(e)* Safeway plc. There is no record of appeals by *(d)* WM Morrisons Supermarket plc. Data are only available from 2000.

The table also shows (i) whether the appeal was allowed or dismissed and (ii) where the appeal was determined by the Secretary of State and whether the decision followed the recommendation of the inspector.

The data requested for:

(iii) whether the proposed development was in a residential area,

(iv) whether the application included planning permission for new homes; and

(v) whether lorry deliveries were expressly permitted between 10 pm and 7 am;

are either not available or can be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

However, the table does include a development description of each appeal and where this appears relevant to request item (iv) has been highlighted. It should be noted that two of these descriptions are incomplete.

The table also indicates the local authority and the appeal decision dates.

Private Office

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in which building her private office will be located. [70583]

Angela E. Smith: The private office of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government is located in Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU.

Regional Fire Control Centres

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the Government's latest estimate is of the cost of setting up the nine regional fire control centres. [70601]

Angela E. Smith: I refer the Hon. Member to the answer given by the Hon. Member for Poplar and Canning Town on 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, 817W.

Regional Government

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what process exists for dealing with a conflict between a regional development agency regional economic strategy and a regional chamber's regional spatial strategy on *(a)* housing numbers and *(b)* airport expansion. [70703]

Yvette Cooper: The regional economic strategy (RES) and regional spatial strategy (RSS) should be mutually reinforcing. They should take account of each other and be based on a common evidence base.

Differences between them may emerge during their preparation and public consultation. In particular, the RSS is also subject to testing by an independent panel who are likely to probe the alignment of the RSS with the RES, as an identified matter of interest.

Government are responsible both for endorsing the RES and for finalising an RSS.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the timetable is for the *(a)* ratification and *(b)* drafting of the regional spatial strategies in each region. [70704]

Yvette Cooper: The latest estimated issue dates of the final RSS for revisions currently in process are set out in the following table. It must be stressed that these are indicative dates only.

RSS revision timetable key stages

Region	*Draft RSS to SoS*	*Examination in public*		*Proposed changes published*	*Issue of final RSS*
North east	June 2005	March 2006	April 2006	October 2006	February 2007
North west	January 2006	October 2006	December 2006	August 2007	December 2007
Yorkshire and Humber	December 2005	September 2006	October 2006	March 2007	September 2007
East Midlands plan	September 2006	April 2007	May 2007	October 2007	March 2008
West Midlands (phase 1) Black Country study	May 2006	January 2007	January 2007	July 2007	November 2007
West Midlands (phase 2)	June 2007	February 2008	March 2008	August 2008	January 2009
East of England	December 2004	November 2005	March 2006	August 2006	May 2007
South east	March 2006	November 2006	March 2007	September 2007	January 2008
South west	May 2006	March 2007	May 2007	November 2007	March 2008

Register of Home Condition Reports

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans the Government have to consult on the regulations to implement the Register of Home Condition Reports. [66258]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Consultation was carried out from October 2005 to January 2006 on the principle of establishing the Home Condition Report register, and the requirement that reports become valid only once they are entered on to it. Provisions for the register will be set out in regulations to be made shortly.

Details regarding the operation of the register will be specified in further regulations planned for later in the year. Drafting of these regulations will proceed in consultation with stakeholders.

Right-to-buy Receipts

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much income local authorities received from right-to-buy receipts in each year since 1997; what estimate he has made of income in future years; and how much was *(a)* retained by local authorities and *(b)* remitted to the Treasury in each year. [45303]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The following table shows both the total capital receipts the disposal of all housing assets and from right-to-buy sales of local authority dwellings in England in the years from 1997-98 onwards, net of discount and as reported by local authorities. These are capital receipts and not income into the authority's Housing Revenue Account, which is generated by, for instance, rental income.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not estimate future right-to-buy receipts but does estimate future housing capital receipts. Estimates are subject to a number of volatile factors such as the state of the housing market, lending rates, amounts of disposable income and stock condition, and are kept under constant review.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister collects data on total pooled receipts and total amounts set aside by housing authorities. These figures include the amounts arising from right-to-buy sales alongside amounts relating to other housing capital receipts, but the amounts relating to right-to-buy sales are not separately identified.

The amount of income received by local authorities from the sale of housing assets will not be quite equal to their housing capital receipts less the amount they are obliged to set-aside or pool. Rather, the housing capital receipt, such as a right-to-buy receipt, will first be reduced by, for instance, the administration costs

associated with the disposal and any other deduction to the capital receipt the authority may make, such as clawing back the cost of improvement to the asset in previous years. It is the value of this reduced capital receipt that is then used as the basis for the calculation of the set-aside or pooling liability.

As can be seen from the following table, since 1997 the Government have consistently invested more in housing than was received in receipts. In 2004-05 the amount paid to government from all housing receipts (not just right-to-buy) was £1.7 billion. The amount invested in housing was £4.1 billion i.e. almost 2½ times the amount received. The ratio of amount invested to amount received is expected to increase substantially in the future.

£ million

	Total housing capital receipts	Right-to-buy receipts	Set Aside/Pooling	Capital investment	Investment greater than set-aside/pooling by
1997-98	1,438	890	943	1,894	951
1998-99	1,630	907	1,085	2,098	1,013
1999-2000	2,249	1,375	1,477	2,173	696
2000-01	2,441	1,431	1,626	2,866	1,240
2001-02	2,244	1,568	1,382	2,696	1,314
2002-03	3,474	2,244	1,626	2,943	1,317
2003-04	3,622	3,007	[1]—	3,964	n/a
2004-05	3,193	2,575	1,700	4,135	2,435
2005-06	[1]—	[1]—	[2]840	[3]5,223	4,383
2006-07	[1]—	[1]—	[2]801	[3]5,347	4,546
2007-08	[1]—	[1]—	[2]753	[3]5,665	4,912

[1] No data
[2] Estimated pooled housing capital receipts
[3] Programmed expenditure
Note:
Pooling replaced set-aside as the mechanism to invest housing capital receipts in 2004-05

Right-to-buy receipts are extremely volatile and difficult to forecast. They are affected by the rest of the housing market and by the nature of the properties available in particular areas. An extrapolation of current trends suggests:

£ million

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Housing capital receipts	1,120	1,068	1,004
Retained by local authority	280	267	251
To Treasury	788	729	665
To ODPM	52	72	88

In 2004-05 ODPM received £53.9 million from debt free local authorities. Treasury received £1.640 billion from with debt local authorities. The remainder was retained by local authorities.

Section 106 Agreements

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate the Government have made of the annual revenue in cash or in kind from section 106 agreements in England. [70707]

Yvette Cooper: Sheffield university and the Halcrow Group have recently completed a study for the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) "Valuing Planning Obligations in England" which provides estimates on both the number of planning permissions that include planning obligations as well as the value of contributions being negotiated by local authorities for the year 2003-04. The report, based on a national survey of local authorities, will be published shortly.

Previous research undertaken by Sheffield university titled "Planning Obligations and the mediation of development" published in 2001 provided estimates for the average value of planning obligations (including cash and in-kind) but not of annual yield.

Sound Insulation

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many dwellings constructed in each year since 2000 have failed to satisfy the relevant regulations on sound insulation; and if he will make a statement. [65143]

Angela E. Smith: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested is not available, but surveys carried out by the Building Research Establishment have indicated that about 25 per cent. of the party walls and 40 per cent. of the party floors between dwellings failed to meet the standards expected by the 1992 edition of Part E of the Building Regulations, which deals with sound insulation. To improve this situation the ODPM revised Part E in 2003 and the evidence is that compliance rates are now much higher, in excess of 90 per cent.

PRIME MINISTER

BDO Stoy Hayward

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister when he last met BDO Stoy Hayward; and what matters were discussed. [70826]

The Prime Minister: I have had no meetings with BDO Stoy Hayward on Government business.

Connexions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions he has had with Ministers at *(a)* the Department of Health and *(b)* the Department for Education and Skills about the Government's Connexions programme; and if he will make a statement. [70390]

The Prime Minister: I have regular meetings and discussions with ministerial colleagues and others on a wide range of subjects. Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Departmental Structures

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make it his policy to consult Parliament before embarking on changes to departmental structures; and if he will make a statement. [70928]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 15 February, *Official Report*, columns 2031-32W.

Ministerial Responsibilities

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister when an updated edition of the List of Ministerial Responsibilities will be published; if he will send a copy to each *(a)* hon. Member and *(b)* Member of the House of Lords; and if he will make a statement. [70077]

The Prime Minister: An updated List of Ministerial Responsibilities is currently being compiled and will be published shortly.

Copies will be available for Members of both Houses in the Vote Office and the Printed Paper Office.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister what mechanisms he has in place to enable him to assess the effectiveness of Ministers; and if he will make a statement. [70924]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave the hon. Member for South Suffolk (Mr. Yeo) on 28 November 2002, *Official Report*, column 442W.

Ministerial Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Southend, West (Mr. Amess) of 2 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1385W, on visits, if he will list the mode of transport used for each visit. [70421]

The Prime Minister: I travel making the most efficient and cost-effective arrangements. My travel arrangements are in accordance with the arrangements for official travel set out in chapter 10 of the Ministerial Code, and the accompanying guidance document, "Travel by Ministers".

Mr. Hands: To ask the Prime Minister (1) whether he uses an Oyster Card in fulfilling his official responsibilities; [69913]

(2) whether the Oyster Card he was filmed with for television on 27 April is one he uses in fulfilling his official duties. [69914]

The Prime Minister: I travel making the most efficient and cost-effective arrangements. My travel arrangements are in accordance with the arrangements for official travel set out in Chapter 10 of the Ministerial Code, and the accompanying guidance document, "Travel by Ministers".

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the flights he has taken since 2001; and what measures to offset the carbon emissions were taken for each flight. [68943]

The Prime Minister: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost. All my travel is undertaken in accordance with the "Ministerial Code" and "Travel by Ministers", copies of which are available in the Library. Since 1999, the Government have published on an annual basis a list of all overseas visits by Cabinet Ministers costing in excess of £500. Copies of the lists are available in the Library. Information for 2005-06 is currently being compiled and will be published when it is ready.

All central Government ministerial and official air travel is being offset from 1 April 2006. Departmental aviation emissions are calculated on an annual basis and subsequently offset through payments to a central fund. The fund purchases Certified Emissions Reductions credits from energy efficiency and renewable energy projects with high sustainable development benefits, located in developing countries. In addition, offsetting my flights and those of Ministers in DEFRA has been backdated to 1 April 2005.

Offshore Trusts

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what his policy is on Ministers having offshore trusts administered *(a)* directly and *(b)* by means of a blind trust; [70828]

(2) whether it is his policy that Ministers are required to make declarations to HM Revenue and Customs relating to *(a)* property, *(b)* income and *(c)* any other form of assets held in (i) accounts, (ii) trusts and (iii) other forms of holding outside the UK. [70829]

The Prime Minister: Guidance to Ministers on handling their financial interests is set out in section 5 of the Ministerial Code.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister when it became his policy to refer hon. Members to his website in replying to Parliamentary Questions; and if he will make a statement. [70078]

The Prime Minister: Where my answer refers to a specific document on the website, copies are made available to the hon. Member asking the question and are also placed in the Libraries of the House.

Party Funding

Mike Penning: To ask the Prime Minister what guidance has been prepared on determining whether party political donors are in breach of regulations governing the grant of peerages in return for financial or other assistance; and if he will make a statement. [68797]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Pendle (Mr. Prentice) on 17 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1420W.

Planning

Mr. Hands: To ask the Prime Minister which Minister is responsible for Government decisions as a result of planning inquiries. [69956]

The Prime Minister: Government decisions as a result of planning inquiries will be made by Ministers in the newly created Department for Communities and Local Government.

President Chavez

Mr. Hands: To ask the Prime Minister whether he will be meeting President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela during his visit to the United Kingdom on 15 to 16 May. [69917]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the press briefing given by my Official Spokesman on 12 May, a copy of which is available on the No. 10 website.

Written Records

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister whether written notes are kept of conversations between himself and foreign heads of Government; and if he will make a statement. [70391]

The Prime Minister: Records are kept in accordance with 'Private Office Records Guidance' prepared by the Cabinet Office and the National Archives. Copies of this guidance are available on the National Archives website.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 16 May 2006

TRANSPORT

Disabled People

Tom Levitt: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on his Department's progress in fulfilling its statutory obligation as a public body of promoting the rights of disabled people. [66009]

Gillian Merron: The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 placed new duties on public authorities to promote equality for disabled people, 'the Disability Equality Duty'.

The Department for Transport is currently assessing its policies in accordance with the duty and the results of this exercise will be included in its Disability Equality Scheme (DES). The DES will set out how the Department intends to meet its duty to promote disability equality including the arrangements in place to assess the impact of its activities together with an action plan outlining how it intends to improve outcomes for disabled people.

The Department for Transport is committed to an accessible public transport system in which disabled people have the same opportunities to travel as other members of society.

A great deal has already been achieved in this area. For example, we have introduced regulations under part 5 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) making all new rail vehicles, buses and coaches accessible. Over 4,400 compliant rail vehicles are already in service and almost half the bus fleet is accessible. These improvements have already had a significant impact on the day-to-day mobility of disabled people.

We are also implementing the transport provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The new Act contains measures amending the rail vehicle accessibility regime and will extend part 3 of the DDA 1995 (which deals with access to goods and services) to the operators of all land-based public transport, vehicle hire and breakdown services from 4 December 2006.

Transport infrastructure, such as stations and airports, is already covered by these provisions which require service providers to remove obstacles that mean disabled people find it impossible or unreasonably difficult to access services. Policy initiatives, such as the recently announced "Access for All" fund (a £370 million ring-fenced resource available to improve access to railway stations) will provide further improvements.

Heathrow (Night Flights)

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what studies he has undertaken into the economic impact of removing the night time restrictions on flights at Heathrow. [68688]

Gillian Merron: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by the then Parliamentary-Under Secretary of State on 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1487-88W, to the hon. Member for Richmond Park (Susan Kramer).

Railways

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the threat by GNER trains to take the Rail Regulator to court over the decision to allow Grand Central Railways to run a Sunderland to Teesside to London rail service. [71377]

Derek Twigg: It is for Great North Eastern Railway Ltd. to determine whether or not it has a case to seek a Judicial Review.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much it cost to run *(a)* Haltwhistle and *(b)* Cramlington railway station between January 2004 and January 2005. [68878]

Derek Twigg: Northern Rail estimates the running costs of each station to be £35,609 per annum.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people travelled by train in the most recent period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [70996]

Derek Twigg: The Office of Rail Regulation publishes rail usage information quarterly in National Rail Trends. The most recent publication covered quarter 3 2005-06 (October to December 2005) and showed there were 285 million passenger journeys in the quarter.

Road Safety

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what assessment he has made of the effects on road safety of requiring drivers to wear reflective vests when leaving their vehicles at the roadside following a breakdown or accident; and if he will make a statement; [70354]

(2) what research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the impact on road safety of requiring drivers to wear reflective vests when leaving their vehicles at the roadside following a breakdown or accident; and if he will make a statement; [70355]

(3) what advice his Department has issued on action to be taken by motorists and their passengers when leaving a vehicle at the roadside in the event of an accident or breakdown on roads which do not have a hard shoulder; [70385]

(4) when his Department last reviewed the advice to motorists provided in the Highway Code on the action

to be taken following an accident or breakdown at the roadside; when he expects the consultation process on revising the Highway Code to be completed; and if he will make a statement; [70386]

(5) what assessment he has made of the extent to which motorists follow existing guidance in the Highway Code on the action to be taken following an accident or breakdown at the roadside; and if he will make a statement. [70387]

Dr. Ladyman: We will continue to monitor experience in other countries that introduce legislation requiring drivers to wear reflective vests when leaving their vehicles at the roadside following a breakdown or accident. If clear evidence starts to emerge that it is beneficial, we would look again at the need to legislate.

The Highway Code advises motorists and their passengers what action to take when leaving a vehicle at the roadside in the event of an accident or breakdown. The Department has also produced a leaflet, "A Guide to Safer Motorway Driving", which also covers breakdowns. This advises drivers and their passengers where to stand after a breakdown, so that they are least vulnerable to being hit by other vehicles.

We have reviewed this advice as part of the current major revision of the Highway Code. The public consultation, which began on 15 February and ended on 12 May, includes proposed new advice to motorists in the section on breakdowns, which says

"help other road users see you by wearing light coloured fluorescent clothing in daylight and reflective clothing at night or in poor visibility".

We will now be considering all the responses to the consultation and the revised code should be issued next spring.

No assessment has been made as to whether motorists follow the guidance in the Highway Code on actions to be taken following an accident. Although failure to comply with the non-statutory rules in the code will not, in itself, cause a person to be prosecuted, the code may be used in any court proceedings under the traffic acts to establish liability.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people have *(a)* been killed and *(b)* seriously injured after leaving their vehicles at the roadside following an accident or breakdown on (i) motorways and (ii) other trunk roads in each of the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [70356]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not available.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what research his Department *(a)* has undertaken and *(b)* plans to undertake into the reasons for trends in the seat belt wearing rate for car drivers between (i) October 1996 and October 1997, (ii) October 2002 and April 2003 and (iii) April and October 2005; and if he will make a statement; [70398]

(2) when he expects the Great Britain car and van seat belt wearing percentage rates for April to be published; if he will place a copy in the Library when published; and if he will make a statement. [70399]

Dr. Ladyman: No such research has been undertaken or is planned.

The table of seat belt wearing rates from the survey in April 2006 will be available soon. When it is published on the Department's website, a copy will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females received an exemption from the requirements of section 14 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 in the last period for which figures are available, broken down by (i) age group and (ii) reason for exemption; and if he will make a statement. [70400]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected.

Mr. Newmark: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the five locations on the A12 in Essex with the highest incidence of traffic accidents in each of the last five years. [70769]

Dr. Ladyman: The Information requested has been placed in the Libraries of the House. In addition, annual safety reports for the A12 are now available on the Highways Agency's website.

Mr. Newmark: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many persons have been *(a)* killed and *(b)* seriously injured on the A12 in Essex in each of the past five years; and what the corresponding figure is in 2006 to date. [70770]

Dr. Ladyman: The following table shows the number of people killed and seriously injured on A12 in Essex over the last five years. The Highways Agency does not currently hold full accident details for the first quarter of 2006.

Accidents A12 Essex

	Fatal	*Seriously injured*
2000	5	41
2001	5	49
2002	4	56
2003	4	40
2004	4	64
2005	7	57
2006	[1]	—

[1] To date.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to publish the revised guidance on speed limits for local authorities. [71194]

Dr. Ladyman: Guidance on setting local speed limits is currently contained in Circular Roads 1/93. The Department has consulted on a draft revision and this guidance will be published shortly.

SPECS Cameras

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Epsom and Ewell (Chris Grayling) of 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 709W, on SPECS cameras, if he will list the 16 core sites; and if he will make a statement. [71001]

Dr. Ladyman: The 16 sites, broken down by safety camera partnership area and location, are shown in the following table.

Partnership name	*Site name*
Nottinghamshire	A52 / Radcliffe Road / Holme Pierrepont
Nottinghamshire	A52 / Saxondale
Nottinghamshire	A631 / MHI Hill / Gringley on the Hill
Nottinghamshire	A6514 / Ring Road / Nottingham
Nottinghamshire	B6004 / Arnold Road / Nottingham
Nottinghamshire	Edwards Lane / Nottingham
Nottinghamshire	A631 / Scaftworth
Northamptonshire	A43 / Lumbertubs Way / Northampton
Northamptonshire	A428 / Bedford Road (SPECS)
Nottinghamshire	A46 / Cotgrave
Nottinghamshire	A46 / Fosse Road / Farndon
Nottinghamshire	A52 / Bingham
Nottinghamshire	A610 / Bobbers Mil / Nottingham
Nottinghamshire	A52 / Grantham Road / Radcliffe on Trent
South Yorkshire	A616(T) / Stocksbridge Bypass / Barnsley
Strathclyde	A77 / Bogend Toll / Ardwell

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Epsom and Ewell (Chris Grayling) of 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 709W, on SPECS cameras, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of SPECS cameras in *(a)* reducing accidents and *(b)* reducing (i) serious and (ii) minor injuries. [71002]

Dr. Ladyman: No specific assessment has been made of the effectiveness of SPECS time-over-distance cameras. However the independent four-year evaluation report of the national safety camera programme covered any SPECS cameras operating between April 2000 and March 2004. The independent academics concluded that SPECS cameras were equally as effective in reducing collisions and casualties as other fixed and red-light cameras. They also concluded that SPECS cameras have been particularly effective at reducing excessive speeds, which are defined as 15 mph over the speed limit.

Station Security

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the effect of the British Transport Police trial deployment of metal scanners at London stations. [70200]

Derek Twigg: "Operation Shield" was conceived as a high visibility Intelligence led policing tactic to tackle knife related crime and forms part of the British Transport Police's (BTP) strategy to reduce violence against the person. The BTP trialled the use of portable metal detecting scanners at London stations for a period of eight weeks from 6 February 2006. During the eight week trial 1,148 stops were carried out from a total of 9,728 people passing through the scanners. 107 arrests were made, of which 48 were for the possession of offensive weapons. The operation is now being rolled-out nationally, across England, Scotland and Wales. It will be deployed on specific pre-planned intelligence-led operations as and when appropriate.

Traffic Growth

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assumptions of traffic growth up to 2021 for housing expansion in north Northamptonshire are being used by his Department in discussions with the growth areas directorate in the Department for Communities and Local Government. [70190]

Dr. Ladyman: The review of the East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy provides the overall framework for assessing and planning for housing and other growth in Northamptonshire.

It is for local authorities to develop detailed forecasts of traffic growth. Northamptonshire have commissioned a series of transportation studies to identify a broader package of transport measures to achieve the modal shift required to enable the scale of growth envisaged in Northamptonshire and surrounding areas to be delivered in a sustainable manner.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Solicitor-General what percentage of his private office staff are *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled. [68988]

The Solicitor-General: My noble Friend the Attorney-General and I share a private office. As of 12 May 2006, expressed as a percentage as requested, the breakdown is 80 per cent. female and 20 per cent. male. None are registered disabled.

David Simpson: To ask the Solicitor-General how much has been paid in *(a)* salary, *(b)* travelling expenses, *(c)* subsistence allowance and *(d)* removal expenses to special advisers in his private office in each of the last five years. [69012]

The Solicitor-General: The Law Officers have no special advisers.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Early-day Motions

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will estimate the cost of tabling an early-day motion, including printing and clerical costs. [71096]

Nick Harvey: Costs of processing early-day motions (EDMs) include the time of Clerks in vetting motions, costs of staff entering the data and costs of printing

and publishing, which depend on the number of times motions are reprinted. EDMs vary in length and complexity and the number of names to them may be one or many. Processing and printing EDMs is only one of a number of tasks carried out by the staff involved and no realistic disaggregation can be made which can give a cost for all aspects of processing a single EDM. The best estimate available of the overall costs of printing and publishing early-day motions in 2005-06 is £627,000, giving an average printing and publishing cost per EDM of £290.

Line of Route

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how many visitors have been given conducted tours of the line of route, broken down by tours *(a)* organised by the Central Tours Office, *(b)* conducted by an hon. Member, *(c)* conducted by a Member of the House of Lords, *(d)* conducted by staff of an hon. Member and *(e)* conducted by staff of either House in the most recent two years for which figures are available. [70403]

Nick Harvey: The numbers of visitors given conducted tours of the visitor route organised by the Central Tours Office (CTO) during the summer opening to the public in 2004-05 was 93,314 and in 2005-06 was 79,170. The numbers of visitors throughout the year on tours organised on behalf of hon. Members of both Houses by the CTO in 2004-05 was 113,815 and in 2005-06 was 108,089, of which approximately 6 per cent. were estimated to be in respect of Members of the House of Lords. Members of both Houses, their staff and staff of both Houses are able to conduct tours themselves for up to six guests at a time without booking; there are no data on the number of visitors under these arrangements.

Telephone Bill

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what the telephone bill for the House of Commons was in each year since 1989. [70402]

Nick Harvey: Details of the cash expenditure incurred on telephone services by the House of Commons is not available prior to 2001. The figures for the last five financial years are:

	£000
2001-02	2,145
2002-03	2,558
2003-04	2,979
2004-05	2,668
2005-06	2,342

TREASURY

Corporation Tax

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the use of low profit-making companies incorporated for the purposes of the avoidance of corporation tax. [70796]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 12 May 2006]:* The Government are not aware of any self-employed businesses that would incorporate for the purposes of avoiding corporation tax.

The associated companies rules prevent companies that fragment into many lower-profit companies from benefiting from lower rates of corporation tax.

EU (UK Contributions)

Mr. Brady: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the Financial Secretary to the Treasury's statement in the debate on future EU finances and own reserves on 8 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 134-5WS, what estimate he has made of the difference in the UK abatement in the new EU financial perspective compared with what it would have been if calculated using the mechanism in place prior to December 2005. [71148]

Ed Balls: As agreed in the December Council Conclusions, the cost to the UK compared to the application of the current Own Resources would be limited to €10.5 billion (£6.9 billion) in 2004 prices.

EU Agriculture Budget

Michael Gove: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of the EU budget will be spent on agriculture in each of the years from 2007 to 2013; and if he will break down the spending between pillar 1 and pillar 2 spending in each year. [70971]

Ed Balls: In its information fiche, dated 11 April, the EU Commission gives an indicative breakdown of expenditure (2004 prices) for 2007 to 2013 in respect of agriculture, as follows:

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Agriculture: direct aids and market support (Pillar 1)								
€ billion	43.120	42.697	42.270	41.864	41.453	41.047	40.645	293.105
Share of total EU budget (percentage)	35.7	35.1	34.5	34.0	33.4	32.7	32.0	33.9
Rural Development (Pillar 2)								
€ billion	10.710	10.447	10.185	9.955	9.717	9.483	9.253	69.750
Share of total EU budget (percentage)	8.9	8.6	8.3	8.1	7.8	7.6	7.3	8.1

Home Computer Initiative

Peter Luff: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1718-21W, on the Home Computer Initiative, what criteria were used in deciding to group questions from hon. Members on the Home Computer Initiative;

and what account was taken of the relevant provisions of the ministerial code in reaching this decision. [69902]

Dawn Primarolo: The questions concerned were grouped to enable a full, substantive statement to be made to the House.

Inheritance Tax

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many written representations he has received since January protesting about inheritance tax; and if he will make a statement; [66657]

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received on the treatment of *(a)* accumulation and maintenance trusts and *(b)* interest in possession trusts for the purposes of inheritance tax; [70202]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government have received a number of written representations about the tax system, including inheritance tax and the tax treatment of trusts.

Pensions

Danny Alexander: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what provision has been made for pension fund deficits in privatised utilities where the pension scheme is guaranteed by the Government. [69892]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given to the hon. Member for Eastbourne (Mr. Waterson) on 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1723W.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the change in the number of pensioners paying income tax since 1997. [69901]

John Healey: Information on the estimated number people paying income tax who are of state pension age can be found in table 2.1 'Number of individual taxpayers' on the HM Revenue and Customs website at:

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/income_tax/table2_1.xls

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Burma

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what financial support his Department has provided to pro-democracy groups related to Burma in the last three financial periods. [67609]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has not provided any support directly to pro-democracy groups related to Burma in the last three financial periods. One of our four objectives in Burma is "increased prospects for successful transition to a democratic society". DFID is aiming to achieve this through support to participatory decision-making, constructive dialogue, innovation and other work to build capacity and institutions that will assist Burma's transition by, for example, integrating such approaches into our activities focused on livelihoods, health and education.

Millennium Development Goals

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress has been made towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. [70171]

Hilary Benn: DFID's public service agreements are based on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Progress was reported in DFID's Departmental Report which was presented to Parliament on 9 May 2006. It is available in the Library of the House of Commons and on the DFID website (www.dfid.gov.uk).

There has been some progress towards the MDGs but not enough. In Africa there has been a reduction in the numbers of people living in poverty and in child deaths, increasing economic growth, and more children getting into school. HIV is also falling or stabilising in some African countries. Much more needs to be done, however, particularly on maternal mortality, girls' education and HIV. In Asia there has been progress in reducing income poverty. The number of children dying before their fifth birthday is decreasing and the number of children being cured of tuberculosis is increasing in many Asian countries. More progress is needed, however, if all the MDGs are to be achieved in Asia, particularly on gender equity.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Avian Influenza

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how long it took from the confirmation of the recent outbreak of avian influenza among poultry to dispose of the carcases; how the carcases were disposed of; and what measures were taken to ensure that the carcases did not enter the food chain. [69754]

Mr. Bradshaw: Poultry on the three premises involved in the recent outbreak of H7N3 avian influenza were slaughtered on suspicion of infection, based on preliminary laboratory results. Killing commenced on all three sites before disease was confirmed and the carcases were transported to off-site disposal facilities in biosecure, leakproof lorries within 24 hours of the culling operation. Disposal was by rendering and incineration. Each load was escorted by the state veterinary service to the disposal facility and destruction was confirmed by an official.

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what arrangements are in place for the mass disposal of carcases in the event of an outbreak of avian influenza;

and what estimate the Government have made of *(a)* the number of birds which would need to be disposed of and *(b)* the maximum disposal capacity available. [69755]

Mr. Bradshaw: The arrangements for mass disposal of carcases in the event of an outbreak of avian influenza are laid out in our Exotic Animal Disease Generic Contingency Plan. Commercial fixed plant incineration or rendering will be the first options for mass disposal of carcases. If incineration and rendering capacity has been exhausted, it may be necessary to consider the use of approved commercial landfill or on-farm burial. Mass pyres will not be used. My Department has already put in place arrangements with animal incinerator and rendering companies to ensure the minimum delay should there be an outbreak of the disease.

The disease control policies are set out in the Contingency Plan and it is our policy to cull birds only where this is justified and on the basis of sound veterinary, epidemiological and scientific advice. Any estimate of the number of birds which would need to be culled depends on these factors and the nature of this advice at the time. Key factors will include the virus strain, its pathogenicity, the location of the disease outbreak and international developments.

The available incineration and rendering capacity at any time will depend on the location of the outbreak, the time of year, breakdowns and other demands. Some 2,500 tonnes per week (equivalent to approximately 1.25 million chickens) would be available very quickly and a further 10-15,000 tonnes per week could be brought on stream within about two weeks.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average level of infection has been of *(a)* the H7 strain of avian influenza, *(b)* the H5N1 strain of avian influenza and *(c)* all other strains of avian influenza found in flocks during outbreaks. [69848]

Mr. Bradshaw: The infection rate within a flock will depend on the stage at which infection or disease is detected. The rate of spread and local epidemiology within a poultry population will be dependent on many factors, but once the virus is introduced into a holding its rate of spread within the flock will be strongly influenced by the host species, the virus strain and the production type. These factors are consistent in their impact for rates of infection in terms of different virus serotypes where rates typically approach 100 per cent.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations he has received on the detected infection rates for the H7 strain of avian influenza in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* other countries. [69849]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has received a range of representations on this subject.

The Veterinary Laboratory Agency (VLA) is world renowned for its avian influenza testing work. As the International Reference Laboratory for avian influenza, the VLA verifies other countries' test results. It is internationally recognised as a centre of excellence in veterinary research.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions he has had with scientists in Scandinavia on the UK's regime for testing for *(a)* the H7 strain, *(b)* the H5N1 strain and *(c)* all other strains of avian influenza. [69882]

Mr. Bradshaw: As an international reference laboratory—and especially as the EU community reference laboratory for avian influenza—the Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) has frequent discussions with its counterparts overseas. The Agency takes a leading role in developing and defining standards and keeps abreast of the latest information.

Recent contact has been made with the relevant national laboratory in Sweden and a private laboratory in Sweden that conducts independent surveillance in wild bird populations. The national laboratory follows EU guidelines in its work to which the VLA makes a significant contribution. The private laboratory uses different sampling regimes which have not been validated to an international standard and lack comparative data with standard regimes.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment he has made of other countries' experiences of outbreaks of avian influenza in preparing the UK's *(a)* testing regime and *(b)* biosecurity measures; and if he will make a statement. [69889]

Mr. Bradshaw: We have worked very closely with the European Commission and all other member states on both the UK testing regime for avian influenza and the requirement for biosecurity measures for poultry keepers. We have also used the experiences of other countries to inform our assessment of the risk to UK poultry. We will continue to assess and review both testing procedures and biosecurity measures in the light of new developments.

Badger Casualties (Bovine TB)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the National Assembly for Wales on the analysis of data from roadside casualties of badgers regarding bovine TB studies; and if she will take steps to provide for the results to be jointly collated and issued in a combined report. [68653]

Mr. Bradshaw: My Department holds discussions with the Welsh Assembly on a variety of issues. There are no plans to collate the results of the Road Traffic Accident surveys.

Biotech Products

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when his Department received the documents *(a)* Comments by the European Communities on the Scientific and

Technical Advice to the Panel, Geneva, 28 January 2005 and *(b)* Further scientific or technical evidence in response to the other parties comments by the European Communities, Geneva, 10 February 2005, relating to the European Communities—Measures Affecting the Approval and Marketing of Biotech Products (DS291, DS292, DS293). [68129]

Ian Pearson: The document entitled "Comments by the European Communities on the Scientific and Technical Advice to the Panel, Geneva, 28 January 2005" was made available to Defra officials on 1 February 2005. The submission "Further scientific or technical evidence in response to other parties comments by the European Communities, Geneva, 10 February 2005" was provided to Defra officials on 11 February 2005.

Chewing Gum

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how the £600,000 provided by the Chewing Gum Action Group will be divided between the pilot areas; and how the pilot areas are dividing their funding between advertising, alternative disposal and enforcement related measures. [68777]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The Chewing Gum Action Group funding provided to the 15 local authority areas is to be used solely to supply the paid advertising element of the campaigns. This will be complemented by local activity, funded by the individual local authorities, which will include enforcement and alternative disposal solutions.

The Chewing Gum Action Group funding has been divided between each local authority based on the advertising space available in the geographical area of the campaign, and the cost of advertising in that specific area.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how the Chewing Gum Action Group pilots in 2006 will differ from the pilot campaigns carried out in 2005 in terms of the techniques employed to reduce gum litter. [68778]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* As the Chewing Gum Action Group campaigns in 2006 are based on the successful pilot campaigns in 2005, the techniques employed to reduce gum litter will remain the same and will focus on paid advertising, education and awareness raising, visible enforcement, and alternative disposal solutions.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what criteria will be used to measure success in the Chewing Gum Action Group pilot areas in 2006. [68779]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The success of the campaign, both in terms of reduced levels of gum deposited on the streets and in the effect on attitudes and awareness, will be recorded and analysed. The Chewing Gum Action Group is currently working with a research agency to formulate this analysis. This will be finalised by the end of May 2006.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many staff are employed by her Department in *(a)* personnel and *(b)* media, press and public information. [67448]

Barry Gardiner: The number of staff employed on 31 March 2006 by DEFRA in the areas requested was as follows:

(a) Human Resources employed a total of 207 staff (200 full-time equivalents). This included 53 staff (51.4 FTE) employed in Learning and Development, Diversity and Equality and Occupational Support and Advisory teams.

(b) DEFRA's Press Office, which deals with media and press, employed a total of 33 staff (32.4 FTE). This included Press Officers, Planning team, administrative support staff, and senior managers. DEFRA recently set up a Customer Contact Unit to centralise provision of information to the public in response to correspondence, public enquiries, and responses to Parliamentary Questions. This employed 65 staff on 31 March 2006. This figure does not include staff employed on telephone helplines. Staff elsewhere in the Department may also be involved in the provision of public information in specific areas; a figure on the number of staff involved in this respect is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of the staff in his Department is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled, broken down by grade. [69089]

Barry Gardiner: The following table outlines the position in DEFRA at 1 April 2006:

DEFRA and Executive Agencies

	Male	*Female*	*Percentage Disabled*
SCS	74	26	2
Grade 6	71	29	5
Grade 7	65	35	4
SEO	64	36	4
HEO	55	45	6
EO	45	55	7
AO	39	61	8
AA	43	57	11
Total	49	51	7

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what opportunities exist for people to work beyond retirement age in his Department. [69097]

Barry Gardiner: The default retirement age for all staff in DEFRA is 60. However the following provisions apply that allow staff below the senior civil service (SCS) to work beyond 60.

Short Service Concession

This applies to staff who have less than 20 years reckonable service. Staff may be retained until they either reach 65 or attain 20 years service, whichever is sooner, subject to continued satisfactory performance and efficiency.

Elective retirement

Staff may elect to stay beyond 60 to a maximum age of 65 where there is a clear organisational need, and subject to continued satisfactory performance and efficiency.

Short term extensions

Exceptionally, it is possible for staff to be retained for an additional six months having reached retirement age where there is a clear business requirement, and the individual wants to stay.

Senior Civil Service

Heads of departments and Agency chief executives may retain the services of members of the SCS if it is considered to be in the public interest, and they are satisfied with their performance and efficiency.

The retirement provisions are currently under revision to meet the requirements of the Employment Equality (Age) Legislation.

Equal Pay

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men are employed in the Department; what the average pay was for (i) women and (ii) men in the Department in (A) 1997 and (B) 2006; what women's average pay is as a percentage of men's average pay; and how many (1) women and (2) men the Department employed in each of the last five years, broken down by grade. [67785]

Barry Gardiner: Defra was created on 9 June 2001 and the information given relates to the period since then.

The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the Civil Service by Department. These include data on the employment of men and women. Information on the numbers of women and men employed in the Civil Service at 31 December 2005 is available in the Library and on the Civil Service website at:

www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/emplovment/index.asp

The earliest readily available pay data split by gender since the creation of Defra is held in the 2003 Equal Pay Review, which covered staff below the Senior Civil Service in the core Department, the Pesticides Safety Directorate and the Veterinary Medicines Directorate Executive Agencies.

(A) 2002-03 average pay:

(i) Women £20,770

(ii) Men £25,186

Women's average pay as a percentage of men's average pay was 82.5 per cent.

The review found that there were no significant pay gaps within the Department, provided that Defra's multi-year pay settlement was fully rolled out for future years up to and including 2005/2006. The final year of the settlement was rolled out last year and runs until the end of June 2006.

(B) For 2006, the average pay for men and women on core-Department terms and conditions (core-Defra, PSD, VMD, SVS, MFA and GDS–the latter three Agencies were created since the 2003 Equal Pay Review and were previously included within the core-Department) was as follows:

(i) Women £26,194

(ii) Men £30,135

Women's average pay as a percentage of men's average pay was 86.9 per cent.

The average pay for the Veterinary Laboratories Agency was as follows:

(A) 2001 average pay

(i) Women £17,168

(ii) Men £22,421

Women's average pay as a percentage of men's average pay was 76.6 per cent.

(B) 2005 average pay

(i) Women £20,706

(ii) Men £26,195

Women's average pay as a percentage of men's average pay was 79.0 per cent.

The average pay for the Senior Civil Service was as follows:

2005 Average pay

(i) Women £73,403

(ii) Men £75,578

Women's average pay as a percentage of men's average pay was 97.1 per cent.

Data for other years could be obtained only by incurring disproportionate cost.

Average pay figures for the Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture Science, the Central Science Laboratory and the Rural Payments Agency are either unavailable or could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The number of women and men employed on a permanent basis in the Department and its Agencies on 1 April of each year since 2002 is shown in the following tables.

1 April 2002

	Full-time staff			*Part-time staff (headcount)*			*All staff (full-time equivalent)*		
Grade equivalent	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
SCS	124	29	153	2	4	6	125.7	32.1	157.8
Grade 6	147	23	170	1	11	12	147.6	30.5	178.1

1 April 2002

	Full-time staff			Part-time staff (headcount)			All staff (full-time equivalent)		
Grade equivalent	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Grade 7	493	136	629	5	26	31	497.0	155.8	652.8
SEO	802	290	1,092	24	96	120	820.0	359.3	1,179.3
HEO	1,013	608	1,621	12	149	161	1,021.8	713.0	1,734.8
EO	1,461	1,301	2,762	21	245	266	1,475.1	1,487.5	2,962.6
AO	1,618	2,141	3,759	33	420	453	1,644.2	2,451.8	4,096.0
AA	596	745	1,341	26	209	235	613.3	874.6	1,487.9
Unreported	10	5	15	1	0	1	10.9	5.0	15.9
Total	6,264	5,278	11,542	125	1,160	1,285	6,355.6	6,109.6	12,465.2

1 April 2003

	Full-time staff			Part-time staff (headcount)			All staff (full-time equivalent)		
Grade equivalent	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
SCS	140	27	167	1	6	7	140.9	31.6	172.5
Grade 6	158	23	181	2	10	12	159.5	31.2	190.7
Grade 7	524	151	675	5	39	44	527.7	178.6	706.3
SEO	798	287	1,085	29	99	128	820.6	355.4	1,176.0
HEO	1,187	732	1,919	24	185	209	1,204.8	856.9	2,061.7
EO	1,325	1,184	2,509	21	246	267	1,338.2	1,349.2	2,687.4
AO	1,514	1,944	3,458	42	471	513	1,543.5	2,248.3	3,791.8
AA	599	707	1,306	22	195	217	613.2	825.7	1,438.9
Unreported	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	6,245	5,055	11,300	146	1,251	1,397	6,348.4	5,876.9	12,225.3

1 April 2004

	Full-time staff			Part-time staff (headcount)			All staff (full-time equivalent)		
Grade equivalent	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
SCS	146	36	182	2	7	9	147.6	40.9	188.5
Grade 6	179	40	219	2	12	14	180.6	49.8	230.4
Grade 7	544	183	727	10	43	53	551.1	214.5	765.6
SEO	845	334	1,179	29	115	144	866.6	414.0	1,280.6
HEO	1,242	805	2,047	30	213	243	1,264.3	951.0	2,215.3
EO	1,403	1,282	2,685	32	282	314	1,424.8	1,470.5	2,895.3
AO	1,628	2,032	3,660	60	549	609	1,668.8	2,384.9	4,053.7
AA	486	557	1,043	26	214	240	503.4	685.4	1,188.8
Unreported	1	0	1	0	0	0	1.0	0.0	1.0
Total	6,474	5,269	11,743	191	1,435	1,626	6,608.2	6,211.0	12,819.2

1 April 2005

	Full-time staff			Part-time staff (headcount)			All staff (full-time equivalent)		
Grade equivalent	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
SCS	155	45	200	3	7	10	157.0	49.5	206.5
Grade 6	186	61	247	4	17	21	188.8	74.0	262.8
Grade 7	564	234	798	10	50	60	571.4	270.9	842.3
SEO	869	380	1,249	31	105	136	891.7	453.3	1,345.0
HEO	1,257	893	2,150	30	188	218	1,279.1	1,018.2	2,297.3
EO	1,279	1,279	2,558	25	287	312	1,296.4	1,468.1	2,764.5
AO	1,363	1,831	3,194	50	531	581	1,399.3	2,169.4	3,568.7
AA	373	368	741	22	195	217	387.5	484.5	872.0
Unreported	41	17	58	0	0	0	41.0	17.0	58.0
Total	6,087	5,108	11,195	175	1,380	1,555	6,212.2	6,004.9	12,217.1

Departmental Televisions

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many television sets are in operation in the Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Minister's private offices and *(c)* in each office building in the Department; and how many television licences are held by the Department. [62795]

Barry Gardiner: To identify all of the television sets in use across my Department would be very difficult to achieve with such a diverse estate of buildings and

locations. I have therefore limited my reply to the major Headquarters sites of London, Guildford and York. The following table summarises the current position.

Location	*Quantity*
Eastbury House	10
Page Street	13
Nobel complex	55
Whitehall Place	11
Guildford	9
York	4
Total	102
Those in use by Minister's Private Offices	14
TV Licenses held	6

Energy Efficiency

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what temperature *(a)* the heating thermostat is set to in winter and *(b)* the air conditioning is set to in summer in his Department's main London office. [67447]

Barry Gardiner: The temperature of the heating in the main London office is set at 21 degrees C in the winter.

There is no air-conditioning in the Department's main London office, it is cooled by natural ventilation.

Entry Level Scheme

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farmers qualified for the Entry Level Scheme; how many of those have *(a)* applied and *(b)* qualified for the Higher Level Scheme; how much has been paid out for that scheme; how much is allocated in total; what the timetable is for making such payments; and whether he expects payments to be made on time. [70102]

Barry Gardiner: Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) is open to all farmers and land managers; it is not competitive and acceptance is guaranteed providing scheme requirements can be met. As of 11 May, almost 19,500 agreements have been entered into under Entry Level or the Organic Entry Level strands of Environmental Stewardship.

Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) is a competitive scheme and applicants are required to deliver specific environmental benefits in high priority situations. Entry into ELS or Organic ELS is generally a pre-requisite for a HLS agreement. As at 11 May, there have been 1,172 HLS applications, and there are now 575 HLS agreements up and running.

The first annual payments for HLS agreement holders will not become due until February 2007, though mid-year HLS payments for those agreements that started in February 2006, become due in August 2006. HLS capital claims are due for payment once work has been completed; as at 11 May 2006, six capital claims have been paid with a total value of just over £37,000. Over £3 million has been allocated in 2006-07 to cover the cost of signed agreements. Payments under HLS are expected to be made on time.

Foot and Mouth Disease

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will name the premises designated 'Dangerous Contact 1' during the 2001 Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak; why they were subsequently removed from the list of dangerous contacts; and if he will make a statement. [70803]

Mr. Bradshaw: Premises with animals originally classified as dangerous contacts (DCs) may have been subsequently confirmed as having the disease, either on clinical grounds or from laboratory tests. On confirmation of disease they will have been placed on the published list of Infected Premises.

As a definitive list of DCs was not published, it is unclear which premises the hon. Gentleman is referring to. If he will write to me with further details I will provide him with a fuller response.

Foul Odours

Charlotte Atkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which *(a)* registration and *(b)* regulations govern prosecutions for creating a nuisance involving foul odours; and which body is responsible for pursuing such a prosecution. [67613]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* Under section 79 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, local authorities have a duty to check their areas periodically for existing and potential statutory nuisances, and to take reasonably practicable steps to investigate complaints of statutory nuisances, including any dust, steam, smell or other effluvia arising on industrial, trade or business premises and being prejudicial to health or a nuisance. A "premises" may be a dwelling, place of business, land, beach, vessel or sea.

Once satisfied that a statutory nuisance exists, or may occur or recur, a local authority must issue an abatement notice requiring that the nuisance be ceased or abated within a specified timescale. It is an offence to breach or fail to comply with an abatement notice. Upon summary conviction through the courts, fines of up to £5,000 for domestic premises and £20,000 for industrial, trade and industry premises may be issued.

Some plants and processes that have the potential for emissions of offensive odours are regulated under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations, which are enforced by either the Environment Agency or local authorities depending on the type of installation. Plants and processes that are covered by these regulations are not subject to the statutory nuisance regime, in order to remove double jeopardy.

Defra recently published the "Code of Practice on Odour Nuisance from Sewage Treatment Work". This aims to provide a framework under the statutory

nuisance regime in England and Wales within which the appropriate regulators and sewerage undertakers can operate to minimise the likelihood and nuisance from odours. The code is available on the Defra website.

In addition, Regulation (EC) 1774/2002 (enforced by the Animal By-Products Regulations 2005) lays down the rules for the collection, transport, storage, handling, processing and use or disposal of animal by-products in order to prevent these products from posing a risk to animal and public health. Plants that process material of animal origin are required to be approved by the Secretary of State in accordance with the regulation. The regulation also requires that animal by-products be transported in sealed new packaging or covered leak-proof containers or vehicles and that they be processed without undue delay.

Vehicles on public highways are not "premises" within the statutory nuisance regime on odour. Emissions from new vehicles are regulated by means of the Motor Vehicles (EC Type Approval) Regulations 1998 or the Motor Vehicles (Type Approval for Goods Vehicles) (Great Britain) Regulations 1982. Emissions from in service vehicles are regulated by means of Regulation 61 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 as amended.

In addition, vehicles driven in a careless or anti-social manner (that is causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress) may be seized by the police under section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002.

Hunting Act

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will make it his policy to introduce an Order to vary the exemptions within the Hunting Act 2004; and if he will make a statement. [70730]

Barry Gardiner: The Government have no plans to bring forward proposals to vary the exemptions within the Hunting Act 2004.

Icelandic Fishing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much was awarded as compensation for the loss of Icelandic fishing, broken down by port of origin of recipient; how many individuals received awards; how much was deducted from compensation payable for exgratia redundancy payments; and how many fishermen were subject to such deductions. [69137]

Mr. Bradshaw: A total of £42.4 million has been paid by DTI in compensation to date. Although the scheme has long since closed, some limited processing of claims remains. The IT system used does not record the port of origin and it is not practical or cost effective to produce this information manually. Some limited information is however available on the basis of beneficiaries' current locations. This gives the following totals:

	£ million
Hull	18.6
Grimsby	6
Cleethorpes	1.7
Fleetwood	3.2

In all, 5,366 payments have been made thus far, with total deductions of £7.4 million in respect of exgratia redundancy payments to some 3,268 fishermen.

Insect Repellents

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the status of insect repellents is under the REACH regulations; and what assessment she has made of the impact of the regulations on manufacturers in the UK, with particular reference to animal testing. [67898]

Ian Pearson: If an active substance of an insect repellent has been assessed and approved for use in either plant protection products or in biocidal products in accordance with existing European Union legislation (Directive 91/414/EEC or Directive 98/8/EC), then the active substance is considered as registered and exempted from authorisation under REACH.

If not exempt, substances on their own or in preparations manufactured in quantities of over 1 tonne per manufacturer per year will have to be registered with the new European Chemicals Agency. Registration requires the submission of basic information on these substances, some of which may be generated through testing on animals if the information is not available elsewhere.

The text of the Political Agreement of December 2005 introduces a number of amendments aimed at minimising the amount of animal testing required and reducing the costs on industry, for example through the incorporation of "One Substance, One Regulation" (OSOR), a UK proposal with strong rules on the mandatory sharing of animal test data by companies.

Low-Frequency Noise

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps he has taken to increase local authority access to means of detecting and locating the source of low-frequency noise. [68866]

Mr. Bradshaw: Detecting and locating the source of low frequency noise can be extremely challenging. Disturbance can occur at levels only slightly higher than the hearing threshold and its effects can therefore vary from one individual to the next.

To help local authorities and environmental health practitioners investigate disturbances caused by low frequency noise, DEFRA commissioned the University of Salford to develop proposed criteria and a methodology for the assessment of low frequency noise complaints.

The University's report, 'Procedure for the assessment of low frequency noise complaints,' was published in February 2005. It is now available on the DEFRA website:http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/noise/research/lowfrequency/pdf/nanr45-procedure.pdf

Nitrogen Dioxide Emissions

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking in conjunction with local authorities to meet European Union targets on nitrogen dioxide emissions. [67876]

Mr. Bradshaw: The First Air Quality Daughter Directive (1999/30/EC) sets binding limit values for nitrogen dioxide; a one hour mean (200 microgramme/m^3) and an annual mean (40 microgramme/m^3) to be met by 2010.

Action is being taken at international, national and local level to tackle air pollution. We are involved in a number of international and European fora in dealing with air quality issues. We are currently negotiating a new ED Air Quality Directive. We are also currently negotiating further .stringent reductions to European emission standards on nitrogen dioxide and particles (PM_{-10}) for light duty vehicles.

Nationally, we are undertaking a review of the Air Quality Strategy (AQS) to identify potential new additional measures to move us closer to meeting the national air quality objectives, which are similar or tighter than the ED limit and target values, and at the same time generating cost-effective health benefits. An AQS consultation document was published on 5 April 2006 and can be found at http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/airqualstrat-review/index.htm. The consultation period finishes on 11 July 2006.

At the local level, local authorities also have a role to play in helping the Government deliver cleaner air. Local authorities have a duty to review and assess the air quality against nationally prescribed air quality objectives for seven main air pollutants. Where local authorities consider that one or more of the air quality objectives is unlikely to be met by the relevant deadline, they must declare an air quality management area (AQMA), covering the area where the problem is expected. These local authorities must then take action, along with other agencies and organisations, to work towards meeting the air quality objectives.

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the nitrogen dioxide emission statistics for *(a)* Marylebone Road, *(b)* Brompton Road and *(c)* Cromwell Road were in each of the last five years. [67877]

Mr. Bradshaw: The following are annual nitrogen dioxide concentration statistics based on automatic air quality measurement data for London Marylebone and Cromwell roads over the period 2001-05. Data for Brompton Road have been provided by the Royal borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Marylebone Road

Statistic	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Annual average (micrograms per metre cubed)	84	80	107	110	112
Number of exceedences of hourly EU limit value[1]	60	2	471	542	853

Cromwell Road

Statistic	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Annual average (micrograms per metre cubed).	76	72	75	80	79
Number of exceedences of hourly EU limit value[1]	2	0	6	3	9

Knightsbridge (LAQN) Brompton Road site

Statistic	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*[2]2005*
Annual average (micrograms per metre cubed).	84	86	93	87	90
Number of exceedences of hourly EU limit value[1]	97	154	235	254	288

Data capture > 90 per cent. in each case

[1] 200 micrograms per metre cubed hourly mean limit value not to be exceeded more than 18 times per year

[2] 2005 Knightsbridge data is provisional

Data for London Marylebone and Cromwell roads are available from the National Air Quality Information Archive www.airquality.co.uk and data for Brompton Road are available from the London Air Quality Network website www.londonair.org.uk/london/asp/home.asp.

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on air quality standards in central London, with particular reference to nitrogen oxide emissions. [67875]

Mr. Bradshaw: The national Air Quality Strategy, published in 2000, sets a one hour mean air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide of 200 micrograms per cubic metre not to be exceeded more than 18 times per year and an annual mean of 40 micrograms per cubic metre, both to be achieved by 31 December 2005. These objectives are to be achieved sooner than the equivalent EU limit values which have to be met by 2010.

The Greater London Authority Act 1999 gave the Mayor responsibility for improving air quality in London. The Mayor published his Air Quality Strategy for London in September 2002, setting out his proposals for implementation of the policies in the national Air Quality Strategy and achievement of the objectives prescribed in regulations. London local authorities have to take account of the Mayor's Strategy when carrying out their local air quality management duties.

Under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995, currently 30 out of the 33 London local authorities have declared air quality management areas in respect of nitrogen dioxide mainly relating to road transport emissions.

Perfluorooctane Sulfonate

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what agreements

the Government has entered into with *(a)* EU and *(b)* other international organisations on the use of perfluorooctane sulfonate. [70021]

Ian Pearson: On 5 December 2005, the European Commission published a proposal for a Directive (76/769/EC) relating to restrictions on the marketing and use of perfluorooctane sulfonates (PFOSs). While the UK welcomes the proposals we do not feel that they go far enough, and the UK is working to strengthen these proposals.

We have reached agreement with member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on the hazard profile of PFOS see www.oecd.org/dataoecd/23/18/2382880.pdf

We are also working to have PFOS agreed as a persistent organic pollutant and subject to international controls under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the UNECE Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

Rural Payments Agency

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost has been of Rural Payment Agency (RPA) services supplied to the National Fallen Stock Company since it was established; and what assessment she has made of the RPA's relationship with the company. [67343]

Barry Gardiner: The total cost of RPA services supplied to the National Fallen Stock Company to the end of March 2006 was £3,424,798.78. This can be broken down into £2,481,211.10 for scheme set-up costs (including IT development) and £943,587,68 for scheme running costs.

The RPA has provided the company with an efficient day to day administration of the scheme and has played a major role in establishing the scheme in co-operation with the company.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many telephone calls have been made to the Rural Payments Agency's Customer Service Centre in *(a)* each of the last 12 months and *(b)* the period commencing 13 April 2006; how many calls in each period have gone unanswered; and if he will make a statement. [68868]

Barry Gardiner: The figures in the table show calls to the main RPA Customer Service Number 0845 603 7777 only. This line is the main customer telephone number for all subsidy and SPS related calls. RPA operate several other call lines.

	Calls offered to 0845 603 7777	*Number unanswered*	*Percentage unanswered*
May 2005[1]	93,346	8,705	9.33
June 2005[1]	24,496	267	1.09
July 2005[1]	20,199	247	1.22
August 2005	20,780	218	1.05
September 2005	21,752	249	1.14
October 2005	26,150	317	1.21
November 2005	26,289	1,168	[2]4.44
December 2005	18,725	187	1.00
January 2006	26,628	185	0.69
February 2006	28,322	175	0.62
March 2006	52,748	450	0.85
April 2006	68,684	281	0.41
13 April to 8 May 2006	89,218	338	0.38

[1] May, June and July 2005 figures are an amalgamation of statistics collected from several call centre systems and represent our best estimate.

[2] The November 2005 figure was the result of a high volume of calls and repeat calls on a day during an emergency evacuation of the call centre.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many requests the Rural Payments Agency received *(a)* before 13 April 2006 and *(b)* on or since 13 April 2006 for claim forms for the 2006-07 Single Payment Scheme; and if he will make a statement. [68879]

Barry Gardiner: Applicants do not have to request a Single Payment Scheme (SPS) application form, as these are automatically issued to all previous SPS claimants.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of potential applicants under the 2006-07 Single Payments Scheme to whom the Rural Payments Agency did not send a claim form before 13 April 2006 having been asked to do so; and if he will make a statement. [68881]

Barry Gardiner: 33,902 Single Payment Scheme application forms were issued to potential applicants by the Rural Payments Agency on or since 13 April 2006.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions he has had on deferring of the deadline for applications to the Rural Payments Agency for single farm payments. [68929]

Barry Gardiner: My noble Friend Lord Bach, the former Minister with responsibility for sustainable farming and food has over the last two months met weekly with the Presidents of the National Farmers Union, the Country Landowners Association and the Tenant Farmers Association to discuss Single Payment Scheme (SPS) issues. An outcome of these discussions is that although farmers should continue to aim to meet the 15 May deadline for SPS applications, late claim penalties will not be applied to applications received between 15 and 31 May. Applications submitted between 1 and 9 June will attract the normal 1 per cent. per working day penalty and any applications submitted after 9 June will be rejected.

Single Farm Payments

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions he has had concerning the position of those who are

yet to receive their Single Farm Payments but are expected to submit their application forms for the following year by 15 May; and if he will make a statement. [69529]

Barry Gardiner: My noble Friend Lord Bach, the former Parliamentary Under Secretary, had for the last two months met weekly with the Presidents of the National Farmers Union, the Country Landowners Association and the Tenant Farmers Association to discuss Single Payment Scheme (SPS) issues. An outcome of these discussions is that although farmers should continue to aim to meet the 15 May deadline for SPS applications, late claim penalties will not be applied to applications received between 15 and31 May. Applications submitted between 1 and 9 June will attract the normal 1 per cent. per working day penalty and any applications submitted after 9 June will be rejected.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farms are affected by the delay in payment of single farm payments. [69562]

Barry Gardiner: By close of business on 4 May 2005 58,000 single payment scheme (SPS) claims had received a full payment.

The Secretary of State announced on 9 May that some £730 million would be paid in the next week in the form of a substantial partial payment. Once this sum has been paid there will remain around 31,000 claimants who will not have received a payment. Some 26,000 of these claimants are due to receive a payment amounting to less than €1,000. Making full payments to the 5,000 farmers due to receive more than €1,000 will now be given the highest priority by the Rural Payments Agency.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost has been to *(a)* his Department and *(b)* IT companies supplying his Department of the IT problems associated with late payments of single farm payments. [69565]

Barry Gardiner: The core IT system to enable the processing of the Single Payment Scheme (SPS) was developed in conjunction with Accenture, the prime contractor, and deployed in phased releases throughout 2005, with the final element being delivered in October 2005. The system is used by Rural Payments Agency (RPA) staff in the processing of SPS claims and is available to them from 6am to 9pm weekdays and 8am to 6pm at weekends. In 2005 RPA implemented a three-shift work pattern to maximise the utilisation of the system and thereby help address the demands of processing the first year of SPS claims.

The overall cost of the Accenture contract is £53.8 million. This includes not only the development of the core SPS processing system but also a Rural Land Register, Customer Register, Customer Service (Call) Centre and Document Management Unit.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the timetable is for making interim single farm payments; and what the latest estimated time scale is for completing all payments. [70093]

Barry Gardiner: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced on 9 May that some £730 million in the form of a substantial partial payment would be paid within a week of that announcement. Once this sum has been paid there will remain around 31,000 claimants who will not have received a payment. Some 26,000 of these claimants are due to receive a payment amounting to less than €1,000. Making full payments to the 5,000 farmers due to receive more than €1,000 will be given the highest priority by the Rural Payments Agency (RPA).

The RPA has not provided a timetable for the completion of outstanding payments, although it is endeavouring to make payment to all 2005 Single Payment Scheme applicants by 30 June.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many information leaflets have been received by each common agricultural policy farmer in *(a)* England and *(b)* Northern Ireland regarding the Single Payment Scheme since the mid-term common agricultural policy reform proposals were agreed in 2003; and what the total estimated cost was of compiling, printing and posting these booklets in each country. [66172]

Barry Gardiner: Eighteen information leaflets regarding the Single Payment Scheme have been sent to English farmers since the mid-term common agricultural policy reform proposals were agreed in 2003. Because of the importance of the scheme and the need to register entitlements in the first year, all publications were mailed to every customer on the Defra database.

Subsequent to the development of the Rural Payments Agency's (RPA) own customer data it was not necessary to send all publications to the same circulation. Copies have been available on call off from Defra Publications and RPA's Customer Service Centre.

The total cost of compiling, printing and posting the leaflets to English farmers is £1,846,243.20.

Northern Ireland falls under the remit of its own devolved Administration.

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* lowest, *(b)* highest, *(c)* median and *(d)* mean value was of the claims for the 2005 Single Payment Scheme within each of the three designated payment areas. [66706]

Barry Gardiner: The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) is in the process of paying claims to the 2005 Single Payment Scheme. As such final figures are not available. Based on payments made up to 3 May the information requested is as follows:

	£
Lowest value	0.01
Highest value	357,593.88
Median value	2,885.67
Mean value	9,143.60

The SPS is administered nationally with claims submitted in respect of land held in one or more English regions. It is not possible to provide the number of claims supporting land in each of the three English regions.

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many claims for the 2005 Single Payment Scheme were *(a)* expected and *(b)* received in each of the three designated payment areas, broken down by value. [66708]

Barry Gardiner: 120,367 applications were received by the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) for the 2005 Single Payment Scheme (SPS).

The SPS is administered nationally with claims submitted in respect of land held in one or more English regions. It is not possible to provide the number of claims supporting land in each of the three English regions. However the amount of land claimed in each of the three regions is as follows:

	Hectares
Non—SDA	7,325,833
SDA other	578,027
Moorland	452,399

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress has been made towards a fully worked up contingency plan to pay partial single farm payments before 30 June 2006. [69850]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* As announced in a written statement by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, on 9 May, after testing the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) has immediately moved to making partial payments.

As a result £730 million has been transferred to the BAGS system or drawn up in payable orders. These payments should reach farmers' bank accounts by the end of the week.

The RPA is still endeavouring to make a full or partial payment to all Single Payment Scheme applicants by 30 June 2006.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what definition of the middle range of historical claimants is being used for the prioritisation of single farm payments. [64801]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The intention is for all eligible Single Payment Scheme (SPS) claimants to receive a payment, either in full or substantial part, by the end of June. With respect to the validation of claims leading to full payment by the Rural Payments Agency, the highest priority is being placed on claims of a value of between €50,000 and €100,000, reflecting a wish to disburse the maximum amount of funds to the maximum number of farmers within the shortest possible time frame. Work to validate claims of a value outside this band is also continuing as far as practicable.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what mechanisms were put in place by the Rural Payments Agency to ensure that the despatch of the Customer Registration booklet to farmers for the new financial year did not affect the finalising of 2005 payments; what assessment her Department made of the merits of delaying the despatch of these booklets until after the 2005 payments had been completed; and if she will make a statement. [66173]

Barry Gardiner: RPAs continuing priority task is the processing of 2005 SPS payments and all resources required to ensure payment at the earliest time has been directed to this task.

However, RPA also needs to ensure that 2006 scheme year claims are issued to enable return within the statutory requirements set by the scheme legislation. EU regulations specify that SPS claim forms must be lodged with the Paying Agency by May 15 each year, so delaying the issue of these forms until all 2005 payments had been processed was not an option.

To assist our customers the 2006 claim forms have been prepopulated where possible with all available customer information such as customer registration, scheme entitlements and land registration details.

Warm Home Zones

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what start-up funding is available for new warm home zones; how much such funding is available in North Staffordshire; and if he will make a statement. [69887]

Ian Pearson: An independent evaluation of the three-year Warm Zones pilot period was published earlier this year. The Government are considering the full range of conclusions from the pilot and will continue to work with Warm Zones Ltd. in its ongoing development.

Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what progress the Government have made during 2006 in meeting the targets of the Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000; and if he will make a statement; [69153]

(2) if he will make a statement on the operation of *(a)* section 1 and *(b)* section 2 of the Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000; what recent representations he has received on the operation of the Act; if he will place in the Library copies of such representations; and whether he plans (i) to amend and (ii) to repeal this Act. [69154]

Ian Pearson: The UK Fuel Poverty Strategy, published in November 2001, defines fuel poverty as a household that needs to spend more than 10 per cent. of its income on fuel to maintain an adequate standard of warmth (21 degrees in the main living area, and 18 degrees in all other rooms). A comprehensive range

of measures has been put in place to tackle the underlying causes of fuel poverty, which are poor, energy inefficient housing, high fuel costs and low incomes. The UK Fuel Poverty Strategy also specifies interim targets to be achieved and target dates for eradicating fuel poverty in the UK.

There have been no recent representations on the operation of the Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act, and there are no plans to amend or repeal the Act.

The Government report annually on fuel poverty targets. The most recent report was published in July 2005 and showed that, in 2003, there were 1.2 million households in fuel poverty in England, 1.0 million of which were vulnerable households. This report, and further information on the UK Fuel Poverty Strategy, is available at: http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/fuel-poverty/strategy/index.html.

The figures for 2004 will be published shortly in the Fourth Annual Progress Report.

Whaling

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps he is taking to persuade those states within the International Whaling Commission sympathetic to Japan to vote in favour of whale conservation. [70338]

Mr. Bradshaw: We regularly send lobbying instructions to our posts abroad to seek support from their host countries for the UK's position on whaling. The prominent role we play within the Commission ensures no country can be in any doubt as to the importance we attach to whale conservation.

I have written to new members of the IWC refuting the spurious claims that whales have a detrimental effect on fish stocks an argument often advanced by whaling countries in support of whaling operations. I personally raise the issue of whaling with my international counterparts at every appropriate opportunity. I have also written to fellow UK Ministers with international contact urging them and their officials to take such opportunities as arise to raise the issue of the conservation of cetaceans in appropriate bilateral meetings, or in the margins of meetings.

The U K and its allies have lost no opportunity in trying to persuade new anti-whaling countries to join the IWC?with some success?five have joined in the last two years.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will take steps to encourage all those members of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) in favour of conservation measures to attend the IWC meeting in June. [70422]

Mr. Bradshaw: In January together with Ministers from Australia and New Zealand I wrote to Ministers in all IWC member countries to encourage their participation in the 58th annual IWC meeting in June. Our posts abroad will be lobbying the Governments of anti-whaling IWC members to encourage attendance and to stress the need to ensure that Commissioners' credentials are in proper order.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Corporate Takeovers

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has made to the EU Competition Commissioner about individual EU members introducing unilateral legislation to prevent corporate takeovers. [69928]

Mr. McCartney: Ministers have made no specific representations. We are confident that the European Commission will deal with breaches of Single Market rules and will consider carefully mergers where the purpose may be to block foreign takeovers. The Commission is well aware of the UK position on these issues and knows that it has our support to enforce Single Market rules and merger regulations to the full.

Employment Status Review

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1105W, on employment status review, when he will publish the conclusions of the Employment Act 1999 section 23 Consultations (Employment Status Review). [71436]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Government published their response to the consultation on the current framework and coverage of employment rights (Employment Status Review) at the end of March as part of the policy statement "Success at Work; Protecting Vulnerable Workers, Supporting Good Employers". Copies of this document have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

EU Extremely Large Telescope

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry where the EU Extremely Large Telescope is expected to be located. [67316]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The main sites under consideration as a possible location for the European Extremely Large Telescope are:

Observatorio Roque de los Muchachos (ORM) La Palma, Canaries

Paranal in the Atacama Desert, Northern Chile

Izafia—in the Moroccan Atlas Mountains

Northwest Argentina—a number of sites

'Dome C'—in the Australian Antarctica Territory

A final decision is not expected to be made until 2008 at the earliest.

European Social Chapter

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which statutory instruments were introduced by his Department to implement the European Social Chapter in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement on the operation of the Chapter. [69632]

Jim Fitzpatrick: In 1991, in what was then the Social Chapter, the EU provided for member states to reach agreement on certain aspects of social policy. The UK exercised its right to 'opt out' from the Social Chapter. In 1997 the UK Government decided it no longer wished to 'opt-out' of provisions in the Social Chapter. As a result the contents of the Social Chapter were incorporated into the Amsterdam treaty, coming into force in May 1999. The Statutory Instruments introduced by the DTI, implementing the four Social Chapter measures already agreed by the other member states prior to the UK ending its 'opt-out', are as follows:

Sex Discrimination (Indirect Discrimination and Burden of Proof) Regulations 2001 (implementing Directive 98/52 which extended to the UK Directive 97/80 on the burden of proof in cases of discrimination based on sex). These provide that once a prima facie case of sex discrimination has been made in an employment tribunal claim, the burden of proof is placed on the defendant (usually the employer) who will need to demonstrate that sex discrimination has not occurred;

The Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000 (implementing Directive 98/23 which extended to the UK Directive 97/81 on the framework agreement on part-time work). These provide for entitlement of part-time workers to the same pro-rata terms and conditions of employment as full-time workers;

The Maternity and Parental Leave etc. Regulations 1999 (implementing Directive 97/75 which extended to the UK Directive 96/34 on the framework agreement on parental leave). These provide for parents to have the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave for the purposes of caring for a child. The leave must be taken by the child's fifth birthday, or within 5 years of the child's placement for adoption;

The Transnational Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 1999 (implementing Directive 97/74 which extended to the UK Directive 94/45 on the establishment of European Works Council). These require companies with at least 1,000 employees in total across the member states and at least 150 workers in each of two or more of those member states, to establish structures for consulting workers on issues that affect them.

Since the Treaty of Amsterdam came into force in 1999, further Directives and Regulations have been adopted under Articles 136-139 of Title XI of the EC Treaty, i.e. the "Social Provisions" Chapter.

Job Sharing

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to encourage employers to provide job shares. [69854]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to him by the Minister for women on 28 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 658W.

Mobile Telephony

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of the land area of the UK is covered by third generation mobile telephony. [69868]

Margaret Hodge: The matter raised is the responsibility of the Office of Communications (Ofcom). Ofcom is the Independent Regulator for the communications sector, deriving its main powers and duties directly from statute rather than by delegation from the Secretary of State, and accountable to Parliament in its own right. Accordingly, my officials have asked the chief executive Officer of Ofcom to reply to my hon. friend and to send me a copy of his response. Copies of the chief executive's letter will also be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Touhig: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the effect on business of local post offices of the ending of the Post Office card account. [70891]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Post Office Ltd. and Department for Work and Pensions are currently discussing various options to help mitigate any impact on post offices resulting from the end of the Post Office card account.

Mr. Touhig: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what average income has accrued to a post office branch from a Post Office card account; [70893]

(2) what the total amount of revenue to a local post office branch from the Post Office card account was in 2005. [70894]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Income received by Post Office Ltd. from a Post Office card account is commercially confidential information.

UK Atomic Energy Authority

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what impact the proposed management buy-out of the UK Atomic Energy Authority will have on the Government's plans for the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus; and if he will make a statement. [70916]

Jim Fitzpatrick: There is no proposed Management Buy Out (MBO) of the UKAEA and the UKAEA is not for sale. However, the Board of UKAEA is overseeing a fundamental restructuring of the organisation in line with Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA)'s published strategy and in accordance with UKAEA's published 2005 Corporate Plan.

UKAEA's Board is now transforming UKAEA into three distinct publicly owned entities. UKAEA will in part, continue as a non-departmental public body (NDPB) responsible for fusion research and development at Culham and the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus (HSIC). Secondly, UKAEA's nuclear sites at Dounreay, Harwell, Winfrith and Windscale will become companies able to be competed by the NDA. Thirdly we are creating a commercial subsidiary, NewCo, which with its Alliance industry partners CH2MHI11 and AMEC will compete in the future decommissioning market.

The UKAEA Board is considering various options for NewCo's continuing commercial development. Any decisions in this regard will not impact on the HSIC which will continue to form part of the ongoing NDPB.

Wireless Telegraphy Act

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many successful prosecutions there were for offences under the Wireless Telegraphy Act 1949 in *(a)* 2002-03, *(b)* 2003-04, *(c)* 2004-05 and *(d)* 2005-06; and how much was collected in fines arising from such prosecutions in each year; [67626]

(2) how many people have been prosecuted in *(a)* England, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* Scotland and *(d)* Northern Ireland for offences under the Wireless Telegraphy Act 1949 since 1991; [67627]

Margaret Hodge: The matter raised is the responsibility of the Regulator, the Office of Communications (Ofcom) which is accountable to parliament rather than Ministers. Accordingly I have asked the Chief Executive of Ofcom to reply directly to the hon. Member. Copies of the Chief Executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of Houses.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Digital Switchover Costs

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what research she has commissioned into the likely costs of digital switchover for the BBC. [68071]

Tessa Jowell: Evidence from a variety of different sources, including primary research, will feed into our assessment of the BBC's future funding needs including costs related to digital switchover. This includes work carried out under the Digital Television Action Plan published in March 2005, the BBC's own figures and the financial analysis carried out by PKF and set out in their independent report published on 26 April.

The Government have carried out a variety of research and drawn on other evidence to inform the development of the assistance scheme for households where one person is 75 or over or has a serious disability, the costs of which will form part of the BBC's overall switchover costs. Details of the published research and other relevant reports which have fed into the policy development are in the table.

Publication	*Author*	*Published*
The equipment needs of consumers facing most difficulty switching to digital TV	The Generics Group	May 2006
Equipment needs of consumers facing most difficulty switching to digital TV equipment	i2 media research	May 2006
Digital TV Equipment: Vulnerable Consumer Requirement	Consumer Expert Group/ Digital UK	March 2006
Ferryside and Llansteffan Technical Trial: Research on Vulnerable Households	Ipsos RSL	July 2005
Digital Switchover Technical Trial at Ferryside and Llansteffan Report	Digital TV Project	July 2005
Supporting the most vulnerable consumers through digital switchover	Ofcom Consumer Panel	November 2004
Attitudes to Digital Switchover	The Generics Group	March 2004
Attitudes to Digital Television	The Generics Group	January 2004
Digital Television for All —A report on usability and accessible design	The Generics Group	September 2003

All research carried out by the Government on digital switchover is available at www.digitaltelevision.gov.uk

Licensing Act

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received on amending section 147 of the Licensing Act 2003. [69949]

Mr. Woodward: During the Government's public consultation on "Drinking Responsibly", some trading standards officers expressed the view that it was difficult to secure convictions against corporate bodies under sections 169A and 169B of the Licensing Act 1964. These are the equivalent offence provisions to those provided by sections 146 and 147 of the Licensing Act 2003, which were given effect on 24 November 2005, and which cover the sale of alcohol, and allowing the sale of alcohol, to children.

As a result of these representations, new offence provisions and closure powers relating to the persistent selling of alcohol to children have been included in the Violent Crime Reduction Bill, which is currently being scrutinised by the House of Lords. If the Bill receives Royal Assent, these new provisions would particularly impact on corporate bodies as well as individuals.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will undertake a review of the implications of licensing costs for village halls and not-for-profit entities; and if she will make a statement. [67302]

Mr. Woodward: An Independent Licensing Fees Review Panel was established by the Government in May last year to consider whether fees had been set at the right level for community groups, businesses and local authorities.

The Panel—which is chaired by Sir Les Elton—published its interim findings on 5 December. This identified a number of areas for more detailed work, including further consideration of the impact of the new regime on not-for-profit organisations and village halls. The full interim report can be accessed on my Department's website at:

http://www.culture.gov.uk/alcohol_and_entertainment/monitoring_and_evaluation/ifreview.htm

The Panel is continuing to work closely with all stakeholders in order to gather the evidence that will inform their final report, which is due to be published in the autumn.

London 2012 Olympics

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions have taken place between her Department and the British Olympic Association regarding the funding required to train athletes to Olympic standard for entry into every event at the 2012 Olympic games. [71097]

Mr. Caborn: There have been no specific discussions between the Department and the British Olympic Association (BOA) on this issue, but the Department has discussed this with UK Sport. UK Sport is the Government's lead agency on elite sport and is responsible for funding high performance sport across the United Kingdom.

Lord Moynihan, chairman BOA, did, however, write to the Secretary of State in November 2005 commenting on UK Sport's submission, developed with the support of the BOA, for additional funding to support our Olympic sports and elite athletes to train and compete at the London 2012 games. In addition, the Secretary of State spoke with Lord Moynihan during the Winter Olympics in Turin.

School Sports

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) how much money provided through the School Sports Policy has been allocated to each project; [71104]

(2) how much money was allocated to the School Sports Policy; and how much of that money has been allocated to sports projects. [71105]

Mr. Caborn: Over £459 million has been invested by the Government to support the delivery of the National School Sport Strategy over the three years 2003-04 to 2005-06. The National School Sport Strategy comprises eight individual but interlinked workstrands. The table sets out details of money allocated to these workstrands:

Budget 2003-04 to 2005-06

Workstrand	*£ million*
Specialist Sports Colleges programme	115
School Sport Partnerships*	224*
Professional Development programme*	*This is
Gifted and Talented programme*	the Total
QCA PE and School Sport Investigation*	for these
Swimming strategy*	5 workstrands
Step into Sport programme	12
Club Links programme	10
Total	361

In addition to the money allocated to these eight workstrands, funding was also invested in work to enhance Community Club Development (£60 million between 2003-04 and 2005-06), Coaching (£28 million between 2003-04 and 2005-06) and the Sporting Playgrounds programme (£10 million between 2003-04 and 2004-05). All this work is supporting the National School Sport Strategy, and the delivery of the sports public service agreement target.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many *(a)* individuals and *(b)* organisations have applied for funding through the School Sports Policy in each year since it was set up; and how many of those applications (i) resulted in an award of funding and (ii) were declined. [71106]

Mr. Caborn: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and the Department for Education and Skills, are working together to deliver the National School Sport Strategy. We have allocated funding to a number of strategic partners, which include Sport England, Youth Sport Trust, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, and others, to implement the National Strategy programmes.

Between 2003-04 and 2005-06, 306 applications for funding were received to form School Sport Partnerships. All of these were successful, in some cases following further development work on some of the applications.

DEFENCE

Aircraft

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether all UK Hercules aircraft are fitted with anti-explosive foam. [70970]

Mr. Ingram: Explosion suppressant foam is not currently fitted to RAF Hercules aircraft, though we have made the decision to fit some of the fleet. The first Hercules fitted with explosion suppressant foam will be available for operational deployment within the next few months.

Army Exercises

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many soldiers have *(a)* been killed and *(b)* seriously injured on exercise in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [58984]

Mr. Ingram: While data relating to soldiers who have died or been seriously injured are recorded centrally, it is not possible within these figures to identify those soldiers who were on exercise at the time of the incident.

Body Armour

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether every serviceman in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan has his or her own body armour. [70241]

Mr. Ingram: All personnel deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan are issued with body armour.

Whether they are wearing it at any time will depend on the security situation in the area they are deployed.

C17s

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the annual cost is of the lease of one C17 from the US; and if he will make a statement on the ownership of the four C17s which are being used by the Royal Air Force. [70274]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Procurement Agency leases the four C-17 aircraft from The Boeing Company, who own the aircraft.

Information relating to the cost of the lease is classified as commercial-in-confidence between the MOD and the Contractor and therefore cannot be released.

Defence Information Initiative

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what impact changes to the delivery plan for the Defence Information Initiative will have on the project's time scale and costs. [68381]

Mr. Watson: The roll-out schedule for the Defence Information Infrastructure (Future) (DII(F)) programme was first negotiated during 2004-05 and was re-worked during January 2006. The DII (F) contract was deliberately structured to allow for a level of change as it recognised that the impact of initiatives such as the efficiency review and the Ministry of Defence's own change programme would require a level of flexibility from the DII (F) Deliver Partner, ATLAS Consortium.

MOD and ATLAS are currently discussing the impact of the revised rollout schedule. However, the changes introduced so far are not significant, and we expect that the rollout of the first increment of DII (F) will remain within its financial approval envelope. Both the DII project team and the ATLAS consortium are working hard to meet the originally forecast 'Last User Live' date and are confident that the predicted benefits will be achieved.

The Civilian Level 0 definition reflects all departmental employees including casuals and those not directly funded by the Department such as staff on loan to other government departments or NATO, and staff on career breaks or absent through long term sickness.

Disposal Contractors

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he was first informed of the dispute referred to on 9 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1177W; and what the estimated scale of the Government's potential financial liability was at that time. [67839]

Mr. Ingram: My right hon. Friend the then Secretary of State for Defence was briefed in April 2001. At that time there was insufficient information available to estimate the Department's potential liability.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what contingent liabilities have been set aside by the Department for final settlement in the case of arbitration referred to on 9 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1177W; and where these appear in the Department's appropriation account. [67841]

Mr. Ingram: The total estimated contingent liability for the Department was disclosed in the Department's annual report and accounts for 2003-04. A contingency for the case referred to was included in these accounts. This case was concluded earlier this year, and the settlement is currently confidential between the parties involved; however, it will be reflected in the departmental accounts for 2005-06, which are currently being prepared.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of the staff in his Department is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled, broken down by grade. [69118]

Mr. Watson: The following table shows the total number of MOD civilian staff at 1 April 2006, and the proportion of this number who are male and female by pay band.

The proportion of disabled staff at each pay band is based only on staff who have declared their disability status. Declaration of a disability is voluntary.

Disability status is not available for Royal Fleet Auxiliary or locally engaged civilians. Gender of locally engaged civilians is also not available.

Headcount (1 April 2006)

Responsibility level	*Staff headcount total*	*Male (percentage)*	*Female (percentage)*	*Declared disability (percentage)*
SCS and equivalent	320	90	10	3.3
Grade 6/7	2,790	81	19	3.8
SEO/HEO	17,610	72	28	5.1
EO	13,760	61	39	6.1
AO/AA	28,340	43	57	5.5
Industrial grades	14,810	80	20	6.7
Unknown grade	170	51	49	0.9
Trading Funds	10,870	80	20	4.0
Royal Fleet Auxiliary	2,340	96	4	n/a
Locally Engaged Civilians	16,790	n/a	n/a	n/a
Civilian Level 0	107,800	—	—	—

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men are employed in the Department; what the average pay was for (i) women and (ii) men in the Department in (1) 1997 and (2) 2006; what women's average pay is as a percentage of men's average pay; and how many (A) women and (B) men the Department employed in each of the last five years, broken down by grade. [67789]

Mr. Watson: The following table shows the numbers of permanent, non-industrial Ministry of Defence staff by gross salary band, gender and full-time/part-time status as at 1 April 2006, in both headcount and full-time equivalent terms. Comparable data by salary band for 1997 are not available.

Table 1: Gross pay for non-industrial permanent staff by gender and hours worked

Non-industrial staff

	Headcount								
	Full-time staff			*Part-time staff*[2]			*Full-time equivalent*[1]		
Salary band[2]	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
1 April 2006									
£10,001-£15,000	4,020	5,600	9,620	100	1,180	1,280	4,090	6,360	10,450
£15,001-£20,000	6,650	8,280	14,940	70	1,650	1,720	6,700	9,370	16,070
£20,001-£25,000	6,810	3,890	10,700	60	640	700	6,860	4,320	11,180
£25,001-£30,000	6,550	1,820	8,360	70	370	440	6,600	2,080	8,670
£30,001-£35,000	5,470	920	6,390	40	140	180	5,500	1,020	6,520
£35,001-£40,000	2,560	560	3,120	20	110	130	2,580	630	3,210
£40,001-£45,000	1,060	190	1,260	30	90	120	1,080	260	1,340
£45,001-£50,000	650	90	750	30	80	110	680	160	830
£50,001-£55,000	370	40	410	20	20	40	380	60	440
£55,001-£60,000	220	40	250	10	10	20	220	50	270
£60,001-£65,000	230	40	260	10	10	20	240	40	280
£65,001-£70,000	120	20	150	—	10	10	120	30	160
£70,001-£75,000	60	20	80	10	10	10	60	20	80
£75,001+	130	20	140	10	10	10	130	20	150
Not reported[3]	240	470	710	30	170	210	250	590	850
Total	35,140	22,000	57,150	510	4,500	5,010	35,490	25,000	60,490
Lower quartile salary[4]	18,400	14,700	16,700	16,200	14,400	14,500	18,400	14,700	16,500
Median salary[4]	25,000	18,200	21,900	25,900	17,800	17,900	25,000	18,200	21,400
Upper quartile salary[4]	31,400	22,400	29,400	39,100	23,000	24,100	31,400	22,500	29,400

— denotes numbers less than 5.
[1] Part-time staff are assigned to the salary band corresponding to their full-time equivalent salary.
[2] Salary in this table is gross salary.
[3] The not reported category contains staff whose salary was not available on 1 April, cases where the data held on the system gave anomalous salary results (either very high or very low) and a number of staff who joined part way through the month leading to partial salary detail.
[4] Salary figures are rounded to the nearest 100, and exclude the "Not reported" category.
Notes:
1. Excludes casual, industrial, trading funds, Royal fleet auxiliary and locally engaged civilian staff.
2. All staff numbers are rounded to the nearest 10.

The following table shows permanent staff employed by the Department broken down by responsibility level, full-time/part-time status and gender, in headcount and full-time equivalent terms, for the five years, 1 April 2002 to 1 April 2006 inclusive.

Table 2: Number of non-industrial permanent staff by gender and hours worked non-industrial and industrial staff

Non-industrial and industrial staff

	Headcount								
	Full-time staff			*Part-time staff*			*Full-time equivalent*[1]		
Responsibility level[2]	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
1 April 2006									
All non-industrial staff	35,140	22,000	57,150	510	4,500	5,010	35,490	25,000	60,490
SCS level	280	30	310	—	—	10	280	30	310

Table 2: Number of non-industrial permanent staff by gender and hours worked non-industrial and industrial staff

Non-industrial and industrial staff

	Headcount								
	Full-time staff			*Part-time staff*			*Full-time equivalent*[1]		
Responsibility level[2]	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
Grades 6/7	2,210	440	2,650	40	80	130	2,230	500	2,730
SEO/HEO level	12,440	3,990	16,430	180	840	1,010	12,570	4,610	17,180
EO level	8,340	4,520	12,860	90	750	840	8,400	5,040	13,440
AO/AA level	11,790	12,940	24,730	200	2,820	3,020	11,920	14,750	26,660
Unknown	80	80	160	—	—	—	80	80	160
All industrial staff	11,520	2,310	13,820	110	550	660	11,580	2,660	14,240
Casual staff	470	440	900	60	190	250	500	560	1,060
Trading fund staff	8,530	1,820	10,350	150	360	520	8630	2060	10,700
Royal fleet auxiliary	2,250	90	2,340	—	—	—	2250	90	2,340
Locally engaged civilians	n/a	n/a	13,400	n/a	n/a	3,390	n/a	n/a	15,100
Civilian level 0 total			97,980			9,820			103,930

Non-industrial and industrial staff

	Headcount								
	Full-time staff			*Part-time staff*			*Full-time equivalent*[1]		
Responsibility level[2]	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
1 April 2005									
All non-industrial staff	36,910	24,020	60,930	410	4,030	4,440	37,180	26,670	63,850
SCS level	270	30	300	—	—	—	270	30	300
Grades 6/7	2,150	420	2,570	40	70	110	2,170	470	2,640
SEO/HEO level	12,800	3,960	16,750	140	650	790	12,900	4,420	17,320
EO level	9,080	4,850	13,930	60	640	710	9,120	5,290	14,410
AO/AA level	12,180	14,580	26,750	150	2,650	2,800	12,270	16,260	28,540
Unknown	440	190	630	—	20	20	450	200	640
All industrial staff	11,820	2,480	14,300	110	550	660	11,890	2,830	14,710
Casual staff	480	500	970	40	190	230	500	620	1,120
Trading fund staff	8790	1730	10,520	120	300	420	8860	1920	10,780
Royal fleet auxiliary	n/a	n/a	2,350	n/a	n/a	—	n/a	n/a	2,350
Locally engaged civilians	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	15,660
Civilian level 0 total									108,470

Non-industrial and industrial staff

	Headcount								
	Full-time staff			*Part-time staff*			*Full-time equivalent*[1]		
Responsibility level[2]	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
1 April 2004									
All non-industrial staff	36,680	23,900	60,590	320	3,960	4,280	35,900	26,470	63,370

Non-industrial and industrial staff

	Headcount								
	Full-time staff			*Part-time staff*			*Full-time equivalent*[1]		
Responsibility level[2]	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
SCS level	270	20	290	—	—	—	270	30	290
Grades 6/7	2,080	370	2,450	40	50	80	2,110	400	2,510
SEO/HEO level	12,700	3,640	16,340	90	500	600	12,770	3,990	16,760
EO level	9,210	4,760	13,970	60	610	670	9,250	5,170	14,420
AO/AA level	12,370	15,090	27,460	130	2,790	2,920	12,460	16,870	29,330
Unknown	50	20	70	—	—	—	50	20	70
All industrial staff	12,360	2,580	14,940	120	700	820	12,430	3,020	15,450
Casual staff	440	480	920	40	170	210	460	580	1,040
Trading fund staff	9400	1790	11,190	110	280	390	9470	1970	11,440
Royal fleet auxiliary	n/a	n/a	2,310	n/a	n/a	—	n/a	n/a	2,310
Locally engaged civilians	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	15,430
Civilian level 0 total									109,050

Non-industrial and industrial staff

	Headcount								
	Full-time staff			*Part-time staff*			*Full-time equivalent*[1]		
Responsibility level[2]	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
1 April 2003									
All non-industrial staff	36,580	22,830	59,410	300	4,500	4,800	36,780	25,740	62,510
SCS level	270	20	290	—	—	—	270	20	290
Grades 6/7	2,090	320	2,410	30	40	70	2,100	360	2,460
SEO/HEO level	12,380	3,040	15,410	60	370	420	12,410	3,280	15,700
EO level	9,240	4,350	13,590	60	670	730	9,280	4,800	14,080
AO/AA level	12,240	14,570	26,810	160	3,240	3,390	12,340	16,640	28,980
Unknown	360	530	890	—	170	180	360	640	1,000
All industrial staff	12,300	2,540	14,840	120	770	890	12,370	3,020	15,390
Casual staff	510	570	1,080	40	140	180	530	650	1,190
Trading fund staff	10060	1860	11,930	100	320	430	10130	2070	12,200
Royal fleet auxiliary	n/a	n/a	2,450	n/a	n/a	—	n/a	n/a	2,450
Locally engaged civilians	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	13,840
Civilian level 0 total									107,580

Non-industrial and industrial staff

	Headcount								
	Full-time staff			*Part-time staff*			*Full-time equivalent*[1]		
Responsibility level[2]	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
1 April 2002									
All non-industrial staff	36,560	22,760	59,310	270	4,270	4,540	36,730	25,480	62,210

Non-industrial and industrial staff

	Headcount						*Full-time equivalent*[1]		
	Full-time staff			*Part-time staff*					
Responsibility level[2]	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
SCS level	270	30	290	—	—	—	270	30	300
Grades 6/7	2,050	280	2,330	20	40	70	2,060	300	2,370
SEO/HEO level	12,270	2,850	15,120	50	320	370	12,300	3,070	15,360
EO level	9,560	4,280	13,840	50	660	710	9,590	4,720	14,310
AO/AA level	12,270	15,290	27,560	150	3,240	3,390	12,360	17,330	29,700
Unknown	140	30	170	—	10	10	140	30	180
All industrial staff	14,080	2,810	16,890	120	800	920	14,150	3,300	17,450
Casual staff	600	790	1,390	50	230	270	620	910	1,540
Trading fund staff	10180	2010	12,190	70	290	360	10220	2190	12,410
Royal fleet auxiliary	n/a	n/a	2,370	n/a	n/a	—	n/a	n/a	2,370
Locally engaged civilians	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	14,120
Civilian level 0 total									110,090

— denotes numbers less than 5.

[1] Part-time staff are recorded according to the proportion of full-time hours worked.

[2] These tables show staff in their substantive responsibility level unless on temporary promotion in which case staff are recorded at the higher responsibility level.

Note:

All staff numbers are rounded to the nearest 10.

Fuel Cell Technology

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether there are plans to adapt the UK armed forces underwater detection capabilities better to detect fuel cell vessels. [70778]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has a number of platforms coming into service now and over the next few years that incorporate sensors and technology specifically aimed at the emerging threat of small, quiet submarines, including those using Air Independent Propulsion.

Haslar Hospital

Peter Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions have taken place between his Department and Gosport borough council in relation to planning issues at *(a)* Haslar Hospital and *(b)* other departmental sites at Haslar. [70952]

Mr. Watson *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* No discussions have yet taken place in regard to the future planning options for the sites at either Royal Hospital (RH) Haslar or Fort Blockhouse (the adjacent site). We expect meetings will commence towards the end of this year.

MOD has submitted Circular 18/84 applications to Gosport borough council for the redevelopment of the Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training Centre, at Fort Blockhouse, in support of current operational initiatives. This requires the re-provision of offices, stores and boatshed and the demolition of a number of obsolete buildings. A decision is expected by the end of June.

A further Circular 18/84 application is to be submitted in due course seeking continued permission for the security fence to the rear of Canada and Albert accommodation blocks at RH Haslar.

Telephone Costs

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many minutes of free personal overseas telephone calls officials of the Defence Export Services Organisation are entitled to each week while working abroad; and which budget line covers such expenses. [69673]

Mr. Ingram: Ministry of Defence personnel who are overseas on short business trips can claim a tax-free overnight expenses allowance. This allowance is intended to cover a number of miscellaneous expenses, including a telephone call home. Similarly, where personnel are posted overseas for longer periods of time they receive a cost of living allowance. The allowance reflects the relative costs of a representative basket of goods and services as a means of protecting the spending power of the UK salary in the overseas area. Services include the cost of telephone calls.

Portland PR

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what meetings officials in his Department have had with representatives of the public relations company Portland PR; what contracts Portland PR has with his Department and agencies for which he has responsibility; and what the nature of the contract is in each case. [70135]

Mr. Ingram: While it would incur disproportionate cost to contact every organisation within the Ministry of Defence to determine if any officials have met with Portland PR representatives, I have determined that there have been no dealings with this company by my central Defence Public Relations policy organisation.

We have not found any records of contracts with Portland PR.

RAF Benevolent Trust

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what support his Department has made available to the Royal Air Force Benevolent Trust in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [70197]

Mr. Watson *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* The Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund is a charity which exists to provide assistance to those of the extended Royal Air Force family who need support as a consequence of poverty, sickness, disability, accident, infirmity or other adversity. While the Ministry of Defence does not provide any direct financial support, the Royal Air Force encourages personnel to make voluntary contributions through the "give as you earn" scheme. In addition, many volunteers from Royal Air Force stations and units organise and support fund raising events and collect donations to support the Benevolent Fund.

Until January 2005, the MOD provided support to the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund Development Trust through the provision of manpower, logistics and display assets for events such as the Royal International Air Tattoo. Since January 2005, the newly established Royal Air Force Charitable Trust has taken over the running of such events as the Royal International Air Tattoo.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Assembly Members

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what guidance he has issued to members of the Northern Ireland Assembly on the latest dates by which they are required to provide notice to their staff in the event of salaries and allowances for the Assembly being withdrawn on 25 November 2006. [69265]

Mr. Hain: As the hon. Gentleman will know, I have made clear that should Assembly Members be unable to elect a First Minister, Deputy First Minister and Executive by 24 November, then MLAs' salaries and allowances would be cancelled immediately.

MLAs' staff are, by definition, employed by MLAs themselves. It must therefore be for individual MLAs to decide, with professional advice should they deem it necessary, how best to proceed in terms of each contract of employment. I will remind MLAs of their responsibilities in this area during the summer.

Brownfield Planning

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average percentage of brownfield planning development for new housing has been in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years. [70450]

David Cairns: The average annual rate of brownfield development for new housing in Northern Ireland was 87 per cent. in 2002; 81 per cent. in 2003; and 72 per cent. in 2004. These are the latest years for which information is available.

Causeway Hospital, Coleraine

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many vacancies there are for *(a)* full and *(b)* part-time nursing staff in Causeway Hospital, Coleraine. [70419]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is presented in the following table.

Current nursing staff vacancies by employment status in Causeway Hospital, Coleraine as at 30 April 2006

	Full-time	*Part-time*		*Total*	
	Headcount	*Headcount*	*WTE*[1]	*Headcount*	*WTE*[1]
Qualified nurse vacancies	6	4	3.20	10	9.20
Nurse support staff vacancies	0	2	1.20	2	1.20

[1] Whole-time equivalent.

Source:
Causeway Health and Social Services Trust

Criminal Justice Act

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to implement in Northern Ireland those provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 relating to non-jury trials; and if he will make a statement. [70963]

Mr. Hanson: Sections 43 to 50 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 provide for trials on indictment to take

place without a jury in cases of serious fraud and where there is a suspicion of jury tampering. The provisions extend to Northern Ireland on the face of the Act.

I refer the hon. Lady to the announcement made by the noble Lord, the Attorney-General on 14 March in another place, that the Government's intention is to proceed with these provisions by way of fresh legislation as soon as parliamentary time allows.

At this stage it remains our intention to implement the Criminal Justice Act provisions relating to non-jury trials in line with the introduction of these measures in England and Wales.

Dangerous Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have been charged under the Dangerous Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 in each year since its introduction; and what was the penalty imposed in each case. [68548]

David Cairns: The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development only holds information from 1999 on the number of persons charged in respect of offences committed under the Dangerous Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1991. This is detailed in the following table. Two of the cases were withdrawn at the last moment following the agreement of the owners to destroy the dogs in question. Of the two cases prosecuted, in the first case the penalty was a £100 fine plus £365 costs and the dog ordered to be destroyed. In the second case the penalty was a £250 fine plus £43 costs and the dog ordered to be destroyed.

Persons charged under the Dangerous Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1991

	Number
1999	0
2000	0
2001	0
2002	2
2003	1
2004	1
2005	0

Drink Driving

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* police officers and *(b)* police civilian support staff were convicted of drink driving offences in each of the last five years. [69226]

Paul Goggins: Statistics for the number of police officers convicted of drink driving offences are provided in the table. The Police Service of Northern Ireland do not hold such records for civilian support staff.

Year	Number of Police Officers
2001-02	10
2002-03	14
2003-04	13
2004-05	8
2005-06	12

Note:
These statistics relate to police officers who were off duty at the time of the offence.

Drug Use (Offenders)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of crime in each constituency in Northern Ireland in the last two years involved offenders who were using *(a)* cannabis and *(b)* other drugs; and if he will make a statement. [69652]

Mr. Hain: The Police Service of Northern Ireland do not keep records in a format that would answer this question.

Cannabis continues to be a first drug of choice for drug users in Northern Ireland, and among the treatment services it is the most commonly reported drug. Over the last three years the partner organisations in the Organised Crime Task Force have seized £36 million of illicit drugs and in 2004-05 the value of cannabis seized was £5.2 million. In the period 2005-06 the police increased the number of seizures by between 10 per cent. to 20 per cent. and the number of persons charged with drug offences by 18 per cent. The Government are not complacent to changes taking place in the drug culture and has noted the rise in cocaine use, from a low base.

On 9 May the Government announced the New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs for 2006 to 2011. It contains a series of key aims, one of which is to disrupt the availability of illicit drugs being brought into Northern Ireland. The Government will continue to encourage and financially support a range of projects to tackle offenders who use crime to support their drug use.

Education and Library Boards

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what honorariums have been paid to employees of each education and library board in each of the last five years; and at what total cost in each year. [69742]

Maria Eagle: The following tables show the number and value of honorariums paid by each education and library board to teaching and non-teaching staff over the last five years

Honoraria paid to Teaching and Non-teaching Education and Library Board staff since 2001

BELB

	Number paid (Teaching staff)	Number paid (Non-teaching staff)	Cost (Teaching staff) (£)	Cost (Non-teaching staff) (£)	Total cost (£)
2001-02	92	3	42,459.35	1,621.58	44,080.93
2002-03	49	4	25,003.28	3,156.89	28,160.17
2003-04	59	33	32,283.00	14,347.68	46,630.68

Honoraria paid to Teaching and Non-teaching Education and Library Board staff since 2001

BELB

	Number paid (Teaching staff)	Number paid (Non-teaching staff)	Cost (Teaching staff) (£)	Cost (Non-teaching staff) (£)	Total cost (£)
2004-05	51	5	29,450.00	3,529.33	32,979.33
2005-06	55	4	32,300.00	25,491.63	57,791.63

NEELB

	Number paid (Teaching staff)	Number paid (Non-teaching staff)	Cost (Teaching staff) (£)	Cost (Non-teaching staff) (£)	Total cost (£)
2001-02	60	6	29,525.00	3,075.00	32,600.00
2002-03	68	4	30,124.45	8,040.00	38,164.45
2003-04	101	9	54,636.65	3,370.00	58,006.65
2004-05	131	47	74,395.63	28,225.00	102,620.63
2005-06	104	38	45,170.80	19,105.00	64,275.80

SELB

	Number paid (Teaching staff)	Number paid (Non-teaching staff)	Cost (Teaching staff) (£)	Cost (Non-teaching staff) (£)	Total cost(£)
2001-02	1	24	440.00	36,853.28	37,293.28
2002-03	17	28	1,078.54	13,806.86	14,885.40
2003-04	22	62	5,212.28	39,586.25	44,798.53
2004-05	0	30	0	23,074.09	23,074.09
2005-06	14	67	10,500.00	54,496.99	64,996.99

SEELB

	Number paid (Teaching staff)	Number paid (Non-teaching staff)	Cost (Teaching staff) (£)	Cost (Non-teaching staff) (£)	Total cost (£)
2001-02	63	13	60,100.00	4,354.50	64,454.50
2002-03	73	4	71,498.50	7,752.92	79,251.42
2003-04	91	19	75,548.96	23,267.30	98,816.26
2004-05	74	2	74,652.00	6,914.42	81,566.42
2005-06	38	35	23,846.32	29,391.56	53,237.88

WELB

	Number paid (Teaching staff)	Number paid (Non-teaching staff)	Cost (Teaching staff) (£)	Cost (Non-teaching staff) (£)	Total cost (£)
2001-02	0	28	0	33,659.43	33,659.43
2002-03	0	30	0	53,550.18	53,550.18
2003-04	0	27	0	41,726.32	41,726.32
2004-05	0	19	0	26,330.41	26,330.41
2005-06	2	15	668.05	18,797.52	19,465.57

Farm Animals

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* pigs, *(b)* beef cattle, *(c)* hens, *(d)* sheep, *(e)* dairy cattle and *(f)* calves there were on Northern Ireland farms in March in each of the last four years. [71215]

David Cairns: Accurate information is not known for March. The results of a statistical survey of Northern Ireland agriculture conducted annually in June provide the best available estimate.

Livestock type	2002	2003	2004	Number 2005
Pigs	387,714	433,689	424,058	405,093
Beef cattle	422,667	433,544	427,695	428,997
Broilers (Thousand)	11,273	12,811	15,007	12,526
Other hens (Thousand)	5,139	5,274	5,061	4,622
Sheep	2,324,161	2,241,112	2,225,407	2,145,084
Dairy cattle	297,935	290,145	288,296	290,530
Calves	472,359	471,471	466,718	457,067

Notes:
1. Pigs are defined as breeding and fattening pigs.
2. Beef cattle are defined as cattle over one year old, intended for slaughter.
3. Sheep are defined as breeding and fattening sheep.
4. Dairy cattle are defined as dairy cows and heifers in milk and dairy cows in calf but not in milk.
5. Calves are defined as cattle under one year old.

Farm Subsidies Appeal Panel

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many times the Independent Farm Subsidies Appeal Panel set up by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) has met in the past 12 months; how many decisions have been returned *(a)* partially and *(b)* completely in favour of the farmer; how many times the panel's decision has been overturned by DARD; and what the cost of the panel to DARD has been over the last 12 months. [71151]

Maria Eagle: For ease of reference the figures requested have been presented in the following table.

	Number
Number of times panel has met in the last 12 months	[1]89
Recommendations returned by panel	[2]153
Partially upheld by panel	13
Upheld in full by panel	60
Times panel recommendation overturned by DARD	0

[1] Includes 10 occasions where the panel reconvened. Panel to reconvene to complete review of two cases.
[2] Includes 16 cases still under policy consideration.

It should be noted, the Farm Subsidies Appeal Panel do not make decisions. Their remit is to review subsidy-related decisions against the relevant European and UK legislation and to consider whether the Department's decision is consistent with these rules. The panel is asked to reach a conclusion and make a recommendation to the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development. The Department does not reject the recommendations made by the Independent Panel. The final decision as to whether the panel's recommendation is rejected or accepted rests with the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development.

The Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development did not accept 29 recommendations made by the panel (of these seven were accepted in part).

During the past 12 months, the Independent Panel's cost to the Department was £257,465. This includes panel fees, travel and subsistence and administrative support/secretariat costs.

Fire Rescue Order

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what financial arrangements have been put in place to enable the Northern Ireland Fire Authority to implement outstanding elements of the Fire Rescue Order (2006). [70494]

Paul Goggins: The provisions in the Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 will not have any significant bearing on the associated costs of the Fire and Rescue Service. Government already provides resources through the Revenue Support Grant, taking into account a whole range of fire service functions, including responding to road traffic accidents and community safety. Promoting fire safety, for example, is already funded as a key activity of the service and there will be scope for redeployment of resources through a more strategic and risk-based approach.

Some additional funding has already been provided for the New Dimension major emergencies/ catastrophic incidents programme and a bid for further funding is currently under consideration.

Any further funding requests from the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service, whether arising from the new legislation or otherwise, will be subject to standard businesses case and subsequent scrutiny procedures and, where appropriate, prioritisation of bids against available resources.

Housing Benefit

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the change in the number of households claiming housing benefit has been in each of the last 10 years. [70426]

Mr. Hanson: The number of households claiming housing benefit (HB) over the last 10 years is not available. The table provides the change in the average number of claimants claiming HB in the last 10 financial years.

	Average numbers claiming housing benefit	*Change +/-*
1995-96	139,600	—
1996-97	140,700	+ 1,100
1997-98	137,900	- 2,800
1998-99	136,300	- 1,600
1999-2000	131,900	- 4,400
2000-01	127,200	- 4,700
2001-02	125,000	- 2,200
2002-03	125,602	+ 602
2003-04	126,033	+ 431
2004-05	128,406	+ 2,373
2005-06	129,110	+ 704

Kidney Transplants

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many kidney transplants were carried out under NHS procedures in Northern Ireland in 2005. [70427]

Paul Goggins: There were 30 kidney transplants carried out in Northern Ireland under NHS procedures in 2005.

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Organisations

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how much funding was awarded by the Government to lesbian, gay and bisexual organisations in Northern Ireland in 2004-05; and what percentage of funding awarded to all section 75 groups this represented; [59991]

(2) how much financial support has been allocated for lesbian, gay and bisexual organisations for 2006-07. [59994]

Paul Goggins: £643,413 was awarded to lesbian, gay and bisexual organisations in 2004-05. This is approximately 0.9 per cent. of the amount paid by Government to all organizations in the voluntary and community sector.

£531,600 is so far estimated for allocation to support lesbian, gay and bisexual organisations in 2006-07.

Library Fines

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many fines were imposed for the non-return of borrowed books by each library in Northern Ireland in 2005. [70448]

Maria Eagle: The following numbers of fines were imposed for the non-return of borrowed stock items (mainly books, but also other items such as DVDs or music) in each Northern Ireland library branch in the financial year 2005-06:

BELB

	Number
Andersonstown	1,095
Ardoyne	798
Ballygomartin	34
Ballyhackamore	2,362
Ballymacarrett	420
Belfast Central	9,753
Chichester	2,580
Falls Road	1,311
Finaghy	1,974
Holywood Arches	1,942
Ligoniel	442
Lisburn Road	2,907
Oldpark	165

BELB

	Number
Ormeau	4,331
Sandy Row	269
Shankill	851
Skegoneill	905
Suffolk	1,687
Whiterock	874
Whitewell	109
Woodstock	1,969
Other	175

NEELB

	Number
Antrim	1,295
Ahoghill	89
Ballee	27
Ballycastle	1,309
Ballyclare	2,001
Ballymena Central	6,027
Ballymena Local Studies	0
Ballymoney	2,203
Bellaghy	73
Broughshane	636
Bushmills	128
Carnlough	488
Carrickfergus	3,039
Castlerock	75
Cloughfern	694
Cloughmills	69
Coleraine	3,039
Crumlin	926
Cullybackey	103
Cushendall	814
Draperstown	743
Garvagh	470
Glengormley	3,287
Greenisland	674
Greystone	1,091
Kells and Connor	441
Kilrea	512
Larne	2,865
Maghera	1,531
Magherafelt	2,575
Monkstown	155
Portglenone	877
Portrush	1,072
Portstewart	1,212
Randalstown	1,194
Rathcoole	938
Templepatrick	91
Whitehead	1,089
Other	1,424

SEELB

	Number
Ballynahinch	1,290
Bangor	5,265
Belvoir Park	448
Braniel	412
Carryduff	797
Castlewellan	696
Colin Glen	2,883

SEELB

	Number
Comber	2,123
Cregagh	1,511
Donaghadee	1,273
Downpatrick	4,078
Dundonald	1,499
Dunmurry	533
Gilnahirk	492
Holywood	2,284
Killyleagh	573
Laurelhill	612
Lisburn	4,192
Moira	1,034
Newcastle	3,753
Newtownards	3,629
Newtownbreda	2,109
Portaferry	1,088
Saintfield	949
Tullycarnet	1,234
Other	469

SELB

	Number
Armagh	3,948
Banbridge	2,531
Bessbrook	525
Brownlow	1,365
Coalisland	1,365
Cookstown	3,241
Crossmaglen	704
Dromore	580
Dungannon	4,065
Fivemiletown	555
Gilford	301
Irish and Local Studies	39
Keady	890
Kilkeel	2,117
Lurgan	3,899
Moneymore	204
Moy	355
Newry	5,585
Portadown	3,546
Rathfriland	603
Richhill	710
Tandragee	507
Waringstown	260
Warrenpoint	2,144
Other	1,447

WELB

	Number
Castlederg	674
Creggan	895
Dungiven	768
Enniskillen	2,839
Fintona	252
Irvinestown	1,037
Limavady	1,779
Lisnaskea	974
Londonderry Central	6,024
Newtownstewart	366
Omagh	5,580
Shantallow	1,670

WELB

	Number
Strabane	2,655
Strathfoyle	274
Waterside	2,615
Other	474

Note:
'Other' fines mainly imposed by mobile libraries, but also include a range of other library outlets.

Birth Rates

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the change in the numbers of live births in *(a)* Coleraine and *(b)* Limavady was between 1995 and 2005. [70919]

Mr. Hanson: The following table gives the number of live births registered in Northern Ireland in 1995 and 2005, where the mother was resident in Coleraine or Limavady local government districts.

Local government district	*1995*	*2005*[1]	*Change 1995-2005*
Coleraine	754	589	-165
Limavady	498	452	-46

[1] Provisional data.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the change in the numbers of live births in each district council area in Northern Ireland was between 1975 and 2005. [70920]

Mr. Hanson: The following table gives the number of live births registered in Northern Ireland in 1975 and 2005 by Local Government District of residence of mother.

Number of Live Births[1] Registered in Northern Ireland by Local Government District of Residence of Mother, 1975 and 2005

Local Government District	*1975*	*[2]2005*	*Change 1995-2005*
Antrim	877	703	-174
Ards	954	891	-63
Armagh	847	806	-41
Ballymena	948	793	-155
Ballymoney	351	376	25
Banbridge[3]	363	651	288
Belfast	4,891	3,291	-1,600
Carrickfergus	421	479	58
Castlereagh	695	723	28
Coleraine	730	589	-141
Cookstown	504	476	-28
Craigavon	1,352	1,195	-157
Derry	1,958	1,528	-430
Down	922	799	-123
Dungannon	924	761	-163
Fermanagh	894	732	-162
Larne	441	350	-91
Limavady	570	452	-118
Lisburn	1,331	1,467	136
Magherafelt	565	614	49
Moyle	270	193	-77
Newry and Mourne[3]	1,503	1,403	-100
Newtownabbey	1,246	1,049	-197
North Down	931	822	-109
Omagh	903	682	-221
Strabane	739	503	-236
Northern Ireland	26,130	22,328	-3,802

[1] Live birth figures for 1975 include births for Northern Ireland to non-resident mothers. These births have been assigned to Local Government District where the birth took place.
[2] Provisional data.
[3] Rathfriland ward was moved from Newry and Mourne Local Government District to Banbridge Local Government District between 1992 and 1993. There were 31 births in 2005 to mothers resident in Rathfriland ward. The numbers of births in 2005 in the Banbridge and Newry and Mourne LCD areas as they existed in 1975 are estimated as 620 and 1,434 respectively.

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the birth rate was in each district council in Northern Ireland in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005. [71315]

Mr. Hanson: The table below gives birth rates by Local Government District of residence of mother for births registered in 2004 and 2005 respectively.

Table: Birth rates[1, 2] per 1,000 females aged 15-44 years by Local Government District of residence of mother, 2004 and 2005

Local Government District	*2004*	*2005*[3]
Antrim	71.8	66.8
Ards	57.4	59.2
Armagh	61.9	68.5
Ballymena	63.8	64.7
Ballymoney	67.5	64.0
Banbridge	62.7	69.5
Belfast	54.7	52.5
Carrickfergus	53.2	57.6
Castlereagh	52.9	53.4
Coleraine	57.3	50.2
Cookstown	69.3	65.7
Craigavon	66.6	67.9
Derry	60.7	62.3
Down	66.5	59.2
Dungannon	75.6	73.3
Fermanagh	57.7	61.2
Larne	50.9	56.5
Limavady	58.2	61.5
Lisburn	60.9	60.9
Magherafelt	66.3	69.1
Moyle	61.2	59.7
Newry and Mourne	72.3	71.9
Newtownabbey	60.8	60.9
North Down	56.2	55.1
Omagh	60.4	63.5
Strabane	59.6	61.6
Northern Ireland	60.9	60.9

[1] Birth is defined to be either still or live birth. Pregnancies which resulted in the birth of twins, triplets or other multiple births are counted twice, three times, etc.
[2] Rate per 1,000 females aged 15-44. 2005 mid-year estimates are not yet published; the rate for 2005 is calculated using 2004 mid-year estimates of population.
[3]Provisional Data

Overseas Education

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what programmes his Department has in place to enable young people and students from Northern Ireland to study in the United States. [70447]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Employment and Learning has overall responsibility for the Business Education Initiative (BEI) which aims to provide students with international business and management skills through a one-year placement at a private, church-affiliated university or college in the United States.

The programme is open to pre-final year, full-time EU students studying for a third level (degree/foundation degree/HND) qualification, in any discipline, in a university or college in Northern Ireland. The US colleges and universities waive their normal tuition fees for the students, while the Department pays for costs to bring the students to the USA and provides some further financial support while they are on placement.

Overweight People

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the percentage of *(a)* men and *(b)* women in Northern Ireland who are overweight. [70446]

Paul Goggins: The 1997 Northern Ireland Health and Social Well-being Survey provides the most recent estimate of overweight and obesity levels among adults aged 16+ in Northern Ireland. The survey found that 48 per cent. of men and 32 per cent. of women were overweight, while a further 17 per cent. of men and 20 per cent. of women were obese. When combined, the survey found that 65 per cent. of males and 52 per cent. of females were either overweight or obese.

Physiotherapists

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action he is taking to ensure that *(a)* placements and *(b)* employment opportunities are available for newly-qualified physiotherapists in Northern Ireland who will complete their training in and after 2006. [70943]

Paul Goggins: Placements for undergraduate students are arranged between the university of Ulster, students and health and social services trusts. All graduating physiotherapy students have undertaken the required clinical placement.

Recruitment is the responsibility of individual health and social services trusts, taking into account service needs and available resources. However, at the overall Northern Ireland level, the balance between physiotherapy supply and demand is monitored through regular DHSSPS work force planning reviews. The Department is currently undertaking a major work force planning review for physiotherapy, the results of which will be published later this year.

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate his Department has made of the number of student physiotherapists in Northern Ireland due to graduate in 2006 who are likely to find employment within the NHS. [70944]

Paul Goggins: Recruitment is a matter for individual health and social services trusts taking into account service needs and available resources. However, the Department is currently undertaking a major work force planning review of the physiotherapy work force and the destination of new graduates, vacancy levels and related issues will all form part of that review.

Primary School Teachers

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what the change in the numbers of fully qualified primary school teachers has been in *(a)* the controlled sector and *(b)* the maintained sector in Northern Ireland in each year between 1995 and 2005; [70431]

(2) what the change in the numbers of fully qualified primary school teachers in *(a)* the controlled sector and *(b)* the maintained sector in Northern Ireland was in each year between 1995 and 2005. [71123]

Maria Eagle: The change in the numbers of fully qualified primary school teachers in *(a)* the controlled sector, and *(b)* the maintained sector in Northern Ireland in each year between 1995 and 2005 is detailed as follows:

	School management type		*Differences from previous year*	
	Controlled	*Maintained*	*Controlled*	*Maintained*
1995	4,301	4,332	—	—
1996	4,258	4,315	-43	-17
1997	4,211	4,276	-47	-39
1998	4,116	4,132	-95	-144
1999	4,040	4,063	-76	-69
2000	4,051	3,986	+11	-77
2001	3,994	3,946	-57	-40
2002	4,050	3,910	+56	-36
2003	4,055	3,900	+5	-10
2004	4,038	3,842	-17	-58
2005	3,949	3,734	-89	-108

Note:
Teacher numbers are taken as at October of each of the years in question.

Pupil Behaviour

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on how many occasions police have been called to schools in Northern Ireland to deal with *(a)* drug-related incidents and *(b)* incidents involving violence during 2005. [70466]

Paul Goggins: The number of occasions when police have been called specifically by schools to deal with a drug related or violent incident is not known. However,

according to PSNI records there were 71 drug related offences and 335 violent offences which occurred within the confines of an educational establishment during 2005.

Racial Abuse

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many complaints of racial abuse have been *(a)* investigated and *(b)* upheld in (i) each Department in Northern Ireland and (ii) his Department in each of the last five years. [70490]

Mr. Hanson: The information requested is set out in the tables.

It shows the number of formal internal complaints made by staff in the 11 Northern Ireland Departments, the NIO and their respective agencies.

	2005		2004	
Department	Investigated	Upheld	Investigated	Upheld
DARD	0	n/a	0	n/a
DCAL	0	n/a	0	n/a
DE	0	n/a	0	n/a
DETI	0	n/a	0	n/a
DFP	1	0	0	n/a
DEL	0	n/a	0	n/a
DHSSPS	0	n/a	0	n/a
DOE	0	n/a	0	n/a
DRD	0	n/a	0	n/a
DSD	1	1	0	n/a
OFMDFM	0	n/a	0	n/a
NIO	0	n/a	0	n/a

	2003		2002		2001	
Department	Investigated	Upheld	Investigated	Upheld	Investigated	Upheld
DARD	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
DCAL	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
DE	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
DETI	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
DFP	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
DEL	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
DHSSPS	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
DOE	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
DRD	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
DSD	1	0	0	n/a	0	n/a
OFMDFM	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
NIO	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a

Rates

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what definition his Department uses of a 'site positive' feature in the Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal system used for rates revaluation. [70575]

Mr. Hanson: The definitions of "site positive" features used within the Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal system CAMA are as contained in the table.

Code	Characteristic	Definition
0	None	No positive site characteristic.
1	Sea frontage	Property boundary actually abuts coast (beach/cliff top).
2	Sea view	Substantial view of sea from main accommodation, but property does not abut coast.
3	Sea view limited	Substantial view of sea from main accommodation that is partially blocked by other structures/substantial sea view only visible from limited rooms e.g. bedroom. Property does not abut coast.
4	Water frontage	Property boundary actually abuts water (lough, substantial river).
5	Water view	Substantial view of water from main accommodation, but property does not abut water.
6	Water view limited	Substantial view of water from main accommodation that is partially blocked by other structures/water view only visible from limited rooms e.g. bedroom. Property does not abut water.
7	Other premium view full	Substantial view of feature from main accommodation.
8	Other premium view limited	Partial view of feature from main accommodation or substantial view only visible from limited rooms e.g. bedroom
9	Adjoining parkland	Property abuts well-maintained parkland or stately home e.g. Botanic Gardens, Ormeau Park, Rowallane, Castlewellan Forest Park, Florencecourt, and Stormont Estate.
10	Adjoining golf course	Property abuts golf course.
11	Conservation area	Property located in designated conservation area.
12	Other positive (specify)	Other positive site characteristic.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on what basis water rates will be calculated from April 2007. [70576]

David Cairns: The information is as follows:

Domestic water charges

From April 2007 unmeasured household charges for water and sewerage will be introduced. Both charges will consist of a standing charge (estimated at around £55) and a variable element based on the capital value of each property as determined by the Valuation and Lands Agency (VLA) for the purposes of domestic rating. The Government intend to set the new household charges during the three-year period to 2009-10 to achieve the average level of charges that will apply in England and Wales in 2009-10. There will also be a low-income protection scheme. The Government's broad objective is to ensure that low-income households should not need to spend more than 3 per cent. of their income on water and sewerage charges. To achieve this a new affordability tariff will be available for those households which are eligible. This tariff will be based on income and will be set at a level equivalent to 3 per cent. of the single person's pension credit guarantee as updated by Parliament each year. Additional protection in the form of lower caps will be set for those with properties valued at less than £100,000.

As many as 200,000 households (30 per cent. of all households) in Northern Ireland who presently qualify for rate rebate, housing benefit or the new Northern Ireland Rate Relief Scheme should benefit from this scheme. The affordability tariff will also extend to all 16 to 17-year-old householders and to children leaving care up to the age of 21.

The new charges will be phased in over a three-year period, with households paying one-third of the full charge in 2007-08, two-thirds in 2008-09 and the full amount in 2009-10. The changes to the non-domestic regime will be introduced on the same basis.

Also from April 2007, meters will be available to pensioner households who apply. Meters will also be installed in all new properties and first time connections. Where meters are installed, both water and sewerage charges (where appropriate) will consist of a standing charge and a variable element based on consumption as registered on the water meter. Those households receiving a meter bill will pay a standing charge similar to that of unmeasured householders.

This approach to metering will be subject to a review after two years when the extension of the metering option to further groups will be considered.

Non-domestic water charges

Metered customers

Charges will continue to be made up of a standing charge (currently around £50) and a volumetric charge based on the volume of water consumed. All metered customers connected to the public sewer will receive a new sewerage bill of around the same magnitude as their new water bill (except in the case of trade effluent customers).

Unmeasured customers

Water Service is undertaking a programme of extending metering more widely throughout the non-domestic sector. However for those non-domestic customers who remain on an unmeasured supply, water and sewerage charges will both be made up of a standing charge (at a similar level to unmeasured domestic standing charges) plus a variable element based on the rateable value of the premises.

Trade Effluent Charges

Trade effluent charges will be extended to all businesses which discharge trade effluent. The calculation of these charges will continue to be on the basis of the Mogden formula and will be brought fully into line with practice in GB.

Road Traffic Offences

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people lost their driving licences in Northern Ireland as a result of being convicted of road traffic offences in each year between 1995 and 2005. [69186]

David Cairns: For previous years the information required could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. However, since 1 May 2005 Driver Vehicle Licensing Northern Ireland (DVLNI) has recorded 7,083 disqualifications and at the 5 May the total number of disqualified drivers recorded on the driver licensing system was 16,386.

Schools

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average amount of funding received by *(a)* integrated schools and *(b)* other schools in Northern Ireland has been for each of the last 10 years. [67070]

Maria Eagle: The following table sets out details of the funding for integrated and other schools in Northern Ireland for the last 10 years. It shows average recurrent funding per school in each year and includes amounts made available under Local Management of Schools Formulae (allocated largely on a per pupil basis) and funds held by Boards and the Department which are distributed to schools in the course of the year to meet teacher substitution and other costs funded centrally by funding authorities. The figures exclude funding for special schools and centrally held resources, such as home-to-school transport, school meals and central administration, which are not attributable to individual schools.

Integrated schools (controlled and grant maintained)

	Number of schools	*Total funding (£)*	*Average spend (£)*
1995-96	23	11,997,360	521,624
1996-97	31	16,772,193	541,038
1997-98	35	21,289,217	608,263
1998-99	40	29,302,465	732,562
1999-2000	43	36,451,764	847,715
2000-01	44	41,834,154	950,776
2001-02	45	46,430,575	1,031,791
2002-03	47	51,151,827	1,088,337
2003-04	50	57,661,816	1,153,236
2004-05	55	61,656,777	1,121,032

All other grant-aided schools

	Number of schools	*Total funding (£)*	*Average spend (£)*
1995-96	1,229	687,672,925	559,539
1996-97	1,222	711,873,610	582,548
1997-98	1,218	727,160,684	597,012
1998-99	1,216	752,664,097	618,967
1999-2000	1,205	795,973,358	660,559
2000-01	1,204	868,617,464	721,443
2001-02	1,200	947,572,220	789,644
2002-03	1,188	977,568,557	822,869
2003-04	1,187	1,031,412,262	868,924
2004-05	1,178	1,043,009,132	885,407

Skin Cancer

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the change in the number of diagnoses of skin cancer has been in Northern Ireland in each of the last ten years. [70428]

Paul Goggins: The following tables detail the number of incidences of Malignant Melanoma of the skin (ICD-10 C43), Non-melanoma skin cancer (ICD-10 C44) and all skin cancers (ICD-10 C43-C44) in Northern Ireland between 1994 and 2003.

Malignant Melanoma of the skin (ICD-10 C43)

	Year of diagnosis									
	1994	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Incident cases	178	169	175	159	177	179	187	215	245	208
Change		-9	+6	-16	+18	+2	+8	+28	+30	-37

Non-Melanoma Skin Cancer (ICD-10 C44)

	Year of diagnosis									
	1994	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Incident cases	2,093	2,054	2,234	2,196	2,174	2,261	2,213	2,157	2,377	2,414
Change		-39	+180	-38	-22	+87	-48	-56	+220	+37

All Skin Cancers (ICD-10 C43 and C44)

	Year of diagnosis									
	1994	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Incident cases	2,271	2,223	2,409	2,355	2,351	2,440	2,400	2,372	2,622	2,622
Change		-48	+186	-54	-4	+89	-40	-28	+250	0

This information has been provided by the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry and is the most up to date currently available.

Somme Commemorations

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether a Minister from his Department will attend the Somme commemorations in France in the summer of 2006. [70449]

Mr. Hain: As in previous years, a Minister from the Northern Ireland Office will be attending the Somme commemorations in France this year. A Minister will also lay a wreath at the Somme service at Belfast City Hall.

Special Needs

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children in Northern Ireland were assessed as having special needs in *(a)* 1995 and *(b)* 2005. [70437]

Maria Eagle: The number of children with special educational needs at schools in Northern Ireland in 2005-06 is 53,699. The total number of children with special educational needs is not available for 1995-96. However, the number of children with a statement of special educational needs in 1995-96 was 5,718. The number of children with a statement of special educational needs in 2005-06 is 11,968.

Teachers Pay and Pensions Unit

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people are employed in the Teachers Pay and Pensions Unit; and what the implications are for the Unit of the Review of Public Administration. [70946]

Maria Eagle: The Department of Education's Teachers Pay and Pensions Branch employs 124 people. The effect that the Review of Public Administration (RPA) will have on this Branch has yet to be determined. The RPA Consultation document of March 2006 proposed that, generally, DE should no longer undertake the direct delivery of services and made explicit mention of the Department's teachers pay and pensions functions as a part of DE likely to be affected by this proposal. Following on from this, and as announced by the Under-Secretary of State for communities and local government, my hon. Friend the Member for Basildon (Angela E. Smith) in her statement of 22 November 2005, the Department has conducted an Internal Review to establish which of the functions currently performed within the Department would transfer to the Education and Skills Authority, to be established under the RPA in 2008. This review covers all of the Department's current functions. The Review is still going on. The implications of the RPA for DE staff, including Teachers Pay and Pensions Branch, will be made clear when it reports.

Waste Transfers

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to prevent waste from the Irish Republic being transferred to Northern Ireland. [70444]

David Cairns: The Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) of the Department of the Environment has formed a dedicated Environmental Crime Team to enforce serious breaches of waste legislation, including the illegal transportation and deposition of waste from the Republic of Ireland (ROI) to Northern Ireland (NI).

The legitimate transfer of non-green listed waste is limited, and strictly controlled under the Transfrontier Shipment of Waste Regulations 1994.

EHS sits on a number of cross-border groups, set up to improve communication, intelligence sharing and effective measures to reduce illegal waste disposal in NI.

EHS Officials have given evidence in ROI courts in order to assist the ROI's Environmental Protection Agency in taking action against offenders.

EHS and the PSNI have carried out a large-scale joint operation which has resulted in the removal of a major illegal waste operator from the activity. As a result, court proceedings are expected later this year.

EHS has recently secured its first conviction in Crown court against landowners who were running an illegal landfill site to receive ROI waste in Fermanagh. This case has also been referred to the Assets Recovery Agency. The possibility of remediation costs being awarded to EHS will also be explored. The Fermanagh case is the first example of a prosecution case involving environmental offences being heard at Crown court in NI. It represents a major step in achieving a wider recognition of the seriousness of waste crime.

Wind Farm Proposals (Tunes Plateau)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1879W, on wind farm proposals (Tunes Plateau), whether an application *(a)* has been submitted and *(b)* is in the process of being submitted. [70445]

Maria Eagle: I can confirm that there has been no change in the position reported in the answer of 23 January 2006. No application has yet been made in respect of the proposed development at Tunes Plateau and I am not aware of the developers' timescale for submitting such an application.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Belarus

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations she has made to her Belarussian counterpart on the arrest and imprisonment of opposition leader Mr. Milinkevich; and if she will make a statement. [68384]

Margaret Beckett: Based on the 1997 General Affairs Council Conclusions, the EU suspended ministerial and high-level contacts with Belarus, while offering dialogue and assistance if Belarus addressed reform. Neither my right hon. Friend the Member for Blackburn (Mr. Straw) then Foreign Secretary or my right hon. Friend the Member for then Minister for Europe Parsley and Renfrewshire, South (Mr. Alexander) have therefore made representations direct to their respective counterparts. However, my right hon. Friend the then Minister for Europe made the following statement on Friday 28 April on behalf of the Government:

"I wholeheartedly condemn this action against people who were trying to exercise legitimate rights of freedom of assembly and expression. Once again the Belarusian authorities have demonstrated their lack of tolerance, respect for their people, and adherence to democratic standards.

In line with the statements of the EU Presidency and colleagues in EU member states, I call on the Belarusian authorities to release immediately Mr Milinkevich, those imprisoned with him and all other political detainees imprisoned following the flawed presidential election on 19 March".

Burma

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what her assessment is of the likelihood of restored relations between Burma and North Korea resulting in Pyongyang becoming one of Burma's suppliers of weapons; and if she will make a statement. [68198]

Margaret Beckett: We understand the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Burmese Government have an existing military and trade relationship which predates the possible establishment of diplomatic relations. The Burmese military purchases weapons from a number of countries. We would be concerned if the DPRK sought to increase its sales of weapons to Burma.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of whether Burma has agreed to restore diplomatic ties with North Korea; and if she will make a statement. [68199]

Margaret Beckett: Neither the Burmese government nor the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has made an official statement about the resumption of diplomatic relations, but we are aware of credible media reports to this effect. It is too early to assess what the impact would be, if any, on contacts between the two countries. Burma is currently the only Association of South East Asian Nations country which does not have diplomatic relations with the DPRK.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on how many occasions the UK Government have requested from the Burmese military authorities direct access to Aung San Suu Kyi since her detention in May 2003; what the results were of each such request; and if she will make a statement. [68200]

Margaret Beckett: In 2003 and 2004, our embassy in Rangoon sent five official notes formally requesting the Burmese Government to transmit a request to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi for our ambassador to meet her. This was at a time when the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) claimed she was not under detention but inaccessible "for security reasons". No official response was forthcoming, but when pressed, Burmese officials claimed that Aung San Suu Kyi had not agreed to a meeting. We believe that the requests were not, in fact, submitted to her. The last formal written request to meet Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was made on 21 September 2004. Again, our embassy was orally informed that a meeting would not be possible. At the end of November 2004, the SPDC clarified that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi had been put under house arrest, citing Section 10(b) of the 1975 State Protection Law. After the SPDC confirmed that

she is, in fact, in detention, our embassy has not sought consular access to her, since she is not a British citizen. However, we continue to press for her release and the release of all political prisoners in Burma.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) if she will *(a)* raise the issue of the current Burmese military offensives in Karen state at the UN Security Council and *(b)* lobby for Security Council resolutions (i) condemning atrocities by the Burmese military against the Karen, Karenni and Shan people and (ii) imposing a global (A) arms and (B) investment embargo on Burma; [71158]

(2) what representations she has made to Burma's military regime following the Burmese army's military offensive in western and northern Karen state; what reference was made during those representations to *(a)* the killing of Karen civilians and *(b)* the displacement of people from their homes; and if she will make a statement; [71159]

(3) what steps she *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take towards preventing the actions of the Burmese military from causing humanitarian problems in eastern Burma. [71176]

Mr. McCartney: We remain deeply concerned about the political and human rights situation in Burma, including the plight of ethnic groups such as the Karen, Karenni and Shan.

We condemn the attacks carried out by the Burmese army on civilians in northern and western Karen State. We understand that these attacks have resulted in a significant number of internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees on the Thai/Burma border. The EU issued a statement on 3 May expressing its concern about these recent attacks. The statement was sent to the Burmese Ministries of Information and Foreign Affairs.

The statement can be found on the EU website at: http://www.eu2006.at/en/News/CFSP_Statements/May/0305Myanmar.html?null

The UK, in response to the humanitarian problems caused by the ongoing conflict in Burma, provides support for IDPs through the International Committee of the Red Cross and for refugees through the Thai Burma Border Consortium.

A global arms and investment embargo can only be imposed on a state under a Chapter VII Resolution of the UN Security Council. At present there is no agreement within the Security Council, including among the Permanent Members, to add Burma to the Council's formal agenda, which is a pre-requisite for adopting such a resolution. Our UN mission in New York has regular discussions with the UN and Security Council partners on Burma.

Consultants

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will list the companies which were paid consultancy fees by her Department in 2005-06; how much each was paid; and what each of the companies was used to accomplish. [69697]

Margaret Beckett: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply my right hon. Friend the then Foreign Secretary (Jack Straw) gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Mitchell) on 25 May 2005, *Official Report*, column 134W.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many people in her Department have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* dismissed for (i) inappropriate use of the internet while at work and (ii) using work telephones to access premium rate numbers in each of the last five years. [67975]

Margaret Beckett: Breaches of IT policy (inappropriate Internet use and misuse of IT systems) have been monitored periodically since April 2003. This table shows the number of staff who have been disciplined in line with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) Misconduct Procedure. A copy of the procedure is in the Library of the House.

	Number of staff	
	disciplined	*dismissed*
2003	72	1
2004	36	0
2005	58	0
2006 (to date)	0	0

No staff have been disciplined or dismissed for misuse of premium rate numbers. Staff are told about the FCO's policy on use of emails and the internet when they join the FCO and are reminded about the policy at regular intervals through office notices circulated to all staff (most recently in June 2005).

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what percentage of the staff in her Department is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled, broken down by grade. [69078]

Margaret Beckett: The information requested, for Foreign and Commonwealth Office UK based civil servants, as of 1 April 2006 is shown in the following table:

Responsibility level	*Male*	*Female*	*Percentage Declared disabled*
SCS level	83.6	16.4	1.6
Grade 6/7	69.4	30.6	2.4
SEO/HEO	66.6	33.4	2.4
EO	48.0	52.0	2.9
AO/AA	43.5	56.5	5.1

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what opportunities exist for people to work beyond retirement age in her Department. [69076]

Margaret Beckett: Opportunities arise on an ad hoc basis. In normal circumstances we do not expect

members of staff to work beyond their normal retirement age. There is provision in our retirement policy for exceptional circumstances where we could agree to re-employing a member of staff at home. For example, there might be operational reasons why we needed to re-employ someone with specialist skills. Normal retirement age for Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) staff is 60 and it is assumed that staff will want to retire at 60 unless they notify the FCO to the contrary six months in advance. However, staff in Band A (clerical or secretarial officers) can choose to retire between the ages of 60 and 65 and staff in Bands B to D (junior and middle managers) between 60 and 63.

Ethiopia

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken by her Department with the government of Ethiopia to improve prison conditions and to monitor the treatment of prisoners. [70000]

Mr. McCartney: The UK and other donors have visited a number of prisons in Ethiopia to monitor conditions and treatment of prisoners, and have raised our concerns with government officials. Our embassy in Addis Ababa, along with other donors, is supporting projects with the government and local non-governmental organisations to try to improve conditions for prisoners.

In 2005-06 the embassy funded the construction of a dormitory in Kaliti prison, Addis Ababa, for 130 female prisoners. The embassy also funded the construction of a biogas digester, dry pit latrines and shower rooms to improve conditions in Metekel prison in Beneshangul regional state.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations she has received about the trial of prisoners of conscience for treason in Ethiopia. [70001]

Mr. McCartney: We have received numerous representations from hon. Members, Members of the European Union Parliament, the public and non-governmental organisations about the trial of Coalition for Unity and Democracy opposition leaders, media and civil society representatives charged with offences after the unrest that followed the elections in Ethiopia last year. Some have been charged with treason.

We continue to raise our concerns with the Government of Ethiopia at every suitable opportunity.

EU Presidency

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2846W, on the EU Presidency, if she will list the small gifts commissioned. [68743]

Mr. Hoon: Mugs, umbrellas, bags, keyrings, pocket size clocks and radios, watches and logoed desk items usually provided as part of a marketing campaign.

FCO Services

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* administrative and *(b)* financial changes were required to make FCO Services an executive agency, with particular reference to (i) use of consultants in the process as part of this change and (ii) increases in pay grades of key personnel. [68503]

Margaret Beckett: My right. hon. Friend, the then Foreign Secretary issued a Written Ministerial Statement on 20 March 2006 *Official Report*, columns 5-6WS, announcing that Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Services would become an Executive Agency (EA) of the FCO on 1 April 2006. FCO Services' move to EA status is aimed at achieving best value for money both for the FCO and ultimately for the taxpayer.

In order to take forward the administrative and financial changes which were necessary, a project team of FCO and FCO Services staff was set up, supported by a small team of three professional consultants.

The administrative changes have been set out in the Framework Document, a copy of which has been placed in the Library of the House and I will send a copy to the hon. Member. The financial changes have involved strengthening the FCO Services' Finance team and modifying the FCO's financial management system to enable a proper separation of the Agency's accounts. There have been no increases to the pay grades of key personnel.

Immigration Authorities (Canada)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make representations to the Canadian embassy regarding the treatment by the Canadian authorities of a Parkinson's disease sufferer from Omagh accused of being a drug addict and returned home following his arrival in Canada from Northern Ireland. [71124]

Mr. McCartney *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* With the limited information provided, we are unable to make representations at this stage. If the hon. Member wishes to provide further details of the incident in writing, we will consider taking appropriate action.

International Arms Trade Treaty

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions she has had with *(a)* the Prime Minister and *(b)* colleagues in the Department of Trade and Industry on a strategy for progress on the International Arms Trade Treaty. [69671]

Mr. McCartney: There are ongoing discussions on the initiative for an international treaty on the trade in all conventional arms including with my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, all interested Government Departments, Industry and civil society. The commitment to work to secure such a treaty was a pledge in the Labour Party's 2005 General Election manifesto.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discounts are available in relation to hotel accommodation used by *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in her Department. [69073]

Margaret Beckett: Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) posts overseas often are able to negotiate special rates with hotels for visitors on official business. Full details of the rates available are set out in the FCO document "Worldwide Subsistence Rates", a copy of which will be sent to the hon. Member and also placed in the Library of the House.

In the UK, Officers undertaking pre-posting training in London can take advantage of corporate rates at a number of central London hotels. A list of these hotels will be sent to the hon. Member and a copy placed in the Library of the House.

Montenegro

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions she has had with his EU counterparts on the forthcoming referendum on Montenegrin independence; and if she will make a statement. [68213]

Margaret Beckett: On 27 February the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) discussed the referendum on Montenegrin independence and issued conclusions. The EU has made clear that the referendum, scheduled for 21 May, must be held according to the terms of the Constitutional Charter of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro and subsequent legislation, and that the whole process needs to be transparent, consensual and democratic. The conclusions of the 27 February GAERC can be found at: www.consilium.europa.eu.

Pakistan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what her policy is on Pakistan's application to join the UN Human Rights Council; and if she will take steps to ensure that Pakistan shows clear progress in implementing international human rights standards, especially in relation to the treatment of women and religious minorities, before its membership is approved. [70902]

Mr. McCartney: Pakistan was elected to the UN Human Rights Council on 9 May, by 149 votes cast in secret ballot, for a term of two years. All members of the Council are expected to uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights, to co-operate fully with the Council, and to be reviewed under the universal periodic review mechanism during their term of membership. We expect all members to take seriously the important responsibility they have for the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide, as the UK has committed to do itself. The UK has, and will continue to have, a regular dialogue with Pakistan on its human rights obligations.

Tibet

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps she is taking to ensure that human rights abuses of Tibetan people are raised by the newly-elected UN Human Rights Council. [70969]

Mr. McCartney: The Government are very concerned about human rights in Tibet. We regularly raise these concerns with the Chinese Government, through the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue, ministerial contact and EU mechanisms. With uncertainty over the format of the first meeting of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) in June, we do not yet know what issues will be raised. Given the election of China to the HRC on 9 May, China is likely to resist any moves to raise Tibet at the HRC. We will continue to look for appropriate opportunities to raise our concerns with the Chinese authorities.

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps she plans to take to raise the human rights of the Tibetan people with the Government of China. [70982]

Mr. McCartney: The Government regularly raises human rights in Tibet with the Chinese Government, including through the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue, ministerial contacts and EU mechanisms. My hon. Friend, the then Minister of State for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs, the Member for Dudley, South (Ian Pearson) raised human rights in Tibet with Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Yesui on 7 April. Tibetan individual cases of concern will be raised with the Chinese Government at the next rounds of the UK- and EU-China Human Rights Dialogues later this year. We will continue to raise human rights in Tibet at every appropriate opportunity.

Visas

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what the average time was that an applicant for a visa to the UK waited for a reply at *(a)* Amman, Jordan and *(b)* other UK embassies in the Middle East in the latest period for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement; [67356]

(2) how many visas to the UK have been issued in Amman, Jordan *(a)* within (i) 24 hours and (ii) seven days of application and *(b)* more than seven days after

application in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [67357]

Dr. Howells: UKvisas does not hold statistics on average time scale for reply to visa applications. Visa sections such as that in Amman operate to public service agreement (PSA) targets, which indicate the length of time within which a visa section should aim to resolve an application (issue, refuse, defer or refer for further information). We do not hold these statistics for only those applications which led to a visa being issued. Statistics are compiled and are made publicly available on the UKvisas website to illustrate the performance of individual visa sections against these targets. They may be found at www.ukvisas.gov.uk—'Entry Clearance: facts and figures'.

The Visa Section in Amman has met all of these targets in the last five years.

The targets since April 2005 are as follows:

PSA 1—90 per cent. of straightforward non-settlement visa applications to be processed and available for return to the applicant within 24 hours from the date of receipt by a visa section of the application and all supporting documents including the fee.

PSA 2—90 per cent. of non-settlement applications requiring further inquiries or interview to be decided within 15 working days from the date of receipt by a visa section of the application and all supporting documents including the fee.

PSA 3—90 per cent. of applicants for settlement visas to be interviewed within target times. For all visa sections in the Middle East this is 12 weeks.

We are currently processing statistics for 2005-06 and expect to publish them in June.

At our embassies and consulates in the Middle East, all visa sections met their targets in the last period for which figures are available (financial year April 2004 to March 2005) except for those in Damascus, Jerusalem and Riyadh where some, but not all of the targets, were achieved.

Prior to April 2005, PSA targets were measured as follows:

PSA Tier 1 and 2—90 per cent. of straightforward non-settlement applications to be resolved within 24 hours.

PSA Tier 3—Average waiting time for first interview should be not more than 10 working days.

PSA Tier 4—Average waiting time for settlement interview should not be more than three months.

Statistics for our embassies and consulates in the Middle East for 2004-05 are as follows:

			PSA targets (financial year 2004-05)		
	Total applications received	*Total visas issued*	*PSA Tier 1 and 2 (percentage)*	*PSA Tier 3 (average wait in days)*	*PSA 3 (average wait in months)*
Amman	17,435	13,717	[1]106.4	0	0.0
Beirut	9,762	8,932	98.1	0	0.0
Damascus	6,629	1,091	49.4	12	2.5
Jerusalem	1,959	1,689	89.5	0.5	0.5
Tel Aviv	2,857	2,688	94.7	0	0.0
Abu Dhabi	22,231	20,008	100	1	0.1
Bahrain	11,156	10,722	95.3	10	0.5
Doha	11,892	11,625	99.5	1	0.1
Dubai	37,252	35,234	93.8	0	0.0
Jeddah	19,250	18,179	99.8	2	0.2
Kuwait	42,730	40,932	99.8	10	0.5
Muscat	10,296	9,729	94.9	4	0.1
Riyadh	28,261	27,086	85.0	2	0.2
Sana'a	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Tehran	36,974	27,977	90.5	0	0.8

[1] This apparent statistical anomaly is most likely to be a result of applications being carried forward from one year to the next)
[2] Statistics unavailable

The statistics for Amman for the previous three years are as follows:

			PSA targets (prior to 2005-06)		
	Total applications received	*Total visas issued*	*PSA Tiers 1 and 2 (percentage)*	*PSA Tier 3 (average waiting time in days)*	*PSA Tier 4 (Average waiting time in months)*
2000[1]	10,114	8,452	91	0.25	1
2001-02	10,227	8,475	90	0.37	0.5
2002-03	10,899	9,793	100	6	0.9
2003-04	13,096	12,284	100	10.5	0.7

[1] Prior to 2001-02, statistics were published by calendar year

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 4 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1811W, on visas, if she will define the circumstances under which a visa application would not be straightforward non-settlement; and if she will make a statement. [70471]

Dr. Howells: Straightforward entry clearance applications are defined as those when the decision to issue can be made based on the information immediately available to the Entry Clearance Officer. Non-straightforward applications are those where the Entry Clearance Officer determines that further enquiries need to be made. Non-settlement applications are those categories of entry clearance other than those where the stated purpose of the application is for the applicant to settle in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 4 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1809W, on visas, (1) what procedures are followed when an applicant for a visa to enter the UK declares they have been refused protection by the United Nations Commissioner for Refugees; [70732]

(2) what procedures are followed when an applicant for a visa to enter the UK declares they have been refused entry by other countries; and if she will make a statement. [70736]

Dr. Howells: All applications for entry clearance to the United Kingdom are considered on a case-by-case basis under the Immigration Rules. Information on previous refusal of entry by other countries or denial of refugee status by the United Nations High

Commissioner for Refugees will be relevant and will be taken into consideration when a decision on entry clearance is being made.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what her policy is on the issuing of visas to enter the UK to individuals who were closely associated with the previous regime in Iraq. [70739]

Dr. Howells: All applications are assessed on their individual merits and applicants must show that they meet the requirements of the Immigration Rules. Officials will check existing records for all applications and take any information held into consideration when making a decision on the entry clearance application. There is provision in the Immigration Rules for refusal on the grounds that an applicant would be considered not conducive to the public good. The degree to which an individual was associated with the former regime in Iraq could be relevant to this.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Arrest Warrants

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many arrest warrants are outstanding for *(a)* non-payment of fines and *(b)* breaching the conditions of a community service order. [69731]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

In March 2006 (the last month for which data are available for England and Wales) there were 6,904 outstanding warrants issued for breaching the conditions of a community service order. Information on the number of outstanding arrest warrants for non-payment of fines is not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Asylum/Immigration

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions he has had with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees on the safe return of failed asylum seekers. [70113]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) is in frequent discussion with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on a wide range of issues that relate to the position of refugees and asylum seekers (including failed asylum seekers).

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the practice started whereby adult children making representations on immigration-related matters on behalf of their parents through hon. Members are no longer accepted unless the parents themselves have signed a letter authorising it. [70320]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 12 May 2006]:* The Secretary of State is required by statute to ensure that an individual's personal information is not unlawfully disclosed to a third party. However, it is not the policy of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) to routinely refuse to provide information to a Member in the circumstances which my hon. Friend has described and each request is considered on its own merits.

Card Durability Survey

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer to Question No. 19869, if he will publish the results of the card durability survey. [23089]

Joan Ryan: The results of the Smartcard Durability Study are available on the Identity and Passport Service website: http://www.identitycards.gov.uk/working-suppliers-publications.asp.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will answer the letter to him dated 24 March from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mrs. S. Akhtar. [67487]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate replied to the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton on 2 May 2006.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will answer the letter to him dated 13 March from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Dr. S. Brooskol. [67488]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton on 28 April 2006.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will answer the letter to him dated 13 March from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. Earl Anthony Clarke. [67489]

John Reid: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 9 May 2006.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will answer the letter to him dated 6 March from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mr. Khalid Rashid Malik. [67490]

John Reid: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate replied to my right hon. Friend on 2 May 2006.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter to his predecessor dated 27 March from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mrs. Asma Asad. [69961]

Mr. McNulty: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 11 May 2006.

Deportation

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* reports he has received and *(b)* assessment he has made of the treatment of Mr. Arif Dar after deportation to Pakistan; and what the evidential basis was for the assurances given to the hon. Member for Bootle as to Mr. Dar's safety. [70763]

Mr. McNulty: Updated advice on the situation in Pakistan was received from the Country of Origin Information Service (COIS), an official government unit which specialises in obtaining country information. COIS is regularly approached for advice by the United Kingdom Immigration Service to assist in the removal process.

There is no evidence to suggest that the alleged treatment that Mr. Dar has received since his return to Pakistan is due to his removal from the UK. We do not routinely monitor the treatment of returnees to any country, we would not remove them if we considered that they were likely to suffer persecution on their return.

Any assurances given regarding this case were based on the up to date information received from COIS concerning Pakistan and the objective opinion of the judiciary who joined the Home Office in believing that Mr. Dar was not likely to suffer persecution should he be returned to Pakistan.

Police

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* full-time police officers and *(b)* other employees of Cambridgeshire Constabulary have taken early retirement in each year since 1997. [69048]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Fraser: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the likely impact of a merger of the Norfolk constabulary with other forces in terms of *(a)* police officer and staff redundancies, *(b)* computer systems, *(c)* rebranding of uniforms and stationery and *(d)* officer relocation. [38861]

Mr. Byrne: Options involving Norfolk police force have been rigorously assessed. The options have been assessed for operational and financial viability, which includes IT changes. The case for amalgamation of Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire police forces can be found on the Home Office website at http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/police-reform/Force-restructuring.

Police Officer and staff matters will be an issue for any new force and authority.

Mr. Fraser: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with members of the Norfolk constabulary and the Norfolk police authority regarding the possible creation of strategic forces in the Eastern region. [38864]

Mr. Byrne: Following the former Home Secretary's letter dated 22 September 2005 inviting forces and authorities to develop options for changes Norfolk police force and authority;

(i) In early November 2005 the Home Secretary provided feedback to the initial short list of options developed by the force and authority.

(ii) The Home Secretary met with Norfolk constabulary's chief and chair on 20 March to discuss the findings of assessments undertaken on its Business Case submitted in December 2005.

Norfolk police authority wrote to the Home Secretary on 11 April 2006 requesting voluntary merger with Suffolk and Cambridgeshire police forces.

Mr. Fraser: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he has taken to ensure that the Norfolk Constabulary undertakes consultation with members of the public in Norfolk in relation to proposals to merge the constabulary with other police forces; and whether he has made additional funding available to the constabulary for this purpose. [38867]

Mr. Byrne: When inviting forces and authorities to develop options for change in September 2005, the former Home Secretary requested that they consult and engage all relevant local stakeholders, including local communities, within existing budgets.

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* warranted officers and *(b)* special constables there are in Waverley borough council; and if he will make a statement. [69559]

Mr. Byrne: Statistics by constituency are not collected centrally. Information by Basic Command Units (BCUs) where Waverley and Guildford form part of the West Surrey BCU, is available. As at 31 March 2005, there were 338 full-time equivalent police officers (including those officers on career breaks or maternity/paternity leave) and 61 (headcount) special constables.

Deployment of police officers in Surrey to basic command units is an operational matter for the Chief Constable.

Secured by Design

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures his Department is adopting to promote the Secured by Design initiative. [69370]

Mr. Byrne: The Home Office supports the Secured By Design initiative which promotes a design-centred approach to crime prevention in the built environment.

The value of Secured By Design in offering practical advice is already recognised in a number of publications. For example, in the joint guide "Safer Places, the planning system and crime prevention" (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister/Home Office, 2004) www.odpm.gov.uk/planning, a number of good

practice case studies involving Secured By Design accredited projects in England are highlighted.

Home Office crime prevention materials such as "Your Business, Keep Crime out of it" (Home Office, 2005) www.crimereduction.gov.uk/yourbusiness (a Welsh language version is available from the Welsh Assembly Government in Cardiff) reflects Secured By Design principles and refers people to the Secured by Design website.

The Government seeks to signal the importance of crime prevention through environmental design as widely as possible. In November 2005, through the National Community Safety Plan 2006-2009 (HM Government, 2005) www.crimereduction.gov.uk/ncsp, Government Departments gave an undertaking to ensure that guidance is in place to help local authorities design out crime.

Secured By Design will have a role to play in that.

Terrorism Relief Fund

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Government's £1 million endowment to the new Terrorism Relief Fund may be spent on those affected by terrorism before the establishment of the fund. [61793]

Tessa Jowell: I have been asked to reply.

Since the Budget we have been working with the Red Cross and victims groups to develop proposals for how the £1 million fund will operate. We will make an announcement soon.

UK Prisoners Abroad

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many UK citizens are detained in overseas gaols, broken down by country. [69364]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

On 31 March 2006, British consular officials were aware of 2,255 British Nationals detained in overseas prisons. The breakdown by country is shown as follows. These figures include detainees on remand, as well as those serving sentences.

Country	*Number of detainees*
Antigua and Barbuda	1
Argentina	14
Australia	298
Austria	5
Azerbaijan	1
Bahrain	3
Bangladesh	1
Barbados	3
Belgium	31
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1
Brazil	37
Bulgaria	1
Cambodia	1
Canada	19
China	15
Columbia	2
Costa Rica	3
Croatia	1
Cyprus	19
Czech Republic	1
Denmark	5
Dominica	1
Dominican Republic	3
Ecuador	10
Egypt	2
Ethiopia	1
France	96
Germany	146
Grand Cayman	1
Ghana	5
Greece	11
Grenada	1
Guyana	2
Hungary	1
India	24
Indonesia	8
Iran	2
Iraq	1
Ireland	79
Italy	18
Jamaica	113
Japan	25
Israel	1
Kenya	1
Korea (South)	1
Kuwait	3
Laos	2
Lebanon	3
Luxembourg	4
Malaysia	4
Malta	5
Mauritius	1
Mexico	7
Morocco	1
Namibia	1
Nepal	1
Netherlands	37
New Zealand	10
Nicaragua	1
Norway	1
Oman	1
Pakistan	2
Panama	5
Peru	16
Philippines	19
Poland	1
Portugal	23
St. Lucia	6
St. Vincent	1
Saudi Arabia	1
Senegal	1
Sierra Leone	2
Singapore	7
South Africa	12
Spain	233
Sri Lanka	2
Sweden	18

Country	Number of detainees
Switzerland	6
Taiwan	22
Thailand	116
Trinidad and Tobago	16
Tunisia	1
Turkey	2
United Arab Emirates	19
USA	598
Venezuela	21
Vietnam	6
Zimbabwe	2

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Churchdown School

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will make a decision on the application by Churchdown School, Gloucester, for permission to dispose of school playing fields; and if she will make a statement. [67706]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* The application by Churchdown School, Gloucester, to dispose of school playing fields is under consideration. Officials are in communication with the school, but it is too soon to say when a decision will be made.

Examination Results

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* GCSE and *(b)* A-level examination results were in (i) 2002, (ii) 2003, (iii) 2004 and (iv) 2005 of the three non-selective state secondary schools nearest to each of the academies opened in (A) September 2002, (B) September 2003 and (C) September 2004; and what the equivalent results were in each of the three academies. [68113]

Jim Knight: The information requested has been placed in the House Libraries.

School Closures

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the schools where *(a)* closures and *(b)* standard number reductions are planned, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [68497]

Jacqui Smith: Where a local authority or governing body plan to close a school they must first consult interested parties, then, after considering views, and if they wish to proceed, must publish statutory proposals. Following publication, and a period for representations, the proposals will be decided by the local authority (if they published the proposals and there are no objections), the local School Organisation Committee (SOC) or the Schools Adjudicator (if the SOC cannot reach a unanimous decision). The Department is not routinely informed of consultations but must be provided with copies of published proposals and the final decisions taken.

I have placed two tables in the House Library. Table A lists the 378 schools for which the Department has been informed statutory proposals for closure have been published and approved. Table B lists the 75 schools for which the Department has been informed statutory proposals for closure have been published but has not yet been informed of a decision.

Both tables include schools that are closing, or have been proposed for closure, for a range of reasons. These include cases where the schools proposed for closure are: to be replaced by another school, sometimes on the same site (for example by an academy or a school with a religious character); amalgamating (for example, infant and junior schools) or are part of another local reorganisation. The tables exclude special school and nursery school closure proposals.

Standard numbers were abolished by the Education Act 2002. They were replaced by a net capacity formula which assesses the capacity of the school and derives an indicated admission number. When setting the admission number for the school, the admission authority must have regard to the indicated admission number however they can set a number that is higher or lower if they wish. If they set a number that is lower, they must publish a notice to inform local parents. The Department does not maintain a central record of proposals to lower admission numbers.

School Fires

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the risk to life posed by fires in schools. [69556]

Jim Knight: Of paramount concern is the safety of pupils, teachers and other users of schools, and regulations are in place to ensure the risk to life posed by school fires is low. Regulation 17 of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 requires that every part of a school building, and of the land provided for a school, shall be such that the safe escape of the occupants in case of fire is reasonably assured. Schools are also covered by the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974 and by subsequent related regulations. These include aspects of fire safety.

Since April 2001, all new building work in schools has been subject to approval under the Building Regulations. If a building is designed in accordance with the guidance in Approved Document B (Fire Safety), which accompanies Part B of the Building Regulations, a satisfactory standard of life safety will be achieved.

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent estimate he has made of the annual cost of fire damage to schools. [69557]

Jim Knight: The Office of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is the lead Department for fire safety policy. The latest figures we have from DCLG are for 2003-04 and show

that 1,359 school fires were attended by local authority fire and rescue services. This is broadly in line with the previous year and a drop of around 130 on 2001-02. Using ODPM's latest Cost of Fire Estimates, published last year, the total cost of property damage due to school fires in 2003-04 amounted to just under £62 million.

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make fire sprinklers obligatory in all new build and refurbished schools. [69558]

Jim Knight: All new building work at schools is subject to approval under the Building Regulations. These regulations do not currently require the installation of sprinklers in schools, but that does not stop local authorities from specifying their use. In our Managing School Facilities Guide 6, "Fire Safety", we give the example of a school in an area of high arson risk as being a suitable candidate for having sprinklers installed (see www.teachernet.gov.uk/fire). However, we recognised the need to provide more detailed guidance than before.

We work closely with colleagues in the new Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and, liaising with them, we produced new draft guidance on fire safety—Building Bulletin (BB) 100, "Designing and Managing Against the Risk of Fire in Schools". It stresses the value of using risk assessments to determine what sort of fire detection and alarm systems should be used in each school, and whether or not sprinklers should be installed. While saying that a building designed in accordance with the guidance in Approved Document B (Fire Safety), which accompanies the Building Regulations, will achieve a satisfactory standard of life safety, it also suggests ways of improving property protection.

Public consultation on the draft BB 100 was completed in November last year, to the same timeframe as DCLG's consultation on its review of the fire safety aspects of the Building Regulations. An analysis of the responses is almost complete and we aim to publish the final version of BB 100 in the autumn.

We are also doing specific work on sprinklers. We have commissioned the Building Research Establishment to carry out a cost benefit analysis of installing sprinklers in schools. Work on this is due to be completed shortly and it should provide robust figures for installation costs, and how these might be partially offset, together with a set of tools to help those carrying out risk assessments.

School Statistics

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of pupils *(a)* are in receipt of free school meals, *(b)* have special educational needs and *(c)* are from ethnic minority families in each secondary school in England that selects (i) wholly and (ii) partly by ability; and what the equivalent percentages are for the local authority in which each school is located. [68784]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 10 May 2006]:* The available information has been placed in the Library.

Information is given on all grammar schools. It is not possible to identify partially selective schools as they are not designated as such and therefore the Department has no definitive list.

Staff Dispute

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will take steps to ensure that the dispute between the University and Colleges Employees Association and the Association of University Teachers does not adversely affect students taking final examinations this year. [68932]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* It is a matter for higher education institutions (HEIs) to consider how best they can minimise the adverse effects on students of the current dispute, including making contingency arrangements for exams and assessment. HEIs, as autonomous bodies, are responsible for determining their own academic and administrative affairs, including deciding what to pay their own staff. Pay and conditions of service are subject to negotiations between employers, their staff and their representative trade union bodies. The Government play no part in this.

While this is a matter for unions and employers, I am disappointed that this has come to industrial action and that students' progress is being threatened by this dispute. The employers have made an offer of 12.6 per cent. over three years, which I believe the academic unions should now formally put to their members with a view to ending this damaging dispute.

Temporary Classrooms (East Riding)

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils are being taught in temporary classrooms in each school in the East Riding of Yorkshire; how many pupils he expects to be being taught in such classrooms at the start of the 2006-07 academic year; and if he will make a statement. [69318]

Jim Knight: East Riding of Yorkshire local authority advises that a total of 1,663 pupils are currently housed in temporary classrooms, with 1,628 anticipated at the start of the 2006-07 academic year. The number at each school is as follows:

	Current	*September 2006*
Beswick and Watton C of E Primary	30	30
Beverley High	74	74
Beverley Minster C of E Primary	165	165
Beverley St. Nicholas Primary	75	75
Boynton Primary	30	30
Bubwith Primary	30	30
Burstwick Community Primary	60	60

	Current	September 2006
Driffield	62	62
Elloughton Primary	60	60
Garton on the Wolds C of E Primary	30	30
Gembling Primary	30	30
Hessle High	120	120
Hessle Penshurst Primary	15	0
Hutton Cranswick Community Primary	50	50
King's Mill	15	15
Kingsway Primary	50	50
Langtoft Primary	15	15
Longcroft	100	100
Martongate Primary	25	25
Middleton on the Wolds C of E Primary	25	25
Nafferton Primary	15	15
North Frodingham Primary	25	25
Patrington C of E Primary	40	40
Riverside Special	30	30
Sledmere Primary	25	25
South Hunsley	100	100
St. Anne's Special	39	39
St. Mary's RC Primary	6	6
Sutton Upon Derwent C of E Primary	20	0
Swanland Primary	60	60
The Snaith School	50	50
Thorngumbald Infant	20	20
Wetwang C of E Primary	20	20
Withernsea Infant	60	60
Woldgate School and Sixth Form Centre	42	42
Wolfreton	50	50

Not all of the pupils' time during the school day will be spent in these classrooms. The number of temporary classrooms used by the authority is broadly half that used 10 years ago.

Examination Boycott

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action his Department is taking to address the boycott of assessment and examination activity called for by the Association of University Teachers. [68850]

Bill Rammell: It is a matter for higher education institutions (HEIs) to consider how best they can minimise the adverse effects on students of the current dispute, including making contingency arrangements for exams and assessment. HEIs, as autonomous bodies, are responsible for determining their own academic and administrative affairs, including deciding what to pay their own staff. Pay and conditions of service are subject to negotiations between employers, their staff and their representative trade union bodies. The Government play no part in this.

While this is a matter for unions and employers, I am disappointed that this has come to industrial action and that students' progress is being threatened by this dispute. The employers have made an offer of 12.6 per cent. over three years, which I believe the academic unions should now formally put to their members with a view to ending this damaging dispute.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment his Department has made of the impact of a continued boycott of assessment and examination activity by further and higher education teachers on initiatives to increase the enrolment of overseas students at English universities. [68851]

Bill Rammell: We have made no such assessment. It is a matter for higher education institutions (HEIs) to consider how best they can minimise the adverse effects on students of the current dispute, including assessing any negative impact on the enrolment of students.

The employers have made an offer of 12.6 per cent. over three years, which the Government would encourage the academic unions to formally put to their members with a view to ending this damaging dispute.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment he has made of the impact of strike action by university staff on *(a)* academic teaching and *(b)* marking and assessment of university students; [70111]

(2) what estimate he has made of the number of students who will not be able to *(a)* sit examinations and *(b)* graduate this year as a result of strike action by university staff. [70128]

Bill Rammell: We have made no such assessment or estimate. It is a matter for higher education institutions (HEIs), as autonomous bodies, to consider how best they can assess and minimise the adverse effects of the current dispute. HEIs are responsible for determining their own academic and administrative affairs, including deciding what to pay their own staff. Pay and conditions of service are subject to negotiations between employers, their staff and their representative trade union bodies. The Government play no part in this.

While this is a matter for unions and employers, I am disappointed that this has come to industrial action and that students' progress is being threatened by this dispute. The employers have made an offer of 12.6 per cent. over three years, which I believe the academic unions should now formally put to their members with a view to ending this damaging dispute.

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action he is taking to ensure that university examination papers are marked and degrees awarded accordingly in the event of industrial action by university teachers in summer 2006; and if he will make a statement. [68430]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* It is a matter for higher education institutions (HEIs) to consider how best they can minimise the adverse effects on students of the current dispute, including making contingency arrangements for exams and assessment. HEIs, as autonomous bodies, are responsible for determining their own academic and administrative affairs, including deciding what to pay their own staff. Pay and conditions of service are subject to

negotiations between employers, their staff and their representative trade union bodies. The Government play no part in this.

While this is a matter for unions and employers, I am disappointed that this has come to industrial action and that students' progress is being threatened by this dispute. The employers have made an offer of 12.6 per cent. over three years, which I believe the academic unions should now formally put to their members with a view to ending this damaging dispute.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Debt Collectors

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether her Department uses the services of private debt collectors. [71059]

Bridget Prentice: A key responsibility of my Department is to ensure respect for the orders of the courts and this includes through working in partnership (where appropriate) with the private sector. For example:

The Legal Services Commission instructs private debt collection agencies, where appropriate, to seek information as to the whereabouts of the debtor and/or the collection of the debt.

In April 2006, Regional contracts were let to enable HMCS to employ Approved Enforcement Agents for the execution of warrants.

In Greater Manchester a trial has been undertaken whereby old outstanding fines accounts have been given to private sector partners as an additional enforcement tool available to the magistrates courts when they have exhausted all the mechanisms directly available to them. Officials are currently evaluating the outcome of that trial.

Magistrates

Dr. Vis: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many magistrates have been disciplined for discriminatory sentencing in the last ten years. [68123]

Ms Harman: No magistrates have been disciplined for their sentencing decisions in the past 10 years. Like other judicial office holders, magistrates are independent and their decisions as such can only be challenged through the courts, not through a disciplinary process. If a higher court considering an appeal from magistrates was concerned that a sentencing decision appeared to have been reached on an improper basis involving misconduct, whether because of discrimination or for other reasons, it would be possible for the court concerned to refer the conduct of the magistrates, as opposed to their decision, to the Office for Judicial Complaints to be considered on behalf of the Lord Chancellor and Lord Chief Justice. Similarly, if in the course of a case magistrates make discriminatory comments or otherwise behave in a way which suggests that they are acting improperly, it is possible for a complaint about their conduct to be made to the Office for Judicial Complaints.

The Office for Judicial Complaints was created on 3 April 2006. Previously complaints about magistrates' conduct were made to the Lord Chancellor. During 2005, 89 complaints were referred to him, of which he upheld 63.

Small Claims

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps are being taken to provide greater assistance to claimants in the small claims court who are not legally represented. [67150]

Ms Harman: All county courts are now accredited by the Legal Services Commission (LSC) as Assisted Information Points, for the Community Legal Service (CLS) Direct Scheme. Unrepresented claimants and defendants who require legal advice are referred to CLS Direct by court staff. CLS Direct can give free advice to those eligible, or can direct people to other sources of free legal advice/assistance in their local area.

The small claims support service being piloted at Reading provides unrepresented litigants with general information and practical assistance on the small claims process. Evaluation of the results will inform the development of departmental plans for offering further help to unrepresented litigants.

In addition, Her Majesty's Courts Service has recently embarked on a study to identify ways in which its website can be made more user friendly to litigants in person who are pursuing small claims. It will consider the means of providing better access to information and assistance through a series of gateways linking to help on different aspects of the court process, relevant court leaflets, and signposts to other agencies and sources of advice.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Action Teams

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many departmental staff are employed in Action Teams in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* in each Action Team area; and how they will be redeployed when Action Team activity ends in September. [69877]

Mrs. McGuire: There are 472.19 full-time equivalent (FTE) departmental staff undertaking work for or in connection with Action Teams in the UK, of which 45.5 are in Scotland.

The Action Team programme is due to finish in September and Jobcentre Plus district managers are working with human resource teams to plan the re-deployment of staff currently engaged in Action Team activity. This is within the wider context of work force planning across Jobcentre Plus districts. Trade union side have been engaged in these discussions.

Information on the number of FTE staff employed in each Action Team area is in the table.

Department for Work and Pensions staff employed in each Action Team area

Region	*District*	*Number*
London	Central London	16.9
	City and East London	10.88
	Lambeth, Southwark and Wandsworth	9
	North and North East London	9.83
	South and South East London	32.15
North East	South Tyne, Sunderland and Durham	49.68
	Northumbria and Gateshead	6.79
	Tees Valley	25.54
North West	Cumbria	7.68
	Lancashire	12.76
	Greater Manchester Central	66.26
	Greater Mersey	48.37
	Liverpool and Wirral	10.22
Scotland	Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway	7.5
	Forth Valley Fife and Tayside	9.47
	Highland, Islands, Clyde Coast and Grampian	11.79
	Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire	16.29
South East	Kent	10.83
South West	Devon and Cornwall	9.36
Wales	Bridgend and Eastern Valleys	22.73
	South East Wales Cardiff and Vale	8.33
	Swansea and West Wales	25.54
West Midlands	Black Country	14.46
Yorkshire and Humberside	South Yorkshire	18.16
	North and East Yorkshire	11.67
Total UK		472.19
Total Scotland		45.05

Notes:
1. Data excludes management and administrative activity as confirmed data are not available, however, the assumption is that an additional 13 per cent. FTE staff are engaged in this capacity.
2. Data are clerically collected and are provided through the Jobcentre Plus Activity Based Information system.
3. Data are calculated on full-time equivalent staff and not on individuals.

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Human Resources Directorate.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of Action Teams for Jobs; and if he will make a statement. [69878]

Mrs. McGuire: Action Teams have been successful in helping more than 162,000 people into work. A review of Action Teams for Jobs DWP Research Report 328 'Review of Action Teams for Jobs' was published in March 2006 and is available in the Library.

Carers

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what percentage of applicants has been refused carers' grants on the basis of means-testing in each local authority in each year since the creation of the grant; [70322]

(2) what guidelines his Department issues to local authorities on the means-testing of carers' grants; [70323]

(3) according to what criteria carers' grants are awarded. [70324]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answers 12 May 2006]:* I have been asked to reply.

This Government introduced the carers grant in 1999 to support councils in providing breaks and other services for carers in England. The grant is not paid to individuals but paid each year to councils as a specific formula grant. There are no conditions attached. Individual carers have a right to an assessment of their ability to provide and continue to provide care under section 1 of the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000. Services are not subject to a means test, though local authorities are able to charge for the carers' services they provide. However, carers cannot be charged for community care services provided to people they care for, including the services provided to enable carers to take a break from caring.

Although there are no conditions attached to the carers grant funding for 2006-07 and 2007-08, the Commission for Social Care Inspection's delivery and improvement statement will monitor the provision of services to carers. As a result, the Department issues guidance to councils to remind them that the policy intention behind the grant is to support carers.

Demographics

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what policies his Department is adopting in response to the likely future decrease in the ratio of workers to pensioners. [70055]

James Purnell: The Pensions Commission has made a thorough analysis of the changing demographic position in the UK. Today there are four workers to every pensioner. By 2050, it is expected that there will be only be two workers to every pensioner in the UK.

We are determined to meet the challenge of an ageing population. Any reform we take forward will be guided by five key tests: whether it promotes personal responsibility, is simple, fair, affordable and sustainable.

We have taken steps to build consensus through the National Pensions Debate and will bring forward a White Paper by the end of the month, setting out our proposals for pension reform.

Financial Assistance Scheme

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department will seek an increase in funding of the Financial Assistance Scheme in the next spending review; and if he will make a statement. [69544]

James Purnell: The Prime Minister recently announced to the House of Commons that we will expedite the review of the Financial Assistance Scheme and its funding.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when former employees of Triplex Components Group Ltd. of Walton, Peterborough will have their cases expedited under the financial assistance scheme; and if he will make a statement. [70434]

James Purnell: The Triplex scheme has been determined to be a qualifying pension scheme. As the scheme is still in the process of winding up, the FAS operational unit will not yet be able to calculate final payments. However, trustees are able to request that the FAS scheme manager make initial payments to eligible survivors, or to those members who have already reached the age of 65 or who are terminally ill.

Mr. Touhig: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the projected funding requirements are of the Financial Assistance Scheme in *(a)* 2007 to 2010 and *(b)* 2010 to 2013. [70889]

James Purnell: It will not be possible to provide firm estimates until we have assessed the eligibility of each scheme and its members. Our current estimates in current cash terms, based on data provided by a number of schemes in late 2004, are shown in the following table. The estimates will change in the light of improved information. Over the longer term we estimate expenditure to be broadly in line with £20 million over 20 years.

Pay 80 per cent. to those within three years of Scheme Pension Age

	£ million, cash
2007-08	15
2008-09	25
2009-10	30
2010-11	30
2011-12	25
2012-13	25

Financial Capability

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what initiatives his Department and its non-departmental bodies support to promote *(a)* financial education, *(b)* financial advice, *(c)* financial inclusion and *(d)* financial capability; which organisations are involved in delivering each initiative; and how much funding is provided to each by (i) his Department and its non-departmental public bodies, (ii) other Government Departments, (iii) the private sector and (iv) the voluntary sector. [66578]

Mr. Plaskitt: Through the Pensions Education Fund, the Department for Work and Pensions is undertaking an initiative from January 2006 to March 2008 offering funding to local and national not-for-profit organisations (such as trades unions, charities, trade associations and the voluntary sector), to use innovative ways to increase financial awareness and encourage working people to provide for their retirement. The objective of the fund is to deliver better retirement planning information to individuals in the workplace.

The Department for Work and Pensions is making £5.5 million available to fund initiatives, selected through the Pensions Education Fund bidding process. Projects will be delivered in the period January 2006 to March 2008.

As part of the Government's strategy to increase access to affordable credit, we are introducing the Growth Fund from summer 2006. The Growth Fund will be used to increase the availability of affordable personal loans to financially excluded people, and will be delivered by low cost lenders from the not-for-profit and private sector.

We will also introduce arrangements whereby lenders meeting certain criteria will be able to apply for deductions from a range of income replacement benefits to repay loans in the event of default.

As part of the Government's strategy to increase access to banking, we introduced universal banking and the Payment Modernisation Programme during 2002-05. This resulted in more than 10 million people receiving information from us about the types of account available prior to moving from payment by order book to payment into an account and, importantly, using their account on a regular basis to conduct their business.

Implementation costs of the deductions scheme and the Growth Fund are funded by the Financial Inclusion Fund. Final figures for the deductions scheme are not yet available but we do not expect to spend as much as the £10 million allocated for both initiatives.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of workers receiving the minimum wage are in receipt of jobseeker's allowance. [70114]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not recorded centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Kvaerner Pension Fund

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will request the Pensions Regulator to publish details of the background to his decision in the case of the Kvaerner Pension Fund. [68397]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

No. This is a matter for the Pensions Regulator. Furthermore to publish these details would breach the confidentiality of information exchanged between the parties and the Regulator.

Pensions

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will ensure that the pension forecasting team states in correspondence with inquirers whether national insurance data has been taken into account when making a pension forecast. [70231]

James Purnell: Customers are advised in their state pension forecasts that the information is based on their national insurance (NI) record. This information is provided to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and sourced from their national insurance recording system (NIRS).

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he plans to publish the Government's White Paper on pensions reform. [70285]

James Purnell: We plan to publish a White Paper on pensions reform by the end of the month.

WALES

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales on how many occasions Ministers of State in his Department stayed overnight in *(a)* five star, *(b)* four star and *(c)* three star hotels on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [68973]

Mr. Hain: In the last three years, there was only one foreign visit by a Wales Office Minister, to China in April 2004. Three five star hotels were used and the booking arrangements were made by the Foreign Commonwealth Office, at a Government negotiated rate, on behalf of the Wales Office.

Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year, this information includes accommodation costs. Copies are available in the Library.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales on how many occasions *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department have stayed overnight in (i) five star, (ii) four star and (iii) three star hotels in each of the last three years. [68974]

Mr. Hain: Travel and subsistence rules do not require the claim to state the star rating of the accommodation used. Claims are limited under those rules to set maximum values, both in the UK and, under Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) guidance, overseas. Therefore the information is not held by the Wales Office and can be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

In the case of a ministerial visit to China in April 2004 supporting officials and special advisers were accommodated in five star hotels in the three cities visited. These were booked by the FCO, at a Government discounted rate.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department staying overnight in (i) mainland Great Britain, (ii) Northern Ireland, (iii) the Republic of Ireland and (iv) other countries in each of the last three years. [68975]

Mr. Hain: The costs of the Wales Office for overnight accommodation is as follows:

£

	Great Britain and Northern Ireland	*Republic of Ireland*	*Overseas*
2004-05			
Special advisers	1,353.85	0	1,037.14
Civil servants	2,740.59	0	2,074.28
2005-06			
Special advisers	999.90	0	0
Civil servants	5,175.38	0	0

Expenditure records kept do not differentiate between Great Britain and Northern Ireland, so are given as one sum. Expenditure records kept prior to 2004 did not separate any accommodation costs and this could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Portland PR

Dr. Francis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what meetings officials in his Department have had with representatives of the public relations company Portland PR; what contracts Portland PR has with his Department; and what the nature of the contract is in each case [70056]

Mr. Hain: The Department does not maintain a central list of such meetings. Civil servants meet many people as part of the process of policy development and business delivery. All such meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Service Code and Guidance for civil servants on contacts with lobbyists and people outside Government. There have been no such contracts.

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much has been paid in *(a)* salary, *(b)* travelling expenses, *(c)* subsistence allowance and *(d)* removal expenses to special advisers in his private office in each of the last five years. [68977]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office employs two special advisers who are paid in accordance with the Cabinet Office pay scales for special advisers.

Since 2003, the Government have published on an annual basis the names and overall cost of special advisers and the number in each pay band. For information relating to the last financial year I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement made by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 158-61WS.

Information on special advisers for this financial year is currently being collected and will be published in the normal way when it is ready.

In 2004-05 the Wales Office paid £552.96 in subsistence and £613.90 in travelling expenses, and in 2005-06 the Wales Office paid £317.90 in subsistence and £319.80 in travelling expenses to special advisers.

Records kept before 2004 do not separate these costs, and this could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost. All official travel by special advisers is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Ministerial Code and the Civil Service Management Code.

From 2004-06 the Wales Office has not paid removal expenses for any special adviser and earlier records could be searched only at disproportionate cost.

Staff Development

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the total cost was of *(a)* staff away days and *(b)* staff team building exercises in his Department in each of the last three years. [68978]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office held a staff away day in February 2003. Expenditure records for that period do not separate this cost. This could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost. A team-building event was held at the beginning of this financial year, but has not yet been brought to account.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Anhydrite Mines

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the number of local authorities where housing has been built on disused anhydrite mines. [64695]

Angela E. Smith: I have been asked to reply.

No estimate of the number of local authorities where housing has been built on disused anhydrite minerals was made by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Audit Commission

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will take steps to cap the audit fees charged by the Audit Commission to parish councils. [71274]

Mr. Woolas: The Audit Commission has fixed its fee scales for the vast majority of non Best Value local (parish and town) councils from 2006 until 2011 following a consultation exercise with the sector.

In addition, a significant number of local councils will see a reduction in fees following the recent amendments to the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003, which increased the threshold at which local councils are eligible for the limited assurance regime from £500,000 to £1 million. A further reduction in the burden for smaller local councils is achieved by increasing the threshold at which local councils may account on the basis of receipts and payments from £100,000 to £200,000.

We consider that these measures already taken to reduce the impact of audit fees on local councils are sufficient and do not seek to impose a cap.

Community Area Committees

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) whether she plans to increase the powers delegated to community area committees; [70070]

(2) if she will make a statement on the role and responsibilities of community area committees. [70091]

Mr. Woolas: Our local government White Paper later this year will set out our plans for devolving powers for local areas and neighbourhoods.

Conferences

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what overseas conferences staff from her Department will attend in the next 12 months; and what conferences staff from the predecessor department attended in the last 12 months. [70578]

Angela E. Smith: Staff from the Department for Communities and Local Government have attended a number of conferences overseas in the last 12 months. However, there is no centrally held record of these and to compile one could be done only at disproportionate cost.

E-Government Partnerships

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will list the regional e-Government partnerships in England; and what the budget was for each in the most recent year for which figures are available. [70646]

Angela E. Smith: There are currently nine e-Government regional partnerships in England:

South West Region
London Connects
North West Electronic Gov Group
West Midlands SMART Region
East of England Region
East Midlands reg. e-Gov Partnership
North East Connects
South East Forum for e-Government
Yorkshire and Humber e-region Partnership.

Each have been allocated £50,000 in 2005-06 to help with sustainability.

Financial Allocations

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much has been allocated to the *(a)* North East Regional Smartcard Consortium and *(b)* North East Trusted Service Infrastructure. [70643]

Angela E. Smith: £250,000 was allocated to the North East Regional Smartcard Consortium in 2002-03. No funds were allocated to the North East Trusted Service Infrastructure.

Fire Service

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) how many fire authorities have not *(a)* prepared and *(b)* published a race equality scheme; [71423]

(2) how many fire authorities have reviewed their relevant policies and functions in respect of racial equality in accordance with Commission for Racial Equality guidance and published the results. [71424]

Angela E. Smith: This information is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. However, my hon. Friend may be interested to know that in 2004 the Chief Fire Officers Association developed an Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit to support fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) in complying with the requirements of the Race Relation (Amendment) Act 2000 to ensure that all new policies, procedures, plans and practices have been assessed for impact with regard to race. It included a template for review and update of FRA race equality schemes. In 2005 the toolkit was circulated so that all FRAs could carry out equality impact assessments and a number of regional workshops were held to provide training for policy officers and equality and diversity professionals within the service.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what funding resources have been provided to fire authorities in order to facilitate the implementation of their race equality schemes. [71425]

Angela E. Smith: Under the Provisions of the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 fire and rescue authorities have a statutory duty to develop and implement race equality schemes for their organisations. Funding for this function is provided through the revenue support grant allocated to each authority.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what rules govern whether the Army may use Fire Service appliances in the event of industrial action. [70722]

Angela E. Smith: When armed forces personnel have provided support they have only been authorised to operate equipment on which they had been trained.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many fire appliances the Army has for providing fire cover; and how old the appliance is in each case. [70723]

Angela E. Smith: The armed forces have no fire appliances for providing emergency fire cover. In accordance with the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2006 to 2008, fire and rescue authorities are expected to supply all fire appliances and equipment required to provide emergency fire and rescue cover.

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether she has received the Fire Brigade Union's alternative proposals for emergency control centres, Regional Controls: National Resilience; and if she will make a statement. [71008]

Angela E. Smith: A copy of proposals was sent to the Deputy Prime Minister at the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on 25 January 2005 by FBU General Secretary Matt Wrack. He and my predecessor the hon. Member for Poplar and Canning Town (Jim Fitzpatrick) subsequently met with Mr. Wrack on 7 February to discuss the proposals.

We welcome the FBU's recognition of the need to strengthen national resilience. On the basis of the limited details available in the document, we do not believe that the proposals offer a viable alternative to the FiReControl project. They would not provide a genuinely resilient solution and would be likely to increase costs.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many firemen were killed while on duty in *(a)* England, *(b)* the North East and *(c)* the Tees Valley in each year since 1997. [71090]

Angela E. Smith: The following table shows the number of firefighters killed while attending a fire in each year since 1997 in *(a)* England, *(b)* North East, *(c)* Tees Valley.

Firefighters killed while attending a fire, 1997 to 2005

	England	*North East*	*Tees Valley*
1997	—	—	—
1998	—	—	—
1999	—	—	—
2000	—	—	—
2001	—	—	—
2002	1	—	—
2003	—	—	—
2004	2	—	—
2005	2	—	—

Source:
Fire and Rescue Service FDR1 returns to ODPM.

Housing

Michael Gove: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has had with the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment on the aesthetic quality of homes built under the Government's Sustainable Communities Programme; and if he will make a statement. [64952]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

ODPM Ministers have held a series of meetings with the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and have invited CABE to wider meetings and events. Matters for discussion have included the quality and design of new homes. CABE representatives are also considering a programme of work on improving design in the Thames Gateway.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what he expects the average market price of his Department's £60,000 home to be in *(a)* Milton Keynes and *(b)* each region when the first homes are made available to the public. [68143]

Yvette Cooper: The Design for Manufacture competition is being run by English Partnerships on behalf of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. It is anticipated that there will be mixed tenure on each site, with some homes being available for affordable rent, some under shared equity and some for private sale.

The aim of the competition is to demonstrate how to build cost-effectively across a range of housing types without sacrificing quality. The target is for high-quality 76.5 square metre home to be built for a construction cost of £60,000 or less with larger and smaller homes being built at a similar cost-efficiency. Each of the 10 sites chosen for the Design for Manufacture competition by English Partnerships is being sold to the successful developers in the usual way. Developers will be responsible for determining the final sales price for dwellings for full sale. Actual sales costs will be known once the homes are built on site and details finalised in accordance with market conditions at the time. Homes available through shared equity schemes on the first four sites are expected to cost £55,000 to £70,000 for a 50 per cent. share.

Kilmartin Property Group

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will call in the application by Kilmartin Property Group for a retail development in Tweedmouth, Berwick-upon-Tweed, for consideration alongside the other major retail applications in Berwick-upon-Tweed which she has already called in. [68909]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 9 May 2006]:* My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, is already giving very careful consideration to whether she should intervene in the application by Kilmartin Property Group for retail development at Ord Road, Tweedmouth.

The local planning authority, Berwick-upon-Tweed borough council, consulted the Secretary of State on 19 April 2006 in accordance with her Shopping Direction. She expects to make a decision in the very near future on whether to intervene, taking her policy on calling-in planning applications into account. In the meantime, the council has been directed not to grant planning permission for the proposed development without further authorisation from the Secretary of State.

I shall ensure that the right hon. Member is notified of the decision.

Local Government

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when she plans to publish proposals on reforming the legislation on the political restrictions on local government employees. [70633]

Mr. Woolas: Our Discussion Paper, "Standards of Conduct in English Local Government", published on 15 December 2005, included our proposals for changes to the legislation on the political restrictions relating to local government employees.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what obligations the best value regime imposes on local authorities' procurement processes. [70655]

Mr. Woolas: Subject to their legal duties, including the duty of best value and public procurement law, local authorities are responsible for taking their own procurement decisions. The duty of best value as laid down in the Local Government Act 1999 requires authorities to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which they exercise their functions, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. This includes the duty they are under in relation to procurement.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what information local authority planning departments provide to Ordnance Survey in relation to *(a)* individual planning and building permissions, *(b)* change of use, *(c)* starts and *(d)* completions. [70656]

Angela E. Smith: Ordnance Survey receives information from many, though not all, local authorities. There is no uniform format or frequency for the provision of such information, and items received vary from copies of planning committee decisions to very detailed site plans. Some information is received electronically although most is in paper form. The information received can include some or all of the categories mentioned in the question.

Ordnance Survey also has a commercial contract with a private sector supplier for regular supply of change intelligence information, some of which is obtained from local authority sources.

The information is used for scheduling survey activities to keep the National Geospatial Database up-to-date.

Local Services (Tendering)

Roger Berry: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effect on local user-led organisations of local authorities putting services out to competitive tender. [68585]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister had not undertaken any assessment of the impact on user-led organisations of local authorities' competitive tendering practices.

Ordnance Survey

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman), of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1694W, on Ordnance Survey, which external suppliers have provided aerial photographs. [70567]

Angela E. Smith: Aerial photography has been provided under contract to Ordnance Survey by the following external suppliers from April 2001 to March 2006:

Simmons Aerofilms Limited

Getmapping plc

UK Perspectives

BKS Surveys Limited

IGN France International

Kampsax A/S

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether Ordnance Survey has used satellite photography in the last five years. [70600]

Angela E. Smith: Ordnance Survey has not used satellite photography for production purposes in the last five years. However, it has evaluated the potential of satellite imagery to meet current and future business needs. This has included an assessment of data from the Quickbird, Ikonos and Spot5 high resolution satellites for potential use in change detection and feature extraction applications.

Police/Firemen's Pay

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the pay at 2006 prices was of *(a)* a leading fireman and *(b)* a police constable in each year since 1976. [70873]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Regeneration Projects

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the letter of 20 May 2005 from the hon. Member for Sunderland, South and the response from her predecessor of 7 June 2005, what conclusions have been reached by the Local Community Centre Task Force on the future viability of projects whose single regeneration budget funding is coming to an end; and if she will make a statement. [70024]

Angela E. Smith: The Local Community Sector Task Force is expected to put forward its report in the next few weeks.

Security Passes

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many departmental security passes were issued by her Department in the most recent year for which figures are available. [70691]

Angela E. Smith: The Department for Communities and Local Government was formed on 5 May 2006. In the year April 2005 to March 2006 a total of 1,497 new and replacement permanent building passes were issued for staff, contractors and consultants working in the London HQ buildings of its predecessor Department the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Small Business Rate Relief

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the Government's forecast is for the take-up rate of small business rate relief in each of the next three years. [70568]

Mr. Woolas: On the basis of returns completed by local authorities before the start of the current financial year, an estimated £390 million is expected to be claimed in small business rate relief for 2005-06, the first year in which the scheme has been operating. Applications for small business rate relief may be made up to six months after the end of the financial year to which the application relates, or six months from notification of an alteration to a rateable value that makes the hereditament eligible for relief. The amount of small business rate relief estimated for 2006-07 is due to be announced shortly, although no forecast has yet been made for years beyond that.

Standards Board for England

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if the Government will abolish the Standards Board for England. [70587]

Mr. Woolas: The Government have no plans to abolish the Standards Board for England. Our proposals for the future of the local government conduct regime, set out in our Discussion Paper of 15 December 2005, are that the Standards Board should continue to play an important strategic role at the heart of the conduct regime.

Super Output Areas

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many super output areas there are in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation; and if she will make a statement. [70238]

Mr. Woolas: There are 32,482 Lower Layer Super Output Areas (SOA) in England. Each SOA has an average population of 1,500 people. SOAs are generally smaller than wards (wards vary in size from 800 to

35,000 people) and have been designed to 10 to 20 years. These SOAs allow us to better identify where small pockets of deprivation exist in otherwise affluent areas and therefore permit us to better target our resources to areas with the greatest need.

HEALTH

Herceptin

12. **Mr. Paterson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on Government policy on the prescription of Herceptin for early stage breast cancer. [70843]

Caroline Flint: It is for individual clinicians, in discussion with patients, to consider whether to prescribe Herceptin. Primary care trusts may need to consider whether to support this decision and supply the drug at NHS expense. We have made clear to primary care trusts that they should not rule out treatments on principle and that they should not refuse to fund Herceptin solely on the grounds of its cost.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how she defines exceptional circumstances with regard to the prescription of Herceptin to patients with early stage breast cancer; and whether she has issued guidelines to primary care trusts on the definition. [67809]

Ms Rosie Winterton: My right. hon. Friend, The Secretary of State confirmed in issue 294 of the Chief Executive's bulletin that primary care trusts (PCTs) should not rule out treatments on principle but consider individual circumstances. How PCTs choose to consider individual circumstances is a matter for local determination. It would not be appropriate for Ministers to dictate, or prejudge, the factors that might properly be taken into account by a PCT in assessing each case, beyond advising against refusals solely on the grounds of cost. My right. hon. Friend has not, and has no plans to, issue further guidance in this matter.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

13. **Julie Morgan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to improve treatment for sufferers of myalgic encephalopathy. [70844]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The £8.5 million funding for the development of new services we announced in 2002 has secured significant improvements in the care of people with chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME) in England.

However, it is the responsibility of primary care trusts to ensure that local services continue to meet the needs of people with CFS/ME.

23. **Dr. Starkey:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what support her Department gives to young people with myalgic encephalomyelitis. [70854]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We recognise that young people can be profoundly affected by chronic fatigue syndrome/ myalgic encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME).

The CFS/ME Exemplar, 'Megan's Journey', we published in 2004, embodies the commitment we made in the children and young people's national service framework, to deliver better services for children and young people, which are tailored to meet their particular needs.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will prepare contingency plans for circumstances where primary care trusts reduce provision of services for myalgic *(a)* encephalomyelitis and *(b)* encephalopathy; [71460]

(2) what support her Department provides for those so severely affected by myalgic *(a)* encephalomyelitis and *(b)* encephalopathy they are (i) bed and (ii) house bound. [71470]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In January 2004, funding of £8.5 million was announced for specialist services for those living with chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME). This funding was specifically intended to cover the costs of setting-up services where none already existed.

The national service framework for long-term conditions (NSF) sets out a clear vision of how health and social care organisations can improve the quality, consistency and responsiveness of their services and help improve the lives of people with neurological conditions, including CFS/ME. National health service organisations are expected to demonstrate that they are making progress towards achieving the level of service quality described in the NSF.

We have no plans to introduce contingency plans for the provision of CFS/ME services. It is the responsibility of local health bodies to meet the health and social care needs of their local population. The Healthcare Commission and the Commission for Social Care Inspection may undertake performance reviews to assess progress on local implementation of the NSF.

Acute Hospital (West Cumbria)

14. **Mr. Jamie Reed:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the plans for a new acute hospital in west Cumbria. [70845]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Following consultation in 2005 the Cumbria and Lancashire strategic health authority gave its approval earlier this year to the North Cumbria Acute Hospitals NHS Trust to develop a strategic outline case for a new build hospital for west Cumbria.

Oculists

15. **Mr. Steen:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will increase the payment oculists receive for carrying out eye tests to the level paid in Scotland. [70846]

Caroline Flint: Negotiations on the fee for NHS sight tests in England for 2006-07 are under way. The fee for 2006-07 will be announced once these negotiations are concluded.

Dental Services

16. **Mr. Goodwill:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on access to dental treatment for patients with severe learning difficulties in *(a)* Scarborough and Whitby and *(b)* England. [70847]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Dental care for patients with severe learning difficulties is usually provided by dentists working in the local salaried primary care services. I understand that Scarborough Whitby and Ryedale Primary Care Trust have made provision for this treatment through the salaried dental service covering North Yorkshire.

NHS Staff

17. **Emily Thornberry:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many front-line staff there were in the NHS in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2005; and if she will make a statement. [70848]

Andy Burnham: The number of front-line staff has increased from around 885,000 in 1997 to around 1,144,000 in 2005. This is an increase of around 259,000 or 29 per cent.

This includes an increase of over 33,000 (37 per cent.) doctors, an increase of over 85,000 qualified nurses (27 per cent.) and an increase of over 38,000 (40 per cent.) qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff.

Broomfield Hospital PFI

18. **Mr. Burns:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the Broomfield hospital private finance initiative scheme will be approved. [70849]

Andy Burnham: As the Prime Minister told the hon. Member for West Chelmsford last week, the Department of Health's PFI review team visited the trust recently. Progress has generally been good. There are a number of commercial and contractual issues which the trust and its private sector partner now need to focus on and resolve so that the Department can look at the final fully costed proposals and their long term affordability. We expect this work to take approximately six months.

Life Expectancy (Women)

19. **Mrs. Moon:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact of *(a)* diet and *(b)* alcohol consumption on life expectancy for women. [70850]

Caroline Flint: Female life expectancy increased from 79.8 years in 1997 to 80.9 years in 2003. We have not made a separate assessment on the impact of diet or alcohol on the life expectancy of women.

It is widely recognised that eating a healthy balanced diet can contribute to a number of positive health outcomes, and eating at least five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables a day could lead to an estimated reduction of up to 20 per cent. in overall deaths from chronic diseases, such as heart disease, stroke and cancer.

We know that alcohol misuse is associated with between 15,000 and 22,000 deaths each year. In 2001 the number of women dying from illnesses directly attributable to alcohol was 2,170 compared with 3,800 male deaths. The Government published the alcohol harm reduction strategy in March 2004 in order to address alcohol related harm.

Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority

20. **Gregory Barker:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the financial position of the Surrey and Sussex strategic health authority. [70851]

Caroline Flint: The 2005-06 month six forecast for Surrey and Sussex strategic health authority indicates an £80.7 million overspend. Achieving financial stability is one of the most challenging issues the national health service in Surrey and Sussex faces. To assist financial recovery, turnaround teams have been working with the SHA to help those trusts facing the greatest financial problems.

Communication Aids

21. **Sir Nicholas Winterton:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her Department's policy is on the provision of and funding for spares and replacements for communication aids. [70852]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: It is for local primary care trusts and councils to provide and fund spares and replacements for communication aids through their local arrangements.

University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust

22. **David Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact of the private finance initiative on progress in delivering the Pathway project for university hospitals of Leicester NHS trust. [70853]

Andy Burnham: On 10 May, university hospitals of Leicester NHS trust issued a press release announcing revised proposals to their PFI scheme. We welcome these proposals which we understand fully reflect guidance published in January this year requiring all major PFI schemes to revisit their capital costs in the light of the current reforms to the NHS.

These new proposals are expected to be submitted shortly to the Department for formal approval.

Nurses (Child Care Costs)

24. **Meg Hillier:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assistance is provided for child care costs for student nurses. [70856]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In 2004-05, support for child care was extended to national health service students in the form of the NHS bursary child care allowance. The Department of Health provided £7 million in 2004-05, and £17.8 million in 2005-06 to meet the full cost of applications.

Agenda for Change

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what mechanisms are in place to monitor *(a)* the number of appeals against the implementation of Agenda for Change and *(b)* the time taken for these appeals to be resolved; how many appeals have (i) been heard and (ii) not yet been resolved, broken down by *(A)* major staff group and *(B)* NHS organisation; what proportion of resolved appeals was upheld; and how long on average it has taken for an appeal to be resolved. [67911]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* The continued monitoring of the number of reviews under agenda for change is being managed by the NHS Employers organisation and the outcomes are reported to the NHS Staff Council, which has representation from both the management and staff side perspectives. They are currently collecting data on the review position.

Cancer

Sir Malcolm Rifkind: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will issue guidance to primary care trusts that cost should not be the factor that decides whether women with third and fourth stages of cancer should have access to the latest drugs, and that decisions should be based on recommendations of specialists and doctors. [66117]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I have no plans to issue such guidance.

While it is down to individual clinicians, in discussion with a patient, to decide whether or not it is suitable to prescribe a specific drug, primary care trusts (PCTs) may also need to be involved to decide whether to support the clinician's decision and supply the drug at the national health service's expense. PCTs need to take a range of factors into account, including local factors, when considering the funding of drugs and other treatments. It would not be appropriate to dictate, or prejudge, the factors that PCTs might properly take into account.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the planned level of funding is for each of the remaining years of the 2000 10-year Cancer Plan. [71272]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We do not hold information centrally on planned levels of funding on cancer services, however around £3.4 billion was spent on cancer services in 2003-04 and this increased to around £3.8 billion in 2004-05. National health service funding is allocated to primary care trusts to meet the health needs of their local population, who in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for cancer services.

Childhood Diseases

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of children with *(a)* asthma, *(b)* diabetes, *(c)* Down's Syndrome, *(d)* epilepsy, *(e)* visual impairment, *(f)* hearing impairment and *(g)* autism, broken down by ethnic group. [71250]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We have made no estimates of the number of children, broken down by ethnic group, living with asthma, diabetes, Down's syndrome, epilepsy, visual and hearing impairments, and autism.

The Department, in collaboration with the information centre for health and social care and NHS Employers, issued updated guidance to the national health service on ethnic monitoring in July 2005 that emphasised the importance of collecting, analysing and using data on the ethnic group of both NHS patients and staff.

Children's Health Services

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list school nursing teams which provide drop-in clinics in schools. [67648]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Choose and Book System

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much will *(a)* a GP and *(b)* a GP practice be paid for each hospital appointment booked through the new Choose and Book system; [65772]

(2) what payments are made to *(a)* GPs and *(b)* GP practices for registering with the Choose and Book system for arranging hospital appointments for their patients; and what financial incentives are offered for using the system; [66996]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answers 25 April and 2 May 2006]:* Revisions to the general medical service (GMS) contract from 1 April 2006-07 include a reward for general practitioner (GP) practices, through a directed enhanced service (DES), for utilisation of the choose and book service and for delivering choice to patients. No payments are made to GPs or GP Practices purely for choose and book registration.

The full value of DES is 96p per registered patient and comprises two equal components, one for choice

(48p) and one for choose and book (48p). Half of the choice component, worth 24p will be made as an aspiration payment to those GP practices who make a written commitment to ensure that choice is offered to relevant patients. The remaining half, also worth 24p, will be paid based on the results of a new survey of patient experience.

Half of the choose and book component, worth 24p, will be made as an aspiration payment to those GP practices who make a written commitment to utilising the choose and book system. Practices that make at least 25 per cent. of their referrals to first consultant out-patient appointments through choose and book by the end of June 2006, will be allowed to keep this payment. The other half, also worth 24p, will be payable on a sliding scale if referrals through choose and book reach 50 per cent. in the period 1 September 2006 to 28 February 2007.

Full details of how the DES will be paid are available in "Revisions to the GMS contract 2006/07: Delivering investment in general practice," published by the NHS Employers Organisation and the British Medical Association's general practitioners committee, and is available in the Library and at www.nhsemployers.org.

Demographic Trends

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what account her Department takes of demographic trends in determining local provision of *(a)* obstetrics and gynaecology, *(b)* paediatrics and *(c)* geriatric services. [68395]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: It is the responsibility of health professionals in primary care trusts (PCTs) to commission obstetric and gynaecology, paediatrics and geriatric services locally, taking account of current and forecast need for services and in consultation with stakeholders.

Revenue allocations are made to PCTs on the basis of the relative needs of their populations. The weighted capitation formula is used to determine PCTs' target shares of available resources, to enable them to commission similar levels of health services for populations in similar need.

The components of the formula are used to weight each PCT's crude population according to their relative need (age, and additional need) for healthcare and the unavoidable geographical differences in the cost of providing healthcare.

The age related need adjustments recognise that more elderly populations tend to make more use of health services than the rest of the population. The additional need adjustments identify several socio-economic variables as indicators of need because of their effect on utilisation, including standardised mortality ratios, the proportion of low birthweight babies born and the standardised birth ratio.

Departmental IT

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of whether her Department is adequately updating its information and communications technology infrastructure in line with the Gershon report's recommendations. [60627]

Caroline Flint: The national programme for information technology, which is being delivered by the NHS Connecting for Health agency, is creating a multi-billion pound information infrastructure that will enable national health service patients to make informed health choices and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of clinicians and other NHS staff, as envisaged in the Gershon report. The foundations have been laid, and the organisational and commercial infrastructure established, to deploy the systems the NHS needs. Implementation has grown substantially in recent months, and its impact is now evident across the NHS.

New systems have already been delivered to thousands of locations in the NHS, and we estimate that over 2 million patients have already received improved and safer care as a result. This figure is increasing every week as the deployment of new systems and services accelerates. For example, a quarter of a million patients have now booked their hospital appointments using the choose and book electronic booking system and three quarters of a million prescriptions have been transmitted using the electronic prescriptions service.

Fingerprints

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her Department has issued guidance to general practitioners on the use of fingerprints as a compulsory personal identifier for patients; and whether she has taken steps to discourage the use of fingerprints for this purpose. [67399]

Caroline Flint: No guidance on the use of fingerprints has been issued and there are no plans for using fingerprints as compulsory identifiers for patients. The Department is not aware of any general practitioners (GPs) having adopted this practice as a prerequisite for care provision, and would not find this acceptable. Some GPs, do however, provide facilities for patients to review the content of electronic health records and systems that enable this, for example the patient access electronic record system (PAERS), may use fingerprint biometrics to ensure that patients can only access their own records and not those of other patients. While the opportunity to review records in this way is generally welcomed by patients, patients are not compelled to use this sort of service and are legally entitled to be provided with paper copies of their records if they would prefer.

General Practice Boundaries

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she plans to permit general practices to extend their boundaries so that they cut across *(a)* primary care trust and *(b)* local authority social services boundaries. [49554]

Caroline Flint: The existing contractual arrangements for general practice allow practices to extend their areas, including potentially across other administrative boundaries. The White Paper "Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services" recognises this and commits us to explore ways of supporting practices who wish to expand, thereby increasing patient choice. This will form part of continuing discussions with the British Medical Association.

Health Treatment Centres

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much and what percentage of the total payment made by the NHS to private sector companies awarded contracts to operate independent sector treatment centres is accounted for by *(a)* the cost of the operations performed and *(b)* an additional premium, broken down by (i) company and (ii) centre. [61718]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The amounts paid to independent sector treatment centre (ISTC) providers are to cover the cost of providing all elements of the care pathway defined in the contract.

Value for money has been ensured by running a robust and competitive procurement process, benchmarking procedure prices between contracts and comparing them to those traditionally paid to the national health service and also to estimates of NHS equivalent costs. The premium to NHS equivalent cost is calculated only to provide a benchmark.

The amounts paid to individual independent sector providers are commercially sensitive and so cannot be disclosed. Local primary care trusts do not pay above the estimated NHS equivalent cost for the procedures they commission from ISTCs. Any cost above the NHS equivalent cost is currently met by the Department.

Healthcare Commission

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time was for a complaint against the NHS to be processed by the Healthcare Commission in the last period for which figures are available; and what the average cost of dealing with a complaint was in that period. [71396]

Andy Burnham: The Healthcare Commission assumed responsibility for the independent review stage of national health service complaints at the end of July 2004. Between then and the end of March 2006 the Commission received 13,400 cases. This compares with about 3,000 a year under the previous NHS system.

The chairman of the Healthcare Commission has informed me that the average time between receipt and closure for cases closed in April 2006 was seven months. The average age of currently open cases is 7.5 months. The chairman of the Commission has also confirmed that its budget for dealing with complaints in 2005-06 was £7.99 million. The Commission resolved 7,400 cases that year at an average cost of £1,079.

Hospital Closures

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the potential impact on patient choice of the closure of local hospitals. [65528]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* Primary care trusts (PCTs) commission the menu of four or more providers from which patients may choose, where clinically appropriate, when referred by their general practitioner to planned hospital care. We expect PCTs to discuss the options with patient groups before deciding which to make available. If a local hospital were to close, the PCT must ensure that it has commissioned an appropriate alternative provider to include on its choice menu to ensure that patients are still able to choose from four or more providers when referred.

By 2008, we expect choice of hospital in these communities to be extended to all national health service hospitals. Any closures of local hospitals is likely to have little impact on the availability of alternatives for patient choices.

IT Reviews

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the functions to be delivered by the National Programme for IT; and what the *(a)* start date, *(b)* planned completion date, *(c)* current expected completion date, *(d)* planned cost and *(e)* current estimated cost is for each function. [69656]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 9 May 2006]:* The national programme was established with four original core components—the NHS care records service (NHS CRS); the electronic booking service, now known as choose and book; electronic transmission of prescriptions, now known as the electronic prescription service (EPS); and the new national network (N3). Delivery now also includes the following additional components: picture archiving and communications systems (PACS); the NHSmail e-mail service; and the quality management and analysis system (QMAS). The objective of the programme is to transform health care in England by the provision of pervasive digital information.

There is no single national start or completion date for individual national programme systems and services. The aim is to achieve substantial integration of health and social care information systems in England under the national programme by 2010. Clearly, systems will need to be upgraded in the light of new technology and new national health service requirements beyond that date. The approach, in line with best practice, is to implement new services incrementally, avoiding a big bang approach, and by providing increasingly richer functionality over time.

The first elements of the NHS care records service, to provide a transaction messaging service, a personal demographics service, a spine directory service and secure access controls via smartcards, went live on time and to budget on 2 July 2004. The software to support choose and book is complete and went live on time and to budget, also on 2 July 2004. The software to introduce QMAS in support of the general medical services contract went live on time and to budget in August 2004 and was fully rolled out within three months, supporting payments to 100 per cent. of general practitioners (GPs) under the quality outcomes framework every month since then. The software to allow electronic prescriptions to be issued went live on time and to budget in February 2005. N3 is ahead of schedule and over 96 per cent. of GPs now have a broadband connection.

The first PACS system under the programme was implemented in April 2005 and 31 systems have been implemented to date with over 25 million digital images stored. In the south of England, the infrastructure is complete and over 50 per cent. of hospitals have PACS systems. NHSmail was implemented on time in October 2004 and currently has over 170,000 registered users sending 500,000 e-mails per day and 70 million to date. The establishment of an accredited software integration environment is complete and has enabled existing system suppliers of GP, hospital, pharmacy and independent sector systems to gain compliance with the new national and local applications.

The values of centrally-funded contracts let for the original core components of the programme are as follows:

	£ million
NHS CRS (including Spine and EPS)	620
Choose and book	64.5
N3	530

Contract values, and actual/current anticipated expenditure for the additional components are:

	£ million
PACS	850
NHSmail[1]	Between 50 and 90[2]
QMAS[3]	4.4

[1] The NHSmail contract value is variable because it is a voluntary service to offer secure, encrypted e-mail with a lifelong e-mail address. The lower amount is based on a reasonable expectation of moderate take-up and is in line with current predictions. The higher figure is the maximum possible take-up by all NHS staff with access to a computer.
[2] Depending on take-up.
[3] QMAS was negotiated as an additional service under the NHS CRS contract. The figure quoted is for the initial version of the application software. Additional releases of the software have been and will continue to be commissioned to reflect further changes in the general medical services contract.

For the avoidance of doubt, none of the relevant budgets managed by the Department's NHS Connecting for Health agency have been exceeded. Anticipated expenditure under these contracts remains at planned levels.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the pilot programmes that have been set up for the National Programme for IT. [69657]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 9 May 2006]:* Extensive work was carried out during the 1990s to pilot electronic patient records through the health infomatics system (HIS) programme. This contributed to the publication, in 1998, of the Department's information for health strategy. Following publication, the Department piloted electronic records at 16 sites across the country under the electronic records demonstrator and implementation programme. Each project had its own focus, for example record sharing and confidentiality, and joint working between health and social care.

A series of outputs, evaluations and guidance reports from these projects, supplemented by lessons learned from projects in other countries, including the European Commission's advanced informatics in medicine programme, contributed to the specification of the NHS Care Records Service. A key purpose of the national programme for information technology (NPfIT) was to enable the benefit from the projects to be shared across the whole country.

During the early stages of the NPfIT procurement process, an electronic patient record pilot study with IBM at Warwick investigated primary care trust-level information gathering and reporting. Also during the procurement phase, detailed technical design studies were carried out and each supplier had to complete a series of proof of solution tests to ensure that they understood the national health service's requirements.

Further trialling of NPfIT systems is always undertaken at user sites and in user-based environments to pilot usability before rollout. Systems are only made available locally after successfully passing through extensive national testing phases. For example, both the quality management and analysis system for general practice, and the system to support payment by results, operated in shadow form for a number of months before going live.

All this activity is in line with the recommendations of the 'Successful IT: Modernising Government in Action', to demonstrate that products work before they are deployed, and to avoid big bang implementations.

Mannitol

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice the Department offers to pharmacists on the purchase and supply of Mannitol; what information the Department has received on its use in the preparation of cocaine; and if she will *(a)* increase restrictions on its issue and *(b)* make it a controlled pharmaceutical. [66362]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* None. As far as licensed medicinal products are concerned, Mannitol is available as an intravenous infusion and is a prescription only medicine which means that pharmacists may only dispense it against a prescription issued by an appropriate practitioner. Mannitol is also used widely as an excipient, that is an inactive ingredient, by the pharmaceutical industry in the manufacture of other medicinal products.

There is an established mechanism to allow proper consideration of making drugs of misuse controlled. The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs, the

expert body that advises Ministers, is made aware of problems posed by specific drugs, or where they are requested by Ministers to consider a specific drug, they will undertake a detailed assessment of whether or not a substance ought to be controlled and make appropriate recommendations to Ministers.

Adulterants and bulking agents mixed with controlled drugs are not usually considered for control where they are not psychoactive themselves or precursors to psychoactive drugs of misuse.

Mental Health

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many times ambulances attended emergency mental health cases in Coventry South in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [70958]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the status of each of the five former mental hospital sites in Epsom. [69547]

Andy Burnham: Of the five former mental hospitals in Epsom, The Manor, Long Grove and Horton have been sold. They are or have been redeveloped predominantly for housing. The surplus parts of St. Ebba's and West Park Hospitals were included in a portfolio of properties that it has been agreed my Department would transfer to English Partnerships to assist in the Government's sustainable communities programme. Ownership has now transferred and it will be for English Partnerships to release the sites for development.

Neurological Conditions

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to recruit the *(a)* consultant neurologists, *(b)* specialist nurses and *(c)* other staff required to fulfil the national service framework for long-term neurological conditions. [67207]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Each national health service organisation is responsible for determining the work force it requires to implement the national service framework for long-term neurological conditions and for putting in place measures to recruit and develop the necessary staff.

NHS Finance

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the effect on the expenditure of each NHS trust if directly employed staff had been used instead of agency staff in each of the last three years. [67929]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 4 May 2006]:* The appropriate use of agency staff and any potential level of saving through using directly employed staff is a matter for local determination. However, the £17 million savings achieved in 2004-05, for nursing staff alone, from reduced use of agencies indicates that the national health service is starting to take advantage of the opportunities available through NHS Professionals and the Purchasing and Supply Agency's agency framework agreements.

We anticipate continuing savings in agency expenditure but recognise that regional variations mean the balance between use of permanent and temporary staff will differ across NHS trusts.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what financial position the Shrewsbury and Telford NHS Trust inherited at its inception. [67249]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Shropshire and Staffordshire strategic health authority has reported that the historic deficit when the Shrewsbury and Telford NHS Trust was established in October 2003 was in the region of £4.1 million. By the start of 2004-05, this had risen to the figure of £7 million following in-year deficits recorded in 2003-04.

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the year-end gross NHS deficit for the 2005-06 financial year. [70855]

Andy Burnham: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Southend, West (Mr. Amess) earlier today.

NHS IT Programme

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effect on competition between potential and current providers to the NHS information technology programme of local service providers not publishing their application programmer interfaces; and what plans she has to require them to do so. [63926]

Caroline Flint: Technical standards for compliance with the national programme for information technology's systems are made routinely available to existing systems providers, as well as contracted national and local systems providers. This is the basis on which existing suppliers of general practitioner and secondary care systems have achieved compliance for the programme's key components. The same standards will apply to any new suppliers who enter the market, including those supporting the independent care sector.

These arrangements were put in place as part of a commercial and organisational model for the national programme, designed to provide best value for money for the taxpayer. There are no current plans to change them.

Under the terms of their agreements with NHS Connecting for Health, local service providers (LSPs) must meet very specific and exacting quality and delivery standards for their healthcare applications, including high levels of disaster recovery and fault tolerance. These could be put at risk if other providers' systems were able to connect freely to the LSP's applications without reference to the LSP, or without demonstrating compliance through NHS Connecting for Health's national integration centre.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what consultation was undertaken before the 2002 launch of the NHS IT programme. [63944]

Caroline Flint: A consultation document, "Delivering 21st Century IT support for the NHS: National Specification for Integrated Care Records Service—consultation draft", issued in July 2002, outlined the requirements for a national patient care records service and the national standards and specification which would underpin it. Its purpose was to provide an initial review of electronic patient records and to describe a direction of travel for the whole range of information technology standards in the national health service. Nearly 200 responses were received from organisations and individuals, and these were taken into account in drawing up the specification for a care record service used in the procurements phase during 2003.

In addition, in early 2002, the NHS Information Authority carried out research into possible new ways of managing the confidentiality of patient health information in the NHS. In conjunction with other data, and in the context of operational experience, the research findings were used as a basis for consultation which sought the views of patients, the wider public and medical professionals. Responses to the consultation were used to inform development of the new information systems.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the *(a)* progress to date, *(b)* prospective timetable for completion and *(c)* value for money of the £30 billion expenditure on the NHS IT programme. [65975]

Caroline Flint: The national health service information technology (IT) programme has already implemented the quality management and analysis system (QMAS) into all 8,800 general practitioner practices; there are 170,000 registered users of the secure NHS e-mail service and 14,269 new national network broadband connections have been delivered that are available to serve around 400,000 NHS staff. Over 216,000 users have been authorised and registered for access to new national IT systems using secure smartcard technology. New IT systems are being implemented every week across the NHS. Progress is ahead of schedule in some areas, and, in the context of a 10-year programme, broadly on track in others. The aim is to achieve substantial integration of health and social care information systems in England by 2010.

The aggregated buying power of the NHS has been demonstrated to purchase IT systems and services from suppliers at substantially more competitive rates than would ever have been possible for individual NHS organisations. Independent analysis suggests savings of over £3.8 billion.

The contracts will cost £6.2 billion over 10 years, not £30 billion.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the contribution of the *(a)* timetables, *(b)* progress and *(c)* benefits of the NHS IT programme in delivering the aims of 'Commissioning a patient-led NHS'. [65987]

Caroline Flint: The national health service information technology programme focuses on improving patient safety, treatment and the patient experience. The new technology will revolutionise the way patient and health information is accessed and shared, making the right information available to the right people at the right time. As it is rolled out, the national programme will also ensure that significantly greater value can be achieved from baseline spending on health care as information begins to follow patients and improve efficiency. This is absolutely in line with the aims, timetable and progress of 'Commissioning a Patient-led NHS'.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the information technology systems for use *(a)* by GPs and *(b)* elsewhere in the NHS are predominantly organised in silos of information. [66071]

Caroline Flint: The new systems and services we are putting in place via the national programme for information technology, being delivered by the Department's NHS Connecting for Health agency, will allow information to follow the patient across and between primary and secondary care settings. They will ensure that the right information is available at the right time to the right people to provide treatment at the point of need. This has not been possible with systems previously implemented that were effectively silos of information usually limited to the site where they originated.

For example, for the first time, records will be transferable between general practices; about 10 per cent. of registered patients move from one general practitioner practice to another each year.

NHS Trusts (Senior Executives)

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy to ensure that the salary bands of the senior executives of all NHS trusts are made publicly available. [68217]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 4 May 2006]:* This information is already included in the annual reports and accounts of national health service trusts, which are publicly available.

North West London Strategic Health Authority

Mr. Khabra: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the net change in the numbers of *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses in the North West London Strategic Health Authority area has been since 1997. [71144]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The table shows the latest figures available for all national health service doctors and qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff including practice nurses employed in the North West London Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area as at 30 September each year from 1997 to 2005. This includes the change in numbers between 1997 and 2005.

All NHS doctors and qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff including practice nurses employed in the North West London Strategic Health Authority area as at 30 September [1] each year

	1997	2005	Change 1997-2005	headcount Percentage change 1997-2005
All doctors[2]	4,422	5,625	1,203	27.2
Qualified nurses including practice nurses	12,602	16,708	4,106	32.6

[1] Practice nurse figures are as at 1 October for 1997 where 1997 data is estimated based on 2002 organisational structure.

[2] Excludes hospital medical hospital practitioners and hospital medical clinical assistants, most of whom are general practitioners (GPs) working part time in hospitals and General Medical Practitioners retainers and registrars.

Sources:

The Information Centre for health and social care, non-medical workforce census

The Information Centre for health and social care, general and personal medical services statistics

The Information Centre for health and social care, medical and dental workforce statistics

Obesity

Dr. Desmond Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of children in England are *(a)* overweight and *(b)* obese; what the targets are in relation to childhood obesity; and what assessment she has made of the progress made to date in achieving those targets. [67844]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Overweight and obesity prevalence among children aged 2 to 15 by sex in England in 2004

	Boys	Percentage Girls
Overweight	13.9	16.6
Obese	19.2	18.5
Overweight, including obese	33.0	35.1
Bases (weighted)	8833	8228

Source:

Health Survey for England, 2004

In July 2004, a public service agreement (PSA) target was set to halt the year-on-year rise in obesity among children under 11 by 2010 in the context of a broader strategy to tackle obesity in the population as a whole. Progress of the PSA on childhood obesity will be monitored through the Health Survey for England.

Patient Care Costs

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost of *(a)* a minor injuries unit patient episode and *(b)* an urgent care centre patient episode was in 2004-05. [57509]

Caroline Flint: The average cost per attendance in a minor injuries unit in 2004-05 was £37. The average cost per attendance in a non-24 hour accident and emergency department/casualty department in 2004-05 was £32.

Primary Care Trusts

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what approval primary care trusts require from strategic health authorities for *(a)* the disposal of buildings and land and *(b)* the use of associated funds; at what stage in the disposal process strategic health authorities become involved; and if she will make a statement; [69681]

(2) whether her Department allows primary care trusts to use the proceeds of disposed assets *(a)* to fund the rent of additional buildings and *(b)* for other purposes in connection with delivering healthcare; and if she will make a statement; [69682]

Ms Rosie Winterton: National health service trusts and primary care trusts (PCTs) have delegated limits for capital investment up to which they may make capital investment decisions without seeking approval from their strategic health authority (SHA) or from the Department. These limits vary between £1 million and £10 million, depending on the organisation's turnover from provider activities and performance in the latest star performance ratings.

Purchases of fixed assets and sales of fixed assets such as land and buildings are dealt with in the same way. Beneath its delegated limit, the PCT can sell assets and reinvest the proceeds without the approval of its SHA. Above the delegated limit, the PCT must seek its SHA's approval both for the sale and to reinvest the proceeds. In many instances, SHAs will approve the reinvestment of the sale proceeds by the selling trust or PCT but the SHA retains the discretion to specify another use.

Where the transaction is subject to SHA approval, there will generally be SHA involvement at outline business case, where the main principles and parameters are established and preferred options are chosen, and full business case, where the details of delivering the preferred option are agreed. Even where formal approval by the SHA is not required, NHS trusts and PCTs may wish to draw on their SHA's technical expertise in estate and capital matters.

PCTs are required by statute to operate within resource limits (revenue and capital) set by the Department as part of PCTs funding allocations. PCTs may use their revenue resources for any revenue expenditure permitted in law, including the commissioning of healthcare and community services and payment of rents.

The sale of a fixed asset, such as a building, gives rise to a capital receipt that is a fixed asset financed by capital in the balance sheet is converted to a cash asset financed by capital in the balance sheet. Except to the extent of any profit on disposal, there is no increase in the resources available to the PCT to spend on revenue costs such as rentals.

As a consequence, the sale of a correctly valued fixed asset would not release funds that could be spent on rentals.

For the above reasons, proceeds from the sale of fixed assets are usually reinvested in buying other fixed assets. Where there is no local capital investment requirement, the cash may be repaid to the Department as a repayment of capital.

Respite Care

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to encourage care homes and nursing homes to include emergency bed provision for respite care users. [71186]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Councils are responsible for taking the needs and wishes of carers and those they care for into account when planning and commissioning services. If appropriate, councils may arrange for respite care to be provided in a care home, as long as this is in accord with the wishes and needs of service users.

The Government introduced the carers grant in 1999 to support councils in providing breaks and services for carers in England. The grant has increased each year, from £20 million in 1999-2000 to £185 million in 2006-07.

The Carers and Disabled Children's Act 2000 provides local authority social services departments with the option to run short-term break voucher schemes. Short-term break vouchers enable cared for people to make arrangements for the additional support they require when carers need a break.

Sexual Health Services

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department is taking to reduce barriers to access to sexual health services with particular reference to young people. [70744]

Caroline Flint: The Government recognise the disproportionate effect of poor sexual health on young people, and this was highlighted in both the national strategy for sexual health and HIV and the teenage pregnancy strategy, and subsequently highlighted in the 'Choosing Health' White Paper.

Improving access to sexual health has been identified as a top priority for the national health service in the 'NHS in England: the Operating Framework for 2006-07' and all primary care trusts are now working towards providing access to genito-urinary medicine appointments within 48 hours. A national programme of screening for chlamydia, targeting 16 to 24-year-olds, will be rolled-out across the country by April 2007. A range of projects are also underway to inform the development of new models of service provision. These include HIV testing in community settings and one-stop shop services.

The teenage pregnancy strategy encourages all young people to delay sex, but also seeks to ensure that they have access to contraceptive and sexual health advice if they are, or are thinking about becoming sexually active—to protect themselves against unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. Efforts to improve access to services focus on making sexual health services more young people-friendly and delivering them in non-traditional settings, such as schools, colleges and Connexions one-stop-shops.

Spinal Cord Injuries

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what *(a)* National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidelines, *(b)* national service frameworks and *(c)* NHS care protocols exist for the care and treatment of spinal cord injured people; [70824]

(2) what longitudinal data is collected by her Department on the care and treatment of spinal cord injured people within *(a)* spinal cord injury centres and *(b)* general and district facilities. [70825]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence has not issued specific guidance on the care and treatment of spinal cord injuries.

The national service framework for long-term conditions is specifically concerned with improving the health and social care needs of those living with long-term neurological conditions, including those with spinal injuries.

The Department does not collect longitudinal data on the care and treatment of spinal cord injuries.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 17 May 2006

TRANSPORT

A23

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the estimated completion date is for the A23 Warninglid to Handcross road improvements. [71449]

Dr. Ladyman: We are currently considering the south-east region's advice on its priorities for major transport schemes including the A23 Handcross to Warninglid road improvements. An announcement is expected later this year.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the potential impact on the number of accidents on the A23 of a delay to the Handcross to Warninglid improvement scheme. [71467]

Dr. Ladyman: We are currently considering the south-east region's advice on their priorities for major transport projects, which includes the A23 Handcross to Warninglid improvement. An announcement is expected later this year. The Highways Agency and its appointed contractor are continuing to develop the scheme to enable the necessary draft orders and Environmental Statement to be published.

An assessment of the impact of a delay has not been made. However, the three-year average personal injury accident record to the end of 2004 is 15 and the scheme improvement is forecast to reduce this figure to 10.

M6 Toll Road

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to extend the M6 toll road beyond Birmingham; what representations he has received in support of such a proposition; what the timescale involved is; and if he will make a statement. [71427]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government have no plans to extend the M6 toll, i.e. the road operated by Midlands Expressway Ltd. under concession. However, we have been considering options to provide extra capacity between junctions 11A and 19 of the M6, with a tolled off-line route as one of the options under consideration. The response to our initial consultation was summarised in my written statement of 19 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 74-5WS.

Since July, the Highways Agency has been engaging with a wide range of representative stakeholder bodies during the development work in order to clarify views on the alternative options for extra capacity in this corridor. A more detailed evaluation will be presented to Ministers shortly.

Motorways

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many road accidents have been reported involving stationary vehicles on motorway hard shoulders in each year since 1980, broken down by motorway; and how many people were *(a)* injured and *(b)* killed in each case [71003]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of personal injury road accidents reported to the police involving parked vehicles on motorway hard shoulders and the resulting number of people *(a)* injured or *(b)* killed, in each year from 1980 to 2004 (the latest year for which figures are available) is given in the table.

Separate figures for each motorway could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Number of personal injury road accidents, fatalities and injuries involving a vehicle parked on a motorway hard shoulder: 1980-2004

	Accidents	*Fatalities*	*Injuries (serious and slight)*
1980	94	18	135
1981	96	27	169
1982	94	19	161
1983	88	8	194
1984	92	17	160
1985	116	23	192
1986	126	26	239
1987	120	19	199
1988	107	31	198
1989	104	19	192
1990	108	23	193
1991	84	13	165
1992	84	14	132
1993	82	33	146
1994	72	11	107
1995	88	11	164
1996	61	13	104
1997	68	6	139
1998	86	21	147
1999	59	11	103
2000	85	12	163
2001	66	12	123
2002	66	16	111
2003	52	8	81
2004	67	3	113

Oyster Cards

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what contribution he expects his agreement with the Mayor for London on the compatibility of smartcard technology and the Oyster card to make towards the roll out of a national concessionary travel card; and if he will make a statement. [70999]

Derek Twigg: The agreement with the Mayor of London to deliver compatibility between the Oyster card system currently in use in London and the Integrated Transport Smartcard Organisation (ITSO) standard represents an important step towards a national travel card system. There remains much work to be done and the Government are working closely with Transport for London and stakeholders in the transport industry to take forward this agenda. No decision has yet been taken on the implementation of the national bus concessionary fares scheme, announced in the 2006 Budget, although the recent agreement on compatible smartcard technology will be useful if a smartcard option is pursued.

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which gated mainline rail stations can be upgraded immediately to accommodate pre-pay Oyster cards; and if he will make a statement. [70998]

Derek Twigg: We believe that the process of upgrading most of the gated mainline stations to accept Oyster pay as you go will be straightforward. The identification of the precise numbers and timing is not yet available. The technical scoping to enable integrated smartcard schemes, as well as the necessary commercial arrangements, is part of the work that we are currently undertaking with Transport for London and the train operators.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he requires new contracts with train operators to include Sundays in drivers' working weeks. [71897]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport specifies the minimum pattern of train services and frequencies in new franchise contracts. It does not specify how these are delivered, which is a matter for the Train Operating Companies.

Road Safety

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the merits of tougher penalties for drivers who cause *(a)* serious injuries and *(b)* fatalities whilst driving under the influence of alcohol. [71468]

Dr. Ladyman: The penalties for those who commit alcohol-related driving offences are already very tough, whether or not they result in serious injury or death. For exceeding the legal alcohol limit for drivers, they include up to six months' prison, mandatory disqualification from driving for at least 12 months, and at least three years' disqualification for a second offence in 10 years. For causing death by careless driving when under the influence of alcohol the maximum prison sentence is 14 years, having been raised from 10 years under the Criminal Justice Act 2003. The Government believe that these penalties provide an effective deterrent for the large majority of the motoring public.

The Road Safety Bill, currently before Parliament, contains several provisions that will tighten up drink driving laws, including an enabling power to extend provisions concerning a mandatory re-take of the driving test to apply to drink drivers.

Transport Direct

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the *(a)* efficiency, *(b)* effectiveness and *(c)* future scope of and proposals for the procurement arrangements of the Transport Direct project. [71430]

Dr. Ladyman: As a central Government service the Transport Direct service (http://www.transportdirect.info) is subject to standard Government procurement rules, which aim to ensure efficient and effective procurement.

Transport Direct is operated on behalf of DfT by Atos Origin, under a Design, Build and Operate contract. This contract was awarded following an open and competitive procurement in 2002. The contract was advertised publicly in the *Official Journal* of the European Union (OJEU), and over 60 initial expressions of interest were received.

The initial award was for three years from January 2003, with an option to extend up to 10 years in total. The contract has been formally extended until 31 March 2007, and further extensions will be considered. Any such extensions will be dependent upon re-evaluation of the commercial merits and value for money provided by the contract. Such exercises would be carried out at the appropriate time.

DEFENCE

Armed Forces (Drug Offences)

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) pursuant to the answer of 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1574W, on drug testing, what assessment he has made of the reasons for the increase in drug use among junior non-commissioned officers and privates between 2002 and 2005; and what steps he plans to take to reduce this; [70146]

(2) how many people have been dismissed from each of the armed forces for drug offences in each of the past five years, broken down by rank. [70035]

Mr. Watson *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* The Directorate of Army Personnel Strategy was commissioned to examine factors which lead to drug use among soldiers who have tested positive for drugs. Work commenced in April this year and is expected to complete within 12 months. The Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force have no current plans to carry out assessments.

Information on the number of people who have been dismissed from the services, either as a result of a positive result following a Compulsory Drugs Test, or following a court martial/summary hearing for drug related offences, is as follows.

Service personnel dismissed for drug offences or positive CDT results

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Royal Navy					
Officers/Cadets	0	0	1	1	0
WO/Senior Rates	0	1	0	3	4
Junior Rates	45	51	58	41	60
Army					
Officers/Cadets	1	1	1	1	0
WO/Senior NCOs	1	2	1	0	0
JNCOs/Privates	761	624	571	632	787
Royal Air Force					
Officers/Cadets	0	0	0	0	0
WO/Senior NCOs	0	0	0	0	0
JNCOs/Privates	28	27	26	11	22

Arms Trade Treaty

Willie Rennie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British defence attachés have raised the international arms trade treaty with their relevant counterparts. [71131]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* The Government have undertaken extensive lobbying through a wide-ranging network of overseas posts, which includes British defence attachés where appropriate.

Astute Submarine

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost is of each fully-equipped Astute submarine. [70776]

Mr. Ingram: The contract with BAE Systems is for the design and manufacture of three Astute class submarines, the estimated cost of which is £3,492 million.

Consultants

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the companies which were paid consultancy fees by his Department in 2005-06; how much each was paid; and what each of the companies was used to accomplish. [69694]

Mr. Ingram: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

However, I can advise my hon. Friend that summaries of the Ministry of Defence expenditure on external assistance, of which consultancy is a part, are available in the Library of the House for the years 1995-96 to 2004-05.

The figures for 2005-06 will be placed in the Library of the House before the summer recess.

The Defence Analytical Services Agency also publishes annually details of companies that are paid £5 million or more per year by the MOD.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what opportunities exist for people to work beyond retirement age in his Department. [69116]

Mr. Watson: The services do not have standard minimum and maximum retirement ages. Personnel may leave their service at various points dependent on the terms of service for the individual's branch or trade, their length of commission or engagement and the operational requirements facing the services at the particular time.

Where it is thought to be in the interest of the service, officers may be retained beyond their normal retirement date or offered an optional retirement date. Other ranks may be offered continuance to serve beyond their normal retirement date where there is a service requirement.

The Ministry of Defence's normal retirement age for all civilian grades below the senior civil service (SCS) is 65. Individuals both in and below the SCS wishing to work beyond their normal retirement age can ask to remain in service. Such requests are considered on the grounds of business need; this means that provided the individual's post is not scheduled to be disestablished and there are no surpluses at that grade and location (or within daily travel distance) and subject to the individual's continuing health and efficiency they may remain in service for a given period.

Drones

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of drones in combat zones. [69886]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence assesses the effectiveness of uninhabited air vehicles on military operations on a regular basis. Operational analysis and studies are routinely conducted to assess military force structures and equipment capabilities (including uninhabited air vehicles). The Department also captures the lessons from the use of uninhabited air vehicles on operations.

Collectively, these assessments inform the Department's balance of investment and wider decision-making processes.

Eurofighter

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what air-to-ground missile system the Eurofighter employs; and if he will make a statement. [70270]

Mr. Ingram: Integration of air-to-ground missile systems onto RAF Typhoon, including the Storm Shadow cruise missile and the Brimstone air-launched anti-armour weapon, is being considered as part of the Typhoon Future Capability Programme.

Financial Data

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will break down the main estimate Request for Resources 1 non-budget expenditure provision by sub-head in *(a)* near cash and *(b)* non-cash terms for financial year 2006-07; [71569]

(2) if he will break down the main estimate Request for Resources *(a)* 1, *(b)* 2 and *(c)* 3 (i) departmental expenditure limit and (ii) annually managed expenditure provision by sub-head in (A) near cash and (B) non-cash terms for financial year 2006-07. [71568]

Mr. Ingram: A full breakdown of the main estimates into near cash and non cash are shown in the following tables.

Ministry of Defence—Breakdown of main estimates 2006-07

TLB/ Estimate type	*Main estimates £000*
Commander-in-Chief Single RN TLB	
DEL near cash	2,101,5
DEL non cash	2,096,8681
Total DEL	4,198,374
AME near cash	0
AME non cash	-5,718
Total AME	-5,718
Non Budget near cash	0
Non Budget non cash	0
Total Non Budget	0
Total Commander-in-Chief Single RN TLB	4,192,656
General Officer Commanding Northern Ireland	
DEL near cash	476,759
DEL non cash	94,615
Total DEL	571,374
AME near cash	0
AME non cash	0
Total AME	0
Non Budget near cash	0
Non Budget non cash	0
Total Non Budget	0
Total General Officer Commanding Northern Ireland	571,374
Commander in Chief Land	
DEL near cash	4,358,352
DEL non cash	1,360,226
Total DEL	5,718,578
AME near cash	0
AME non cash	0
Total AME	0
Non Budget near cash	0
Non Budget non cash	0
Total Non Budget	0
Total Commander in Chief Land	5,718,578
Air Officer Commanding In Chief RAF Strike Command	
DEL near cash	1,865,712
DEL non cash	1,864,028
Total DEL	3,729,740
AME near cash	0
AME non cash	0
Total AME	0
Non Budget near cash	0
Non Budget non cash	0
Total Non Budget	0
Total Air Officer Commanding In Chief RAF Strike Command	3,729,740

Ministry of Defence—Breakdown of Main Estimates 2006-07

TLB/Estimate type	*Main estimates £000*
Chief of Joint Operations	
DEL near cash	383,180
DEL non cash	139,307
Total DEL	522,487
AME near cash	0
AME non cash	-4,000
Total AME	-4,000
Non Budget near cash	0
Non Budget non cash	0
Total Non Budget	0
Total Chief of Joint Operations	518,487
Chief of Defence Logistics	
DEL near cash	4,453,296
DEL non cash	2,853,825
Total DEL	7,307,121
AME near cash	0
AME non cash	9,910
Total AME	9,910
Non Budget near cash	0
Non Budget non cash	0
Total Non Budget	0
Total Chief of Defence Logistics	7,317,031
Adjutant General	
DEL near cash	1,622,465
DEL non cash	160,459
Total DEL	1,782,924
AME near cash	0
AME non cash	0
Total AME	0
Non Budget near cash	9,152
Non Budget non cash	0
Total Non Budget	9,152
Total Adjutant General	1,792,076
Chief RAF Personnel and Training Command	
DEL near cash	765,507
DEL non cash	160,959
Total DEL	926,466
AME near cash	0
AME non cash	0
Total AME	0
Non Budget near cash	0
Non Budget non cash	0
Total Non Budget	0
Total Chief RAF Personnel and Training Command	926,466

Ministry of Defence—Breakdown of Main Estimates 2006-07

TLB/Estimate type	*Main estimates £000*
Central	
DEL near cash	2,098,460
DEL non cash	1,219,381
Total DEL	3,317,841
AME near cash	0
AME non cash	2,360
Total AME	2,360
Non Budget near cash	578
Non Budget non cash	0
Total Non Budget	578
Total Central	3,320,779
Defence Estates	
DEL near cash	902,507
DEL non cash	-751
Total DEL	901,756
AME near cash	0
AME non cash	0
Total AME	0
Non Budget near cash	2,700
Non Budget non cash	0
Total Non Budget	2,700
Total Defence Estates	904,456
Defence Procurement Agency	
DEL near cash	1,574,061
DEL non cash	710,447
Total DEL	2,284,508
AME near cash	0
AME non cash	175,505
Total AME	175,505
Non Budget near cash	0
Non Budget non cash	0
Total Non Budget	0
Total Defence Procurement Agency	2,460,013
Corporate Science and Technology	
DEL near cash	538,452
DEL non cash	-4,252
Total DEL	534,200
AME near cash	0
AME non cash	0
Total AME	0
Non Budget near cash	0
Non Budget non cash	0
Total Non Budget	0
Total Corporate Science and Technology	534,200

Ministry of Defence—Breakdown of Main Estimates 2006-07

TLB/Estimate type	*Main estimates £000*
Conflict Prevention RFR2	
DEL near cash	47,326
DEL non cash	0
Total DEL	47,326
AME near cash	0
AME non cash	0
Total AME	0
Non Budget near cash	0
Non Budget non cash	0
Total Non Budget	0
Total Conflict Prevention RFR2	47,326
War Pensions and Benefits RFR3	
DEL near cash	0
DEL non cash	0
Total DEL	0
AME near cash	-648
AME non cash	1,030,599
Total AME	1,029,951
Non Budget near cash	0
Non Budget non cash	0
Total Non Budget	0
Total War Pensions and Benefits RFR3	1,029,951
MOD Total	33,063,133

Note:
The Single RN TLB was formed from the merger of Commander-in-Chief Fleet and 2nd Sea Lord/Commander in Chief Naval Home Command TLBs

Fuel Cell Technology

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Department plans *(a)* to procure fuel cell technology and *(b)* to encourage further research into fuel cell technology for submarines. [70777]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has funded work in fuel cell technology, but no decision has yet been taken regarding its specific application.

Haslar Hospital

Peter Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department has assessed the Aldershot Centre for Health as a model which could be followed at the Royal Hospital Haslar. [70953]

Mr. Watson *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* The future use of the Haslar site is a matter for the Hampshire and Isle of Wight strategic health authority, the local primary care trusts and the Portsmouth hospitals. We will of course continue to be engaged with the local health authorities as they develop their plans for the future of healthcare in South East Hampshire.

The Ministry of Defence will be assessing options for innovative partnerships for delivery of primary, tier 2 and intermediate care, particularly in the light of NHS developments and future military basing. However, it would be premature to model another facility on the Aldershot Centre for Health until the functional success of the project has been evaluated and any lessons have been identified.

Joint Strike Fighter

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the variants of the F35 which the UK is involved with; and how many of each the Government is planning to order. [70273]

Mr. Ingram: As a result of the United Kingdom's contribution to the System Development and Demonstration Phase, the UK is involved with all three variants of the F35 programme. These are the conventional take-off and landing, short take-off and vertical landing (STOVL) and the Carrier variants. The STOVL variant was selected in 2001 as the optimum solution to meet the UK requirements, of which variant the UK is intending to buy up to 150.

Meteorological Office

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the locations in the UK for which the Meteorological Office can readily supply information regarding average daily temperatures allowing for a wind chill factor; and if he will make a statement. [70395]

Mr. Watson: The Met Office records data in various ways. The stations listed record hourly temperature and hourly wind speed observations. From the temperature observations, the average daily temperature can be calculated. The wind speed observations can then be used to calculate the apparent temperature felt on exposed skin, known as wind chill.

UK Locations

Aberdaron
Aberporth
Aboyne No. 2
Albemarle
Aldergrove
Altnaharra No. 2
Andrewsfield
Aultbea No. 2
Aviemore
Ballykelly
Ballypatrick Forest
Baltasound No. 2
Barra
Bedford
Benson
Bingley No.2
Boscombedown
Boulmer
Bridlington MRSC
Brize Norton
Camborne
Capelcurig No. 3
Cardiff Weather Centre
Cardinham, Bodmin
Carlisle
Castlederg
Charlwood
Charterhall
Chivenor
Church Fenton
Church Lawford
Coleshill
Coningsby
Cottesmore
Cranwell
Crosby
Culdrose
Dishforth Airfield
Donna Nook No. 2
Drumalbin
Dundrennan
Dunkeswell Aerodrome
Dyce
Edinburgh, Gogarbank
Emley Moor
Eskdalemuir
Fair Isle
Filton
Fylingdales
Glasgow, Bishopton
Glenanne No. 2
Gravesend, Broadness
Hawarden Airport
Heathrow
Hereford, Credenhill
Herstmonceux, West End
High Wycombe, HQSTC
Holbeach No. 2
Hurn
Inverbervie No. 2
Islay: Port Ellen
Isle of Portland
Kenley Airfield
Kerwick
Kinloss
Kirkwall
Lake VYRNWY No. 2
Langdonbay
Larkhill
Leconfield
Leek, Thorncliffe
Leeming
Lerwick
Leuchars
Linton on Ouse
Liscombe
Little Rissington
Loch Glascarnoch
Loftus
Lossiemouth
Lough Fea
Lyneham
Machrihanish
Manston
Marham
Middle Wallop
Milford Haven Conservancy Board
Mumbles Head

Northolt
Nottingham, Watnall
Odiham
Pembrey Sands
Pershore
Plymouth, Mountbatten
Portglenone
Prestwick, Gannet
Redesdale Camp
Rhyl No. 2
Ronaldsway
Rosehearty
Saughall
Scampton
Scilly: St. Mary's Airport
Sennybridge No. 2
Shap
Shawbury
Shobdon Airfield
Shoeburyness, Landwick
Shoreham Airport
Skye: Lusa
Solent
South Farnborough
South Uist Range
Spadeadam No. 2
Stangelo
St. Athan
St. Bees Head No. 2
St. Mawgan
Stornoway Airport
Strathallan Airfield
Tain Range
Thorney Island
Tiree
Topcliffe
Trawsgoed
Tulloch Bridge
Valley
Waddington
Wainfleet No. 2
Walney Island
Warcop Range
Wattisham
West Freugh
Weybourne
Wick Airport
Wight: St. Catherines Point
Wittering
Woodford
Yeovilton
Bramham
Coventry, Coundon
Derrylin
Dunstaffnage
Durham
East Malling
Katesbridge
Killowen
Kinbrace, Hatchery
Monks Wood
North Wyke
Point of Ayre
Preston Wynne
Salsburgh
Sutton Bonington
Wisley
Aonach Mor
Bealach Na Ba No. 2
Cairngorm Summit
Cairnwell
Glen Ogle
Great Dun Fell No. 2

Military Personnel

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many military personnel have died in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [67079]

Mr. Ingram: During the five-year period 2001-05, 34 service personnel died in Northern Ireland who were members of the regular UK armed forces or full-time members of the Home Service Battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment. Details on annual deaths incurred are listed in the following table.

	All deaths	*Regular UK armed forces*	*Home service[1] battalions of the Royal Irish regiment*
2001	6	5	1
2002	6	2	4
2003	9	6	3
2004	8	5	3
2005	5	3	2
Total	34	21	13

[1] Full-time members only.

Military Spending

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much was spent on the *(a)* Army, *(b)* Royal Air Force and *(c)* Royal Navy in (i) cash and (ii) real terms in each year since 1997. [71202]

Mr. Ingram: Defence spending is not split by Service. Instead, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) operates a system of delegated authority to Top Level Budget (TLB) holders. Some are single Service but several, for example, the Defence Procurement Agency, the Defence Logistics Organisation and the Chief of Joint Operations support all three Services and their budgets are not broken down by Service.

Information on spending by TLBs can be found in the Government's Expenditure Plans (GEP) 2005-06 to 2007-08 MOD (Cmd6532) a copy of which is available in the Library of the House. This sets out past expenditure and future spending plans. It provides breakdowns of consumption by activity area. This includes the single Service Top Level Budget holders, and in the case of the RAF this shows the Commander-in-Chief Strike and

the Commander-in-Chief Personnel and Training Command. More recently, the MOD has published the 2004-05 Annual Report and Accounts, which provides the same breakdown. Figures for 2005-06 will be published in our Annual Report and Accounts, which is planned for publication before the summer recess.

Nuclear Weapons Testing

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what comparative assessment he has made of the National Radiological Protection Board research papers of 1988 and 1993 on the incidence of cancer among men from the UK who participated in the nuclear weapon test programmes. [71446]

Mr. Watson: Assessment of the 1988 report, which examined cancer incidence up to the end of 1983, led to the conclusion that presence at the UK atmospheric nuclear test sites had increased the risk of multiple myeloma and leukaemia (other than chronic lymphatic leukaemia) compared with controls selected from members of the armed forces who had not been present at the tests. This was because the level of these cancers among the control group was lower than would be expected for the general population rather than because it was higher for those who took part in the tests. These findings did not correlate with the risk of exposure from ionising radiation; rather, levels in the controls were inexplicably low. The 1993 analysis extended follow up to the end of 1990. Rates of multiple myeloma and the relevant leukaemias in the additional follow-up years were slightly lower in test participants compared with controls, whose rates were as in the general population. Because the differential increase in incidence of the relevant leukaemias mirrors the likely pattern of radiation-induced leukaemias, it was accepted that a possible slight risk of lymphatic leukaemia (other than chronic leukaemia) in the first 25 years after participation could not be ruled out. The small hazard of multiple myeloma in the 1988 report was not found in 1993 and was considered a chance finding. Both the 1988 and 1993 studies found that presence at the sites had no detectable effect on the risk of developing any other malignancy. A further study, published in 2003, also confirmed these findings.

Paveway IV Missile

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the Paveway IV missile will enter service; and which aircraft will be able to use it. [70275]

Mr. Ingram: Paveway IV was selected as the solution to the requirement (SR(A) 1248) for an all-weather precision guided bombing capability and will enter service on Harrier GR9/9A in mid 2007. The intention is that Paveway IV will also be integrated onto Tornado GR4/4A and Typhoon aircraft.

Regimental Mascots

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 7 May 2006, to question 50244, on regimental mascots, when he will reply to the hon. Member for Pendle on the matter. [70337]

Mr. Ingram: I replied to my hon. Friend on 15 May 2006.

Service Personnel (Commendation)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what means of recognition are available for the commendation of those serving in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan; and what means of recognition is available for those (i) injured and (ii) killed in the line of duty in those operations. [70823]

Mr. Watson: The full range of gallantry and meritorious service awards is available for those serving on operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere and may be awarded to those injured or killed while on operations. The only exception is that Orders cannot be conferred posthumously, for example a serviceman killed on operations cannot be appointed to the Order of the British Empire.

Service in Iraq and Afghanistan is also specifically recognised by the award of the Iraq Medal and the Operational Service Medal "Afghanistan" respectively. Should qualifying service be brought to an end before the completion of the specified qualifying period on account of death, wounding or other disability due to operational service, the reduced period shall be sufficient qualification for the award of the medal.

The Government-supported Armed Forces Memorial, which is to be the national memorial dedicated to members of the UK armed forces killed on duty or by terrorist action since the Second World War, will be constructed at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire and will record the names of almost 16,000 men and women. The trustees hope that construction will commence this summer and plan to unveil the Armed Forces Memorial in October 2007.

Rolls of Honour similar to those kept by the Royal Air Force in the Church of St. Clement Danes in London, which record the names of those who have died while serving in the UK armed forces, will be created for the Royal Navy and for the Army and will be kept in the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields and the Royal Hospital Chelsea respectively. A memorial, without names, in Westminster Abbey dedicated to members of the armed forces killed in conflict is also planned.

Tornado Fleet

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how long the *(a)* Tornado GR and *(b)* Tornado F3 will remain in service. [70271]

Mr. Ingram: On current plans, the Tornado GR4 will continue to be operated by the RAF until well into the 2020s, and the Tornado F3 will be retired from service around the end of this decade.

Type 45 Destroyers

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 10 May 2006, Question 67918, on Type 45 Destroyers, what assessment the naval staff has made of whether *(a)* an amphibious task group and *(b)* a carrier task group can be defended by fewer than two such destroyers. [71178]

Mr. Ingram: As I stated in my answer of 10 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 290W, it is the capability provided by the ships, rather than their numbers, that determine the level of protection provided.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Abortion Inquiry

Mr. Amess: To ask the Leader of the House if he will establish a joint House of Commons and House of Lords inquiry into abortion; and if he will make a statement. [70379]

Mr. Straw: The Government have no plans to do so.

Government Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Leader of the House what considerations underlie a decision on into which House of Parliament a Government Bill is introduced; and if he will make a statement. [70380]

Mr. Straw: A decision on the appropriate House of introduction is taken according to the circumstances of each Bill. Factors to be taken into account will include the subject matter of the bill and the amount and the nature of the business currently before each House.

More bills, particularly those giving effect to the Government's major policy priorities, will generally be first introduced into the Commons rather than the Lords. Consolidated Fund and Finance Bills, and most other Bills primarily financial in nature, are introduced into the Commons. It is the practice for Consolidation Bills, Law Commission and statute law repeal bills to be introduced into the Lords.

Members (House of Commons)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Leader of the House what the cost was per hon. Member in *(a)* 2004-05 and *(b)* each of the previous four years; and if he will make a statement. [70410]

Mr. Straw: I have taken this question to be referring to the total costs of the House of Commons per hon. Member.

Direct costs of the House of Commons are the sum of the Estimates for House of Commons: Administration and House of Commons: Members, though a range of the costs within the Administration Estimate do not relate solely to Members.

Financial year	*Total cost[1] (£ million)*	*Total per Member (659)*
2004-05	331.4	0.50
2003-04	312.1	0.47
2002-03	308.5	0.47
2001-02	285.6	0.43
2000-01	308.7	0.47

[1] In accordance with the principles on which the accounts are prepared, the information is in resource rather than cash terms.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Leader of the House how many hon. Members re-elected in 2005 have *(a)* had their information technology equipment (i) entirely and (ii) partially renewed and *(b)* not had their information technology renewed; and if he will make a statement. [70316]

Mr. Straw: Of the 646 Members elected in June 2005, 122 were new Members and four have now been or are subject to by-elections. This leaves 520 Members who were re-elected in 2005 who are included in the project to refresh their equipment.

As of 15 May, of the 520 Members, 161 Members have received all of their equipment. For a further 239 Members, the refresh is in progress (i.e. Members have been surveyed, orders placed or installations booked) and for 37 of these the refresh is partially complete. Some 120 Members have yet to submit their order forms. The refresh project is being undertaken in phases, and all Members will have been given an opportunity to refresh their equipment before the summer recess, providing forms are returned and survey and installation dates are agreed as per the guidance issued to Members.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Leader of the House what incentives exist for hon. Members to take less than the full first-class fare for rail tickets to and from their constituencies. [70276]

Mr. Straw: Under the terms of the Resolutions of the House of 10 April 1924 and 4 March 1980, Members are reimbursed for the cost of all travel within the UK on parliamentary business. It is for hon. Members to decide whether they travel first or standard class on any journey. There are no limits on the number of journeys that an hon. Member can make on parliamentary business.

Members may also claim travel allowances for their spouses, civil partners and children. This is limited by Resolution of the House to 15 return journeys per year and is not dependent on the ticket purchased.

The current arrangements are straightforward to administer and well understood by Members, and they provide choice in respect of the class of travel. Changes to the rules on travel are considered by the Advisory Panel on Members' Allowances, which can offer advice to the Members Estimate Committee.

Petitions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Leader of the House how many petitions were presented in Session *(a)* 2003-04 and *(b)* 2004-05; how many have been presented in 2005-06; and on how many occasions the responsible Department declined to make any observations. [70405]

Mr. Straw: Petitions statistics for past Sessions are published in the annual Sessional Returns. The following information for 2003-04 and 2004-05 is reproduced from this source. Information for 2005-06 to date has been added.

Session	Petitions presented	Observations tabled	Remainder
2003-04	128	82	46
2004-05	51	38	13
2005-06[1]	212	145	[2]67

[1] To 9 May 2006.
[2] Departments have confirmed that observations will not be tabled in respect of 19 petitions. 48 petitions are still outstanding.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Postage Costs

Mr. Dismore: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what the postage costs were for each Department of the House in each of the last three years; what percentage of *(a)* postal costs and *(b)* quantity of post was (i) first class and (ii) second class for each Department; what the Commission's policy is on when first or second class post should be used; and if he will make a statement. [70281]

Nick Harvey: Prior to April 2006 all official mail posted from the House of Commons was sent under a general Speaker's frank; a breakdown of the postage costs by departments of the House is therefore not available.

Postage costs for the House broken down between first and second class in each of the last two financial years are given below. There are no reliable figures for financial year 2003-04, but it is estimated that the figures for that year would have been broadly similar.

	2004-05		2005-06	
	£	Percentage	£	Percentage
Total of which	129,960	—	138,750	—
1st Class	127,105	97.8	134,206	96.7
2nd Class	2,855	2.2	4,545	3.3

From April 2006, identifiers have been introduced on the frank to allow departmental expenditure to be monitored. Much non-urgent departmental correspondence, which used to be sent by second class mail, is now conducted by email. The information provided will be used to encourage greater use of second class postage for appropriate items.

Security Passes

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission, how many security passes have been issued which give access to the Palace of Westminster and its associated buildings, broken down by category; and if he will make a statement. [70381]

Nick Harvey: A paper setting out the number of currently valid security passes giving access to the Parliamentary estate, broken down by category, has been placed in the Library of the House.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Asiatic Languages

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many pupils have taken *(a)* GCSE and *(b)* A-level examinations in Asiatic languages in each year since 1994; [69861]

(2) how many *(a)* schools and *(b)* colleges offer (i) GCSE and (ii) A-level qualifications in Asiatic languages. [69862]

Jim Knight: The information requested can be found in the following tables.

GCSE full course entries[1] in Asiatic languages[2], of 15 year old pupils[3] in all schools, 1994-2005[4]

	Number of entries
2005	15,046
2004	15,372
2003	15,958
2002	15,333
2001	15,083
2000	14,460
1999	14,117
1998	13,444
1997	13,356
1996	13,068
1995	11,844
1994	10,798

[1] For each subject only one attempt is counted, that which achieved the highest grade.
[2] The definition of Asiatic languages used here includes: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Gujarati, Hindi, Japanese, Modern Hebrew, Punjabi, Turkish, Urdu and Persian.
[3] Age at start of academic year i.e. 31 August.
[4] Includes attempts by these pupils in previous academic years.

GCE A-level entries in Asiatic languages[1], of 16-18 year olds[2], 1994-2005

	Number of entries
2005	3,088
2004	2,970
2003	2,714
2002	2,538
2001	2,146
2000	2,251
1999	2,164
1998	2,110
1997	2,153
1996	2,188
1995	1,878
1994	1,637

[1] The definition of Asiatic languages used here includes: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Gujarati, Hindi, Japanese, Modern Hebrew, Punjabi, Turkish, Urdu and Persian.
[2] Age at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August.

Information is not collected on the subjects offered by schools and colleges. However, it is possible to provide figures on the number of schools where at least one pupil has been entered for a particular subject and these are given as follows:

(a) The number of schools where at least one 15 year old pupil was entered for a GCSE full course in an Asiatic language in 2005 was 1,706;

(b) The number of schools/colleges where at least one student was entered for a GCE A-level in an Asiatic language in 2005 was 789.

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students studied asiatic languages at *(a)* university and *(b)* colleges of higher education in each year since 1994. [69863]

Bill Rammell: The available information is given in the following tables:

Enrolments to Asiatic studies[1] at English HE institutions, 1994/95 to 2001/02

	1994/5	1995/6	1996/7	1997/8	1998/9	1999/0	2000/1	2001/2
Pre-92 universities								
Postgraduate	250	285	260	285	315	320	270	325
Undergraduate	680	275	895	900	860	870	825	955
Total	930	1,165	1,155	1,185	1,175	1,195	1,095	1,285
Post-92 universities								
Postgraduate	15	10	15	15	10	—	5	30
Undergraduate	450	485	340	375	350	250	220	285
Total	465	495	445	385	360	250	225	315
Other HE institutions								
Postgraduate	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Undergraduate	25	35	40	30	15	10	5	—
Total	25	35	40	30	15	10	10	—
Total								
Postgraduate	265	300	275	300	325	325	275	360
Undergraduate	1,155	1,400	1,360	1,305	1,220	1,130	1,050	1,240
Total	1,420	1,700	1,640	1,605	1,545	1,455	1,325	1,600

— denotes a figure of less than 3
[1] For 1994/5 to 2001/2, 'Asiatic studies' includes 'Chinese studies', 'Japanese studies' and 'Other Asian studies' but excludes those coded as 'Others in Eastern, Asiatic, African, American and Australasian languages, literature and related subjects'.
Note:
Figures are on a snapshot basis as at 1 December and are rounded to the nearest 5.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record.

Enrolments to Asiatic studies[1] at English HE institutions, 2002/03[2] to 2004/05

	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5
Pre-92 HE institutions			
Postgraduate	460	530	520
Undergraduate	1,320	1,370	1,470
Total	1,780	1,900	1,990
Post-92 HE institutions			
Postgraduate	80	40	5
Undergraduate	495	520	695
Total	575	560	700
Other HE institutions			
Postgraduate	—	—	—
Undergraduate	5	—	—
Total	5	—	—
All HE institutions			
Postgraduate	540	570	525
Undergraduate	1,820	1,890	2,165
Total	2,360	2,460	2,690

— denotes a figure of less than 3 [1] For 2002/3 onwards 'Asiatic studies' includes 'Chinese studies', 'Japanese studies', 'South Asian studies' and 'Other Asian studies' but exclude those coded as 'Others in Eastern, Asiatic, African, American and Australasian languages, literature and related subjects'.
[2] For 2002/3 onwards, the Joint Academic Coding Scheme (JACS) replaced HESACODE as the coding frame used to identify subject of study. In addition to the coding change, enrolments for 2002/3 onwards are apportioned between all subjects studied whereas figures for 2001/2 and earlier are based upon a headcount of major subject of study. Hence the two sets of figures are not comparable.
Note:
Figures are on a snapshot basis as at 1 December and are rounded to the nearest 5.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record.

Pupil Statistics (Coventry, South)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of children *(a)* are in receipt of free school meals, *(b)* have special educational needs and *(c)* are from ethnic minority families in Coventry, South. [70957]

Jim Knight: The information requested is shown in the following tables.

Maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools[1]: school meal arrangements[2]. Coventry, South parliamentary constituency, January 2006 (provisional)

	Maintained nursery and primary				Maintained secondary				
Number on roll	Number of pupils taking free school meals	Percentage taking free school meals	Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage known to be eligible for free school meals	Number on roll	Number of pupils taking free school meals	Percentage taking free school meals	Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage known to be eligible for free school meals
7,851	1,460	18.6	1,772	22.6	7,337	1,036	14.1	1,324	18.0

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Includes dually registered and boarding pupils.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: number of pupils with special educational needs. Coventry, South parliamentary constituency, January 2006 (provisional).

	Maintained primary				Maintained secondary				
Total pupils	Pupils with statements	Percentage[2]	SEN pupils without statements[3]	Percentage[4]	Total pupils	Pupils with statements	Percentage[2]	SEN pupils without statements[3]	Percentage[4]
7,608	71	0.9	1,201	15.8	7,337	175	2.4	1,491	20.3

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Number of pupils with statements of SEN expressed as a percentage of total number of pupils. Excludes dually registered pupils.
[3] Includes pupils at school action and school action plus.
[4] Number of SEN pupils without statement expressed as a percentage of total number of pupils. Excludes dually registered pupils.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: number and percentage of minority ethnic pupils[2]. Coventry, South parliamentary constituency, January 2006 (provisional)

Maintained primary		Maintained secondary	
Number of minority ethnic pupils	Percentage of minority ethnic pupils[3]	Number of minority ethnic pupils	Percentage of minority ethnic pupils[3]
1,746	29.1	2,157	29.4

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Pupils of compulsory school age and above were classified according to ethnic group. Excludes dually registered pupils.
[3] Those pupils who have been classified according to their ethnic group and are other than white British expressed as a percentage of the number of pupils of compulsory school age and above.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Education and Inspections Bill

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent representations he has received on the Education and Inspections Bill. [68640]

Jim Knight: We continue to receive representations regarding the Education and Inspections Bill from a wide range of different people and organisations. We are engaged in ongoing work with our key stakeholders as the Bill progresses through Parliament.

Ms Butler: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what targets he plans to set for the educational achievement of children attending the special schools proposed in the Education and Inspections Bill; and if he will make a statement. [70443]

Jim Knight: The Education and Inspections Bill provides that where new or replacement special schools are needed, they should be set up under the provisions in Clauses 7 to 9. Clause 10 also allows non-maintained and independent special schools to publish proposals to enter the maintained sector.

The Education (School Performance Targets) (England) Regulations 2004 require all special schools to set appropriate targets for improving pupil performance in the same way as mainstream primary and secondary schools, taking account of the differential performance of pupils with Special Educational Needs.

Targets must be set for pupil attainment in the final year of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3, and in the last year of compulsory schooling. Where pupil performance is expected to be below the national curriculum levels, special schools can set zero targets. However, governing bodies must set additional

appropriate targets for such pupils using the P scales or other performance measures to improve the contribution schools make to the learning of pupils with Special Educational Needs.

The Government remain committed to ensuring that every child, regardless of background or any special educational need they might have, gets the education they need to enable them to fulfil their potential.

E-learning

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to ensure that the e-learning strategy outlined in the paper, "Harnessing Technology: Transforming learning and children's services" *(a)* is kept up to date and *(b)* makes use of the latest information technology, with particular reference to high-speed mobile communications; and if he will make a statement. [70519]

Phil Hope *[holding answer 12 May 2006]:* The e-strategy is being delivered through a number of themes:

Strategic Technologies - getting the right technology deployed cost-effectively.

E-Maturity - assessing the maturity and effectiveness of our system in use of the technology.

Personalised Content - harnessing multimedia resources to meet the needs and learning styles of users.

Knowledge Architecture - joining up information and identity management across the system and making it learner-centred.

The Department established a technology group in October 2005 to implement the e-strategy across the education and children's services sectors. The Department is supported in this role by the British Educational Communication and Technology Agency (Becta), our key NDPB partner in the delivery of the e-strategy.

The e-strategy is informed by independent research. The Becta Review 2006 (published 28 April) is an assessment of the state of technology in education based on the most recent research, evaluation and survey reports, most of which are produced by independent academic institutions or commissioned or managed by Becta itself. It presents the latest findings and provides a commentary and assessment of what the findings might mean for policy and practice. The review offers assessment of progress, where it can be identified, and highlights issues and challenges that may affect further change in the system. It has identified that mobile technologies are set to play an increasingly important role, with personal ownership of technologies such as laptops, PDAs and mobile phones on the rise in schools.

Independent Children's Homes

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research the Commission for Social Care Inspection has carried out in the last three years into the effects of clustering of independent children's homes. [69338]

Mr. Dhanda: I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that the commission has not carried out any research into the effects of clustering of independent children's homes in the last three years.

Looked-after Children

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many looked-after children there were in each year since 2000, broken down by *(a)* sex and *(b)* ethnic group. [71224]

Mr. Dhanda: The number of looked-after children by gender is provided in Table A of the Department's Statistical Volume 1 entitled "Children looked after by Local Authorities Year Ending 31 March 2005" which can be accessed on:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/VOL/v000646/index.shtml.

The number of looked after children by ethnicity is provided in the following tables.

Children looked after in England at 31 March by ethnic origin, 2001-05[1,2,3]

Number

	2001[4]	*2002*[4]	*2003*[4]	*2004*[5]	*2005*[5]
All Children[1]	58,900	59,700	60,800	61,100	60,900
White	48,900	49,100	49,500	48,800	48,100
Mixed	4,400	4,700	5,000	5,000	5,000
Asian or Asian British	1,100	1,200	1,300	1,500	1,800
Black or Black British	3,700	4,000	4,200	4,900	4,900
Other ethnic groups	820	800	870	990	1,100

[1] Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short-term placements.
[2] Historical data may differ from older publications. This is mainly due to the implementation of amendments and corrections sent by some local authorities after the publication date of previous materials.
[3] Information on ethnicity started to be collected in 2001.
[4] Figures are taken from the CLA100 return.
[5] Figures are taken from the SSDA903 return.

Children looked after in England at 31 March by ethnic origin, 2001-05[1,2,3]

	2001[4]	2002[4]	2003[4]	2004[5]	Percentage 2005[5]
All Children[1]	100	100	100	100	100
White	83	82	81	80	79
Mixed	7	8	8	8	8
Asian or Asian British	2	2	2	2	3
Black or Black British	6	7	7	8	8
Other ethnic groups	1	1	1	2	2

[1] Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short-term placements. [2] Historical data may differ from older publications. This is mainly due to the implementation of amendments and corrections sent by some local authorities after the publication date of previous materials.
[3] Information on ethnicity started to be collected in 2001.
[4] Figures are taken from the CLA100 return.
[5] Figures are taken from the SSDA903 return.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children were taken into local authority care from mothers under the age of *(a)* 16 and *(b)* 18 years in each year since 1997. [70909]

Mr. Dhanda: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Medicine Courses

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students have been admitted to university to read medicine on courses which lead to registration as doctors with *(a)* less than three Bs at A-level and *(b)* less than three Cs at A-level in each of the last seven years. [63642]

Bill Rammell: Admission of students to medical, and other, courses is a matter for individual institutions. The main scheme for widening participation is Aimhigher, which aims to raise the attainment levels of young people and their aspirations towards university, and to improve progression. Most activities are not subject-specific, although some local and regional activities are designed to raise awareness of and encourage progression to specific subjects such as medicine. Aimhigher does not include the delivery of degree or other higher education programmes. Information on the pre-entry qualifications of students entering first degree courses in medicine is, however, provided in the following tables.

English domiciled entrants to first degree courses in medicine, by qualifications on entry[1]

Year of entry	Entrants with A levels as highest qualification on entry	of which, those with scores equivalent to: Less than 3 Bs[2]/300 tariff points	Less than 3 Cs[2]/less than 240 tariff points
Based upon A level points score from the student's best three A levels, 1998/9 to 2001/2.			
1998/99	2,920	75	30
1999/00	2,835	135	40
2000/01	3,155	160	30
2001/02	3,420	235	60
Based upon UCAS tariff score from A levels from student reporting A level as their highest qualification on entry, 2002/3 to 2004/5.			
2002/03[3,4,5]	3,760	170	75
2003/04	4,177	200	65
2004/05	4,270	130	55

[1] Figures for 1998/99 to 2001/02 are points-based upon the students' best three A levels. In 2002/03 the UCAS tariff replaced A level scores. The tariff covers a wider range of qualifications though it is possible to identify those students with the tariff equivalent of 3 grade Bs (300 points) or 3 grade Cs (240 points). However, tariff score contains an unlimited number of eligible qualifications, not just the students' best three A levels.
[2] Including students with less than 3 Cs/240 tariff points.
[3] In 2002/03 a new method of coding subject of study was introduced on the student record, though the impact to entrants in medicine is likely to be small.
[4] Figures given for 2002/03 in a previous answer on 14 November 2004 were based upon all students with A level points recorded. This included some students who had a higher qualification on entry (for example a first degree).
[5] Figures for 2002/3 to 2004/5 are based upon students' tariff score from A levels where A levels are their highest qualification on entry.
Note:
Figures are on a snapshot basis as at 1 December and have been rounded to the nearest 5.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Primary Initiatives

Dr. Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many education initiatives there have been in primary education since 1997. [71080]

Jim Knight: The Government's reform agenda for primary schools has been set out in successive White papers, key policy documents and Acts of Parliament, as follows:

Key policy documents	*Acts of Parliament*
Excellence in Schools 1997	Education Act 1997
Schools Achieving Success 2001	Education Schools Act 1997
Every Child Matters 2003	School Standards and Framework Act 1998
Excellence and Enjoyment: a strategy for primary schools 2003	Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998
Every Child Matters 2004	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
The Five Year Strategy for children and learners 2004	Education Act 2002
Higher Standards Better Schools for all 2005	Education Act 2005
The Rose Review of the Teaching of Early Reading: Final report 2006	
Building Primary Schools at the heart of the community	

All these documents are available from the House of Commons Library and to the public from the National Stationery Office.

Prison Education

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to recommendation 29 of the Education and Skills Select Committee Report, HC114-1, on Prison Education, what discussions she has had with the Home Secretary about the role of Heads of Learning and Skills in prisons. [65565]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have been asked to reply.

The former Home Secretary (Charles Clarke) had several meetings with the former Secretary of State for Education and Skills (Ruth Kelly) over the past year, at which a number of issues relating to the offender learning and skills agenda were discussed.

The prime function of Heads of Learning and Skills (HoLS), is to support the delivery of all aspects of education provision in prison, and its integration with education provision in the community. This is set out in the Green Paper "Reducing Re-Offending through Skills and Employment", published at the end of last year. HoLS also ensure that this work is linked into the wider establishment resettlement agenda, including vocational training, and improving links with employers.

The role of individual HoLS is defined by local Prison Service operational priorities.

School Food

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress is being made in introducing healthier eating for children in schools. [71384]

Jim Knight: Later this month, we intend to announce, in response to recommendations from the School Meals Review Panel and the School Food Trust, a full suite of new standards for food in schools. The School Food Trust plans to publish good practice guidance to assist with the implementation of the standards.

School Statistics

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many secondary schools are located in villages producing deep mined coal. [69794]

Jim Knight: The Department for Education and Skills does not differentiate between types of coal mines, but can provide data relating to the number of secondary schools in coalfield and former coalfield areas as a whole.

	Number of secondary[1] schools located within coalfield wards in England
Maintained schools	269

[1] Includes secondary and middle deemed secondary schools

Source:
EduBase 11/5/06/ODPM Updating Coalfield Areas May 2003

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Arts Council

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of Government grant in aid to Arts Council England since 2001-02. [71200]

Mr. Lammy: My Department is currently involved in the Government's comprehensive spending review. This exercise, which is led by HM Treasury, includes a retrospective assessment of how Arts Council England has spent the grant in aid it has received since the last comprehensive spending review. The organisation was also recently the subject of a peer review, the results of which were published in December 2005.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money has been allocated to Arts Council England in each year since 1997; and how much this represents per head of population in England. [71048]

Mr. Lammy: Grant in Aid allocations to Arts Council England, population figures for England[1] and per capita spend for 1997-2004 are in the following table. Grant in aid allocation for 2005-06 was £412m but accurate population data are not yet available. These figures do not include the £1,525m funding for the arts from the National Lottery Distribution Fund from 1997-98 to 2004-05.

Year	Grant in Aid (s)	Population	£ Spend per head
1997-98	186,600,000	48,664,800	3.83
1998-99	189,950,000	48,820,600	3.89
1999-00	228,250,000	49,032,900	4.66
2000-01	237,155,000	49,233,300	4.82
2001-02	251,455,000	49,387,700	5.11
2002-03	289,405,000	49,561,800	5.84
2003-04	324,955,000	49,855,700	6.52
2004-05	368,859,000	50,093,100	7.36

Source:
[1]Office of National Statistics Mid-Year Population Estimates

BBC Broadcasts

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps are being taken to ensure that all BBC licence payers in the North West continue to receive BBC broadcasts when analogue is switched of in 2009. [71322]

Mr. Woodward: Digital switchover will enable digital terrestrial coverage to match the current 98.5 per cent. analogue level. Switchover for the Granada region and the Yorkshire region will happen in the second half of 2009 and the first half of 2011 respectively.

The Government have confirmed the regional timetable for the switchover to digital television and announced details of a support scheme to help the most vulnerable households to make the switch.

Digital UK, an independent, not-for-profit company, will co-ordinate the implementation of digital switchover and ensure that consumers have timely and accurate information about the switch.

Consultations

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many public consultations her Department undertook in the last 12 months; and what the cost was *(a)* in total and *(b)* of each consultation. [70481]

Mr. Lammy: Over 2005, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport undertook 15 formal public consultations in order to inform the Department's policy development. Information on the cost of each consultation and the total cost of all consultations could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Equal Pay

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps are undertaken within her Department to ensure that women are obtaining equal pay to men doing work of equal value. [65852]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport was one of the first Departments to conduct an equal pay audit and to publish an equal pay action plan. Since then we have taken steps to reduce pay differentials between men and women by shortening pay bands and by increasing the number of women in the more senior grades. The results of these activities are shown in the data contained in the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for North Ayrshire and Arran (Ms Clark) on 8 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 45-47. The Department is now conducting a further equal pay review with trade unions and expects to report later this year.

Heritage Lottery Fund

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the answer of 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1233W, on Heritage Lottery Fund, how much was awarded to organisations and projects in each *(a)* constituency and *(b)* council district in Northern Ireland in each year since 2002. [70488]

Mr. Lammy: Details of grants awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund to organisations and projects in Northern Ireland in each year since 2002 are set out in the following table. This information is derived from the Department's Lottery award database, searchable at: www.lottery.culture.gov.uk, which uses information supplied by the Lottery distributors.

District council local authority	2002	2003	2004	2005	£ 2006
Antrim	176,500	5,000	—	5,000	9,835
Ards	538,100	34,300	45,600	122,400	2,975,000
Armagh	962,036	27,033	119,098	321,851	199,257
Ballymena	3,311	95,800	1,233,390	—	—
Ballymoney	—	—	—	293,100	—
Banbridge	4,961	12,459	4,900	4,350	—
Belfast	2,316,321	1,443,680	1,170,315	6,108,715	528,863
Castlereagh	3,481	2,638	1,614,100	—	—
Coleraine	3,795	1,111,500	—	178,500	38,300
Cookstown	4,340	212,900	195,703	148,349	—
Craigavon	738,250	54,256	34,400	4,970	13,900
Derry City	64,100	360,400	4,075	1,123,276	553,000
Down	1,246,500	484,455	24,900	86,600	—
Dungannon	177,118	—	105,300	28222	

District council local authority	2002	2003	2004	2005	£ 2006
Fermanagh	54,650	57,900	5,240	330,580	35,200
Larne	509,251	237,000	192,787	—	—
Limavady	4,400	—	—	—	—
Lisburn	2,829,288	1,433,988	1,004,675	69,680	—
Magherafelt	5,000	67,200	4,047	4,300	—
Moyle	610,235	303,330	100,600	73,900	—
Newry and Mourne	14,544	1,553,235	313,107	118,482	150,500
Newtownabbey	5,000	—	2,250	—	348,500
North Down	301,800	79,000	—	13,200	455,000
Omagh	—	—	—	48,100	—
Strabane	7,500	253,400	236,700	—	—

UK Constituency	2002	2003	2004	2005	£ 2006
Belfast East	905,981	7,218	4,500	49,495	—
Belfast North	97,156	328,000	112,300	1,048,820	353,463
Belfast South	1,272,165	160,100	1,989,770	865,200	499,700
Belfast West	44,500	951,000	692,645	145,200	24,200
East Antrim	509,251	237,000	192,787	—	—
East Londonderry	8,195	1,111,500	—	178,500	38,300
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	231,768	57,900	10,240	332,047	35,200
Foyle	64,100	360,400	4,075	1,123,276	553,000
Lagan Valley	2,829,288	1,433,988	989,875	69,680	—
Mid Ulster	9,340	280,100	300,050	179,404	—
Newry and Armagh	967,036	1,575,633	428,014	436,951	224,757
North Antrim	613,546	399,130	1,333,990	367,000	—
North Down	301,800	79,000	—	13,200	455,000
South Antrim	181,500	5,000	2,250	5,000	9,835
South Down	1,256,044	418,090	33,991	94,332	125,000
Strangford	538,100	105,300	45,600	122,400	2,975,000
Upper Bann	743,211	66,715	34,400	4,970	13,900
West Tyrone	7,500	253,400	236,700	48,100	—

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for Ministers of State in her Department on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [69119]

Mr. Lammy: All travel by DCMS Ministers when travelling on official business is undertaken in accordance with the Ministerial Code on Travel by Ministers. Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year, this information includes accommodation costs. Copies are available in the Libraries of both Houses.

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what percentage of her private office staff is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled. [69127]

Mr. Lammy: Some 87 per cent. of private office staff are female and 13 per cent. male. At present, there are no disabled members of staff working in the private office.

Promotion Boards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what promotion boards have been held in her Department in each of the last five years. [70482]

Mr. Lammy: The Department held annual promotion boards for all permanent staff below the senior civil service until 2004. In November 2005, the Department introduced a new selection to post system in which staff may apply in competition for posts either at their current grade or at a higher grade.

Racial Abuse Complaints

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many complaints of racial abuse have been *(a)* investigated and *(b)* upheld in her Department in each of the last five years. [70484]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has not had any complaints of racial abuse in the last five years.

Staff Surveys

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many staff surveys have been conducted in her Department in each of the last three years. [70485]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport conducts Staff Opinion Surveys every two years as a way of gathering valuable feedback from staff. In the last three years the Department has conducted two staff surveys, one in June 2003 and one in June 2005.

Television Licence

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she had with the BBC about the role of the Post Office in supplying TV licences prior to the decision to end the contract. [71173]

Mr. Woodward: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not had any discussions with the BBC on this matter. The award of the contract for over-the-counter sales of television licences is a commercial matter for the BBC as television licensing authority. The Government have no power to intervene in such matters, nor would it be appropriate to comment on the Corporation's decision. DCMS officials were informed by the BBC of the proposal to put the contract out to tender and were notified by the Corporation prior to the announcement of the award of the contract. DCMS liaised with the DTI to keep them informed of developments.

Unspent Budget

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much of the budget for her Department remained unspent in the 2005-06 financial year. [70480]

Mr. Lammy: The accounts for financial year 2005-06 have not yet been finalised. The provisional outturn indicates a total resource under spend of £58 million. This equates to 3.3 per cent. of the total budget.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Ministerial Responsibilities

10. **Jeremy Wright:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what he expects the cost to public funds to be of his fulfilment of his new role in each of the next three years. [71288]

The Deputy Prime Minister: As I said earlier, the Prime Minister has today announced the details of my new responsibilities, and these are now available in the Library of the House.

In carrying out this role, I will be supported by a private office, a secretariat and the Cabinet Office as relevant to my responsibilities.

11. **Mr Gauke:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his responsibilities are in his new role. [71289]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the responses I gave the hon. Member for Daventry (Mr. Boswell) and the hon. Member for Bexleyheath and Crayford (Mr. Evennett) today.

Office Staff

13. **Mr. Heathcoat-Amory:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many staff will be working for him in his new office. [71291]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Reading, East (Mr. Wilson) today.

14. **Hugh Robertson:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his new office will have a diary secretary. [71292]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Reading, East (Mr. Wilson) today.

15. **Peter Viggers:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria staff in his office have to fulfil before they become eligible for fully paid leave. [71293]

The Deputy Prime Minister: Staff management issues are the responsibility of the civil service.

PRIME MINISTER

Social Behaviour

11. [71304] **Mr. Allen:** To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his oral answer of 1 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 316, on social behaviour, if he will meet the hon. Member for Nottingham, North to discuss the teaching of social behaviour in primary schools in areas of educational under-achievement.

The Prime Minister: I met my hon. Friend recently to discuss these issues. I pay tribute to my hon. Friend for the leadership he shows on these issues, and in his constituency. Ministers at the Department for Education and Skills will continue to work closely with him on these issues.

Staffordshire Ambulance Service

12. [71305] **Michael Fabricant:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the future of the Staffordshire ambulance service.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the statement made on 16 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 849-51 by my hon. Friend the Minister of State for Health (Andy Burnham).

Deputy Prime Minister

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister (1) if he will list the official duties of the Deputy Prime Minister; what his annual salary will be; what official accommodation he has been allocated; how many staff he has been allocated; at what grade; what the official office address will be; and if he will make a statement; [70076]

(2) if he will list the Cabinet Committees which are chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister. [70876]

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Prime Minister (1) how many full-time equivalent staff the Deputy Prime Minister will have working for him in his new role; [70664]

(2) where the Deputy Prime Minister's new office will be based; and whether he will retain his offices at 26 Whitehall; [70669]

(3) whether the Deputy Prime Minister will retain his official residences; [70670]

(4) whether the Deputy Prime Minister will have a *(a)* private parliamentary secretary and *(b)* junior Ministers assisting his brief; [70671]

(5) To ask the Prime Minister whether the Deputy Prime Minister will appoint a special adviser; [70735]

(6) which Cabinet Committees the Deputy Prime Minister will *(a)* chair and *(b)* be a member of. [70740]

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister where the Deputy Prime Minister's office will be located; and how many civil servants will be attached to it, broken down by grade. [70313]

Mrs. May: To ask the Prime Minister under which departmental budget the cost of the Deputy Prime Minister's office will fall; and what estimate he has made of the cost in 2006-07. [71071]

The Prime Minister: The business of Government is by nature cross-departmental and the main way of agreeing policy and driving reform across departmental responsibilities is through Cabinet Committees and sub-Committees.

Like previous holders of the office, the Deputy Prime Minister will act with my full authority in overseeing the delivery of Government business, including delivering key pledges in the 2005 manifesto. He will have a wide-ranging brief across the full range of domestic policy areas, and will continue to deputise for me domestically, including at Prime Minister's Questions, and in his current international role.

Following the reshuffle, the full list of chairs of Cabinet Committees and sub-Committees has today been announced in a written ministerial statement. The Deputy Prime Minister will chair nine Committees, a net addition of four to his previous responsibilities. This includes chairing the Domestic Affairs Committee, which takes decisions across the range of domestic Government business.

The full list of Committees chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister is:

Domestic Affairs (DA)
Public Health (DA/(PH))
Housing and Planning (HP)
Inspection (RB(I))
Post Office Network (MISC33), a new Committee
Ageing Policy (DA(AP))
Local and Regional Government (LRG)
Local Government Strategy and Performance (LRG(P))
Animal Right Activists (MISC13)

In addition, the Deputy Prime Minister will play an active role as my deputy on the following seven Committees:

Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)
Asylum and Migration (AM)
Energy and the Environment (EE)
National Health Service Reform (HSR)
Public Service Reform (PSR)
Schools Policy (SP)
Serious Organised Crime and Drugs (SOC)

The Deputy Prime Minister is also entitled to attend all other Cabinet Committees, as he judges necessary.

The Deputy Prime Minister has also agreed to work with Cabinet colleagues on improving the effectiveness of policy development across Government, and in particular with respect to the major issues which require an effective cross-Government response. He is also looking at our practice in developing policy, and how this can be improved.

Additionally, the Deputy Prime Minister will continue to assist me with my international duties, along with his other international work particularly in respect of the China task force, and, in recognition of his work in delivering the Kyoto treaty, to work with the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for the Environment, and other departments across Government on promoting the Government's post-Kyoto agenda.

The Deputy Prime Minister will continue to have the use of Dorneywood. Under the terms of the Dorneywood Trust, there is no cost to public funds. The Deputy Prime Minister will be supported by a private office and secretariat, allocated from within existing civil service resources. This expenditure will be accounted for and audited in the normal way. In his Cabinet Committee work he will be supported by the Cabinet Office's secretariats, and will draw on the support of officials in other Departments as necessary to fulfil his other responsibilities.

Minister Without Portfolio

Mr. Heald: To ask the Prime Minister what the responsibilities are of the Minister without Portfolio; and what salary is paid to her in respect of these responsibilities. [70010]

The Prime Minister: The Minister without Portfolio is a member of Cabinet and will be a member of a number of Cabinet Committees. A full list of the membership of Cabinet Committees will be published shortly. The salary of the Minister without Portfolio is paid for by the Labour Party.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Prime Minister (1) on how many occasions *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Office have stayed overnight in (i) five star, (ii) four star and (iii) three star hotels in each of the last three years; [69246]

(2) what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for *(a)* civil servants in his Office and *(b)* special advisers staying overnight in (i) mainland Great Britain, (ii) Northern Ireland, (iii) the Republic of Ireland and (iv) other countries in each of the last three years. [69247]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 8 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 566W to the hon. Member for Chichester (Mr. Tyrie).

Television Licences

Danny Alexander: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions his Office had with the BBC about the role of the Post Office in supplying TV licences *(a)* prior to and *(b)* since the decision to end the Post Office's contract for this work. [71175]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House (Jack Straw) on 11 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 517-18 to the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Mr. Carmichael).

CABINET OFFICE

Social Exclusion

9. **Mr. Drew:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what support has been made available since 1997 to tackle social exclusion in the most deprived areas of the United Kingdom, with particular reference to rural areas. [71287]

Hilary Armstrong: Tackling social exclusion is one of this Government's most ambitious and important goals. The Social Exclusion Unit aims to explore the rural dimension in all its work. Furthermore, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund was established in 2001 and £45 million of NRF funding is currently allocated to 16 rural areas. DEFRA provides £73 million per annum to RDA budgets and is committed to establishing the Commission for Rural Communities.

Departmental Contracts

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what contracts the Cabinet Office has awarded to *(a)* Geronimo Communications and *(b)* Tribal Communications since 1997; for what purpose each contract was issued; and what the cost was of each contract. [70711]

Hilary Armstrong: The Cabinet Office has not let any contracts to Geronimo Communications or Tribal Communications since 1997.

Ministerial Tenure

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what the average length of time in office has been for *(a)* Cabinet Ministers, *(b)* Ministers of State and *(c)* Parliamentary Under-Secretaries of State since 1976. [70123]

Hilary Armstrong: This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Northcote-Trevelyan Report

Mark Pritchard: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster whether the Government plan to review the conclusions of the Northcote-Trevelyan Report on the civil service. [71290]

Mr. McFadden: The Government remain committed to a permanent impartial civil service with appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. These principles have been confirmed in the new Civil Service Code which was launched for consultation on 27 January 2006.

Portland PR

Mr. Henderson: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what meetings officials in her Department have had with representatives of the public relations company Portland PR; what contracts Portland PR has with her Department and agencies for which she has responsibility; and what the nature of the contract is in each case. [70041]

Hilary Armstrong: The Cabinet Office has not awarded any contracts to Portland PR.

The Department does not maintain a central list of such meetings. Civil servants meet many people as part of the process of policy development and business delivery. All such meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Service Code and Guidance for civil servants on contacts with lobbyists and people outside Government.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

"Sustainable Communities: Homes for All"

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost was of printing the "Sustainable Communities: Homes for All" revision. [67016]

Angela E. Smith: I have been asked to reply.

In order to replenish stocks, 2,000 further copies of Cm 6424 "Sustainable Communities: Homes for all" were printed in March 2005 at a cost of £3,950.

Anti-Semitism

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps the Government are taking to reduce anti-Semitism; and what dedicated funds are available for this. [69741]

Meg Munn: The Government celebrate and value the contribution made by the Jewish community. The Government deplore all forms of racism and are committed to tackling anti-Semitism wherever it exists.

We believe that the best way to do this is through the effective implementation of strong legislation against racial and religious discrimination and racially and religiously motivated crime, underpinned by policies and strategies to increase racial equality and community cohesion.

Our laws therefore do not distinguish between particular racial groups or particular forms of racism. We therefore treat anti-Semitic incidents as racist incidents.

In recent years the Government have strengthened both the legal framework against race discrimination and the criminal penalties for offences such as incitement to racial hatred and for racially or religiously aggravated assault and criminal damage.

We have robust police and crime prosecution service policies. Additionally, crime and disorder reduction partnerships are required to consider all crime including hate crime and their local areas when determining their strategies. Tackling hate crime is an essential element of ensuring safer communities.

The Government are fully committed to engaging with faith communities at all levels and this forms a crucial part of our overall strategy of building a more inclusive, tolerant and cohesive society. Since the publication and subsequent implementation of the recommendations of the "Working Together: Co-operation between Government and faith communities" Report (2004) there has been substantial progress in consulting and involving faith communities in policy development across Whitehall.

We are teaching young people through the National Curriculum about citizenship and there is a statutory requirement on schools to teach about the Holocaust. Government also support the annual commemoration of Holocaust Memorial Day to reinforce the message that racism and prejudice can have catastrophic consequences.

In keeping with the approach towards tackling hate crime as outlined above we deliberately do not have dedicated funds to tackle anti-Semitism.

However, the Home Office established the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust in 2005 to take over the responsibility for organising a national commemoration. The Government support the Trust with an annual amount of £500,000 to meet the costs of the commemoration.

Departmental Re-branding

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much has been allocated in connection with the setting-up of her new Department for *(a)* the design and production of new logos, *(b)* modifications to buildings and furnishings, *(c)* stationery, *(d)* online media design, *(e)* re-branding and *(f)* other costs; and from what budgets the resources will be drawn. [71587]

Angela E. Smith: The Department will bear down on all costs involved in setting up the Department for Communities and Local Government and have allocated a budget of £8,000 to £12,000 from the Department's corporate communications budget.

To date the costs for this exercise are as follows:

(a) the design and production of a new logotype £2,200,

(b) the modifications to buildings and furnishings, approximately £5,000,

(c) stationery, approximately £2,500.

(d) online media design £600

For *(e)* re-branding and *(f)* other costs, the Department will draw down on the allocated corporate communications budget.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much her Department is expecting to spend on departmental re-branding. [70588]

Angela E. Smith: The Department will bear down on the necessary costs arising from the establishment of the Department for Communities and Local Government and at all times will look to achieve best value for money for the complete exercise. Where appropriate the Department will continue to use existing Office of the Deputy Prime Minister branded materials while these stocks last.

A budget of £8,000 to £12,000 has been allocated for this exercise, of which approximately £2,200 has been spent on the design, production and introduction of a departmental logotype.

The remainder of the budget will be used for implementation over time.

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate she has made of the cost of transferring the responsibilities of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to her Department. [69856]

Angela E. Smith *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* There will be no additional public expenditure as a consequence of the Machinery of Government (MOG) changes transferring the responsibilities of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and other Departments to the new Department for Communities and Local Government.

The MOG changes will be reflected in adjustments to Departmental budgets which will be cost-neutral in overall public terms.

Any costs of establishing the new Department for Communities and Local Government, such as relocation of incoming staff from other Departments' buildings, changes to signage and stationery, will be met from existing budgets.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government which communities and civic renewal functions have been transferred to her Department from the Home Office. [70580]

Angela E. Smith: As set out by the Prime Minister in his letter of 9 May, responsibilities for communities, race, faith, and equalities will be brought together with the existing responsibilities of the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of the staff in his Department is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled, broken down by grade. [69058]

Angela E. Smith: I have been asked to reply.

The following table sets out the percentage of staff within DCLG as at 31 December 2005.

Percentage

Responsibility level	*Male*	*Female*	*Declared disabled*
SCS level	61	39	2
Grades 6/7	60	40	2
SEO/HEO	54	46	2
EO	48	52	3
AO/AA	38	62	2
Industrial	100	0	0
Total	53	47	2

Source:
HR Information System (PIMS)

Departmental records of disabled staff are solely based on voluntary declaration of disability under the Disability Discrimination Act and not connected in any way to formal register of disability.

Fire Service

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how fire cover will be provided if firefighters take strike action; and what contingency planning the Government have taken in the event of strike action. [70725]

Angela E. Smith: The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 imposes a duty on fire and rescue authorities to put in place business continuity management arrangements to ensure that they can continue to exercise their functions in the event of an emergency as far as reasonably practicable. This includes industrial action.

National contingency planning arrangements for industrial action in the fire and rescue service are kept under constant review.

Gershon Review

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps her Department has taken as a result of the Gershon initiative. [70692]

Mr. Woolas: Following the Gershon efficiency review, the Spending Review 2004 set the Department (as ODPM) a target to achieve at least £620 million annual efficiency gains by 2008. We have established a central efficiency programme which includes registered social landlord housing, regional development agencies, fire modernisation, homelessness, Departmental work force reduction and administration. Some £244 million in gains have been made to date and we are forecast to exceed our target. The Department's Annual Report to be published shortly will cover the latest progress.

DCLG also has responsibility for overseeing delivery of the Local Government target of £6.45 billion efficiencies from local authorities, schools and police by 2008. Councils' contribution to this is at least £3 billion. They are on track to meet and indeed exceed it. Information on activities and progress can be seen in the "Efficiency—One Year On" document (www.rce.gov.uk/rce/aio/16537).

Housing

Lynne Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many households there were on *(a)* council and *(b)* registered social landlord waiting lists in each of the last 20 years. [42223]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

(a) The number of households on councils' housing waiting lists in England for the period 1986-2005 is shown in the following table:

As at 1 April:	*Number of households on the housing waiting list*
1986	1,351,300
1987	1,289,500
1988	1,273,500
1989	1,250,000
1990	1,255,500
1991	1,282,500
1992	1,296,700
1993	1,208,800
1994	1,121,500
1995	1,087,100
1996	1,062,200
1997	1,021,100
1998	1,022,800
1999	1,035,800
2000	1,038,700
2001	1,039,300
2002	1,093,300
2003	1,266,300
2004	1,427,700
2005	1,546,900

Source:
The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix return (HSSA) from 2000 onwards; ODPM's Housing Investment Programme (HIP) return before 2000.

Local authorities (LAs) in England report the numbers of households on their housing waiting list as at 1 April in their annual Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix returns. Where the local authority maintains a common waiting list with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) in their district, the list will also include households placed on the list by RSLs.

(b) The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not collect information on households on individual RSL waiting lists. However, as stated above the figures for LA waiting lists will include some households on RSL waiting lists where they operate a common list.

Not everyone on the waiting list is necessarily in urgent housing need. The waiting list also includes those who consider social housing as their preferred or one of a number of housing options, and those who decide to get onto the waiting list ladder before they need or want to move house—particularly where the priority system is heavily based on waiting time.

Planning Gain Supplement

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate the Government has made of the annual revenue to be raised from planning gain supplement. [70705]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The amount of revenue from a planning-gain supplement (PGS) will depend on final decisions on its rate and scope. PGS will be set at a modest rate to help finance additional infrastructure whilst preserving incentives to bring land forward for development.

Power Stations

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what plans she has to exclude power stations from rateable value growth targets as part of the end of year one review of the local authority business growth incentive scheme. [70973]

Mr. Woolas: The Local Authority Business Growth Incentive scheme's (LABGI) end of year one review is considering feedback received following the scheme's first year in operation (2005-06) including consideration of power stations. The review's conclusions will have implications for the details of the scheme in years' two and three, and Ministers will be announcing their conclusions in due course.

Regional Centres of Excellence

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the cost has been of the regional centres of excellence. [70728]

Mr. Woolas: Since 2004-05, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the predecessor to the Department for Communities and Local Government, has provided direct funding of the order of £30.8 million to the regional centres of excellence (RCEs).

SCOTLAND

Departmental Expenditure

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much was spent on advertising by his Department in each of the last three years. [70625]

David Cairns: Nothing.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what percentage of his private office staff are *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled. [69107]

David Cairns: Some 67 per cent. of staff in private office are male and 33 per cent. are female; in the interests of privacy, we do not publish the figures on disabled staff where these are less than five.

Home Working

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many people in his Department have been enabled to work from home in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [67988]

David Cairns: All the staff in the Scotland Office are on loan from the Scottish Executive or the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA). Although no staff in the Scotland Office have formally worked from home in the last three years, both the Scottish Executive and the DCA are committed to achieving a work-life balance for all staff.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland on how many occasions *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department have stayed overnight in (i) five star, (ii) four star and (iii) three star hotels in each of the last three years. [69101]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office does not hold this information.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department staying overnight in (i) mainland Great Britain, (ii) Northern Ireland, (iii) the Republic of Ireland and (iv) other countries in each of the last three years. [69102]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office does not hold this information in the form requested.

Public Consultations

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many public consultations his Department undertook in the last 12 months; and what the cost was *(a)* in total and *(b)* of each consultation. [70623]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office has undertaken no public consultations in the last year.

Racial Abuse

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many complaints of racial abuse have been *(a)* investigated and *(b)* upheld in his Department in each of the last five years. [70626]

David Cairns: There have been no complaints of racial abuse in the last five years.

Staff Surveys

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many staff surveys have been conducted in his Department in each of the last three years. [70627]

David Cairns: Over the last three years, staff in the Scotland Office have been able to participate in two staff surveys by the Department for Constitutional Affairs and three staff surveys by the Scottish Executive.

Unspent Budget

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much of the budget for his Department remained unspent in the 2005-06 financial year. [70622]

David Cairns: It is estimated that the Scotland Office will underspend its provision for 2005-06 by £0.59 million.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Advertising

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much was spent on advertising by her Department in each of the last three years. [70536]

Margaret Beckett: The total spent on advertising in each of the last three years was:

	£
2003-04	368,818.96
2004-05	151,560.75
2005-06	233,797.34

Air Miles

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many free air miles have been accrued by senior civil servants in her Department on official business in each of the last three years; and how they were used. [70540]

Margaret Beckett: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not record the number of air miles earned by members of its staff travelling on official business.

The FCO follows Cabinet Office rules, which do not permit staff to use air miles, which they have accumulated through official travel, for personal journeys. We encourage staff to make use of these air miles to reduce the cost of future official travel. If they are unable to do so, and the air miles are transferable, they may pass them to their resource manager to use for official travel by others. If the air miles are not transferable, staff may donate them to a charity of the travel operator's choice.

Basra

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of progress in implementing the agreement to restart cooperation with the local government in Basra in Iraq since 12 March 2006; and if she will make a statement. [65730]

Margaret Beckett: We have been working hard since my hon. Friend the Minister of State for the Middle East, Kim Howells, visited Iraq in March to secure a resumption of co-operation with the Basra Provincial Council. This was finally achieved on 7 May, when the Chairman of the Council announced a formal end to the boycott he and his colleagues had earlier imposed. This welcome development opens the way to restoration of full co-operation between us and the Basra local authorities.

Departmental Credit Cards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what facility is available for senior civil servants in her Department to use credit cards supplied by the Department. [70539]

Margaret Beckett: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) issues a corporate credit card to UK-based staff for use on official travel. The card may be used in the UK and overseas to pay for items such as hotel accommodation, rail tickets and taxi fares. Officers travelling overseas may also use the card to withdraw foreign currency, up to a limit of £325 per week.

The corporate credit cards are issued to UK-based staff who travel regularly and are not restricted only to senior civil servants. Each officer holding a card is given guidance on its use and their attention is drawn to what may and may not be purchased with the card. At present, there are nearly 600 UK-based card holders, who made over 2,500 individual transactions in the first quarter of 2006.

Some overseas posts also issue their own corporate credit cards, in line with guidance issued by Finance Directorate. These cards are issued locally and, although Finance Directorate are aware of the posts that have issued cards, the Directorate does not hold information about the cardholders, or how frequently they are used. Finance Directorate guidance is that cards are issued to officers according to need, rather than according to grade.

Iran

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations she has made *(a)* unilaterally and *(b)* through the EU to the Iranian government in response to reports of renewed persecution of those of the Baha'i faith in Iran; and what representations she has received on the matter. [70885]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I are seriously concerned at the situation faced by the Baha'i community in Iran. Recent reports that Iran's Supreme Leader has instructed the Iranian authorities and armed forces to identify Baha'is and monitor their activities are deeply disturbing. We expect Iran to uphold freedom of religion and belief in accordance with its international obligations under Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Ministers and officials have pressed the Iranian authorities on many occasions to take action to address the intimidation and discrimination suffered by Iranian Baha'is. At our suggestion, the EU conveyed its serious concern to the Iranian authorities on 31 January and again on 11 April. On 10 April, EU Foreign Ministers underlined their

"continued concerns about the human rights situation in Iran, in particular regarding the situation of Baha'is".

We have also taken action at the UN. All EU countries co-sponsored a UN General Assembly resolution on human rights in Iran in December last year. This expressed serious concern at, inter alia,

"the escalation and increased frequency of discrimination and other human rights violations against the Baha'i, including cases of arbitrary arrest and detention, the denial of freedom of religion or of publicly carrying out communal affairs, the disregard of property rights, the destruction of sites of religious importance, the suspension of social, educational and community-related activities and the denial of access to higher education, employment, pensions, adequate housing and other benefits".

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has received several representations from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the UK on this issue.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of *(a)* the likelihood of and *(b)* the time scale for Iran developing nuclear weapons. [70929]

Dr. Howells: The Iranian Government have stated on a number of occasions that it does not wish to develop nuclear weapons. However, Iran's documented record of deception over the last two decades gives serious grounds for concern about the real intentions of its nuclear programme. There is documented evidence that Iran used a clandestine international procurement network. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has also reported that Iran has in its possession a document describing the procedures for the reduction of UF6 to uranium metal in small quantities, and the casting of enriched and depleted uranium metal into hemispheres, related to the fabrication of nuclear weapon components. The IAEA has indicated that the existence of this document is a matter of concern. Information has also been made available to the IAEA concerning possible Iranian work on the design of a missile re-entry vehicle which could have a military nuclear dimension. Iran has refused to discuss this information with the IAEA.

IAEA Director General, Dr. el-Baradei, in his report on 2 September 2005 noted that after

"two and a half years of intensive inspections and investigation, Iran's full transparency is essential and long-overdue".

The IAEA is still unable to conclude that there are no undeclared nuclear materials or activities in Iran. At a press conference in Algeria, on 17 February, my right hon. Friend the then Foreign Secretary (Mr. Straw) said:

"There are strong suspicions internationally that Iran may be seeking to use its nuclear programme in order to develop a nuclear weapons capability.... but we do not have absolute proof".

Estimates of the time Iran might require to develop a nuclear weapon vary, depending on assumptions made.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of Iran's threat to withdraw from all or part of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. [71459]

Dr. Howells: Iran's leaders have said on a number of occasions in recent weeks that Iran might consider withdrawing from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) in certain circumstances. For example, President Ahmadinejad said on 24 April,

'working in the framework of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and the (International Atomic Energy) agency (IAEA) is our concrete policy, but if we see that they are violating our rights, or they don't want to accept (our rights), well, we will revise'.

On 7 May, 160 Majlis deputies issued a statement saying that if the United Nations Security Council adopted a Resolution on Iran under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the Majlis would oblige the Iranian government to consider withdrawing from the NPT.

Such comments are hard to reconcile with President Ahmadinejad's claim at the UN General Assembly in September 2005 that "continued interaction and technical and legal co-operation with the IAEA will be the centrepiece of our nuclear policy", and with the commitment of Iran's Ambassador to the IAEA in August 2005 that Iran would "never" leave the NPT. They have presumably been made to influence Security Council deliberations presently under way. As the IAEA Board and the Security Council have made clear, Iran needs to build confidence that its nuclear programme is for exclusively peaceful purposes, including by reinstating a full suspension of all enrichment-related and reprocessing activity and increasing transparency with the IAEA. Threats to withdraw from the NPT have the opposite effect, undermining international confidence still further.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations she has made to Iran concerning the filling of the post of Iranian ambassador to London. [71495]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has made no such representations.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make a statement on Iranian accession to the World Trade Organisation. [69176]

Dr. Howells: The World Trade Organisation (WTO) General Council accepted Iran's application to begin the process of accession to the WTO on 26 May 2005. This process normally takes several years. The next steps will be to establish a working party of WTO members that indicate an interest, and for Iran to submit a memorandum on foreign trade describing its current trading regime and setting out the reforms it intends to make in order to ensure that this regime is compatible with WTO norms. The European Union has traditionally supported the principle of Iran's accession to the WTO, which should promote economic reform, liberalisation, transparency and respect for property rights, and reduce discriminatory trade practices. As part of the accession process, Iran must agree acceptable terms and complete bilateral negotiations with all interested WTO parties before it could finally join.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations she has received from within Iraq on behalf of the International Tax and Investment Center in Iraq since January 2005; and if she will make a statement. [68560]

Dr. Howells: We have not received any representations from within Iraq on behalf of the International Tax and Investment Center since January 2005.

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British civilians have been killed in Iraq since March 2003. [70266]

Dr. Howells: Our consular records show that at least 36 British civilians have died in Iraq since March 2003. This number includes deaths from natural causes, but is not a definitive figure as records include only those cases where consular assistance has been sought. The figure does not include British dual nationals.

Israel

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether representations have been made to the Israeli authorities to cease withholding Palestinian tax revenues by *(a)* the UK and *(b)* the EU; and what assessment has been made of the feasibility of channelling those tax revenues via the EU. [71378]

Dr. Howells: The UK and the EU have consistently called on the Government of Israel to ensure that the tax revenues it collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority (PA) reach the Palestinian people. We welcome the move by Israel to use the revenues to pay utilities bills that the PA has accrued with Israeli companies from those revenues. We also welcome Foreign Minister Livni's announcement that withheld revenues could be used for humanitarian purposes. Channelling funds through the EU mechanism would be a further positive move.

Leonard Hardy

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* discussions and *(b)* correspondence there has been between her Department and the German authorities on the case of Leonard Hardy; and whether an agreement was reached between the Government and German authorities in relation to this case. [66821]

Margaret Beckett: Leonard Hardy was arrested in Spain on 17 August 2005 for the bombing of the Osnabruck barracks, Germany, in 1996.

There were discussions between our embassy in Berlin and the German authorities about the UK's policy in relation to dealing with terrorist suspects "on the run". These focused, in particular, on the implications of the document entitled "Proposals in Relation to On the Runs (OTRs)" published in May 2003 and the subsequent draft legislation, the Northern Ireland (Offences) Bill, and their potential relevance to the cases of individuals suspected of offences committed in Germany.

That legislation was withdrawn on 11 January 2006. The Government had no role in Hardy's extradition from Spain to Germany, which we understand took place under the European Convention on Extradition 1957 and the relevant German and Spanish legislation, and subsequent prosecution. No agreement was made between the Government and the German authorities in relation to this case.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on how many occasions *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in her Department have stayed overnight in (i) five star, (ii) four star and (iii) three star hotels in each of the last three years. [69071]

Margaret Beckett: There is no centrally held record of the number of nights civil servants or special advisers have been accommodated in hotels over the last three years, nor the standard of those hotels. To answer this question officials would need to contact every post worldwide and ask them to let us know specifically the number of nights and the standard of accommodation civil servants or special advisers stayed in. To collate this information would therefore incur disproportionate cost.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in her Department staying overnight in (i) mainland Great Britain, (ii) Northern Ireland, (iii) the Republic of Ireland and (iv) other countries in each of the last three years. [69072]

Margaret Beckett: There is no centrally held record of the cost of overnight accommodation for civil servants or special advisers over the last three years. To answer this question staff from my Department would need to contact every post worldwide and ask them to let us know specifically the cost of accommodation in which civil servants or special advisers stayed. To collate this information would therefore incur disproportionate cost.

Officials' Phone Calls

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many minutes of free personal overseas telephone calls officials in her Department are entitled to each week while posted overseas. [69672]

Margaret Beckett: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office allows staff on detached duty overseas to claim reimbursement for up to five minutes of calls back to the UK a week. In addition, staff on substantive postings overseas receive an element in their overseas allowances to cover up to 60 minutes a month of calls back to the UK at local rates.

Palestine

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much aid the EU plans to channel to the Palestinian territories; and what the value is of the tax revenue due to the Palestinian Authority which has been withheld by Israel. [71387]

Dr. Howells: The EU was tasked by the Quartet on 9 May to develop a temporary international funding mechanism to ensure assistance reaches the Palestinian people. The modalities of the mechanism, and the amounts that could be channelled through it, are being worked on urgently. The UK will of course want to play its part. Israel collects around US$50 million per month in tax revenues, part of which has been used to pay utilities bills.

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what percentage of her private office staff is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and (c) disabled. [69077]

Margaret Beckett: Some 36 per cent. of staff in my private office are male, 64 per cent. female and none registered disabled.

Promotion Boards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many promotion boards have been held in her Department in each of the last five years. [70535]

Margaret Beckett: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has held the following number of promotion boards over the past five years:

	Boards held
2001	35
2002	32
2003	32
2004	36
2005	22
2006	[1]13

[1]boards held to date, a further 17 planned this year

Racial Abuse

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many complaints of racial abuse have been *(a)* investigated and *(b)* upheld in her Department in each of the last five years. [70537]

Margaret Beckett: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not keep a categorised record of formal complaint types (grievances), as grievances are often complex and can arise from a number of different issues so such categorisation is misleading.

I refer the hon. Member to the reply my hon. Friend the then Minister of State for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs (Ian Pearson) gave to him on 18 April, *Official Report*, column 537W. FCO records date back to 2003 only.

Staff Development

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the total cost was of *(a)* staff away days and *(b)* staff team building exercises in her Department in each of the last three years. [69075]

Margaret Beckett: There is no centrally held record or costing of staff away days and team building exercises. To answer this question would involve staff contacting every Foreign and Commonwealth Office Department and post worldwide to collate this information. This would therefore incur disproportionate costs.

Staff Surveys

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many staff surveys have been conducted in her Department in each of the last three years. [70538]

Margaret Beckett: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has conducted three staff surveys since 2003:

2004 Employee attitude survey

2005 FCO Services "Your Say" survey

2006 "Feedback" staff engagement survey

The results of the feedback survey are available on the FCO website at the following address: http://www.fco.gov.uk.

UK Waters

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on how many occasions UK waters around Northern Ireland have been illegally entered in each of the last 10 years. [70453]

Mr. McCartney: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to him today (UIN 70532). In international law there is no distinction made between Northern Ireland waters and UK waters. We do not hold any figures relating specifically to waters around Northern Ireland.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on how many occasions UK waters have been illegally entered in each of the last 10 years. [70532]

Mr. McCartney: The UK claims a 12 nautical mile territorial sea. Under Article 17 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) ships of all States enjoy the right of innocent passage through the territorial sea.

Article 19(1) of UNCLOS provides that passage is innocent so long as it is not prejudicial to the peace, good order or security of the coastal State. Passage of a foreign ship shall be considered prejudicial to the peace, good order and security of the coastal State, provided the coastal State has not consented to the activity, if the ship engages in any of the activities listed in Article 19(2) of UNCLOS. These activities range from fishing activities to wilful pollution to exercise or practice with weapons of any kind.

The act of a foreign flagged vessel entering the UK territorial sea is not in itself illegal, but the activity in which the ship engages once inside the territorial sea may be contrary to UNCLOS.

We do not hold data on illegal activities carried out in UK waters, although individual Government Departments may be able to provide statistics on specific areas relating to their responsibilities, e.g. illegal fishing.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Pensions

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have made claims for pension credit via *(a)* post, *(b)* telephone and *(c)* a home visit in each of the last three years. [64504]

James Purnell: The information requested is not available.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claimants of pension credit have *(a)* requested and *(b)* received home visits to assist with a claim in each of the last three years. [64505]

James Purnell: The information is available in the following table.

	Requests for visit for pension credit claim completion	*Visits completed for pension credit claim*
2004-05	167,000	162,000
2005-06	82,000	84,000

Notes:
1. Local Service became a nationally led business unit within the Pension Service in April 2004. There are no data available for 2003-04 as there was no national collation of data prior to this restructure.
2. Figures show a higher number of cleared than received requests during 2005-06. This is due to the carry over of appointments into financial year 2005.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners have received *(a)* telephone calls and *(b)* letters from agencies for which his Department is responsible, inviting them to explore the possibility that they may be eligible for pension credit since October 2004, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [64508]

James Purnell: The information is not available in the format requested.

Since October 2004, the Pension Service has successfully contacted approximately 462,000 pensioners by telephone to discuss their eligibility for pension credit. It is not possible to provide a breakdown of this figure by parliamentary constituency.

From October 2004 to March 2006 approximately 2.83 million pensioners received a letter from the Pension Service inviting them to explore their eligibility for pension credit. I have placed a breakdown of this figure by parliamentary constituency in the Library.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners having been invited to explore the possibility that they may be eligible for pension credit via an unsolicited call from *(a)* the Pension Service and *(b)* another agency for which his Department is responsible went on to make (i) a successful and (ii) an unsuccessful application for pension credit, broken down by parliamentary constituency; and how many did not respond. [64521]

James Purnell: The available information is in the following table.

April 2005-March 2006	*Number*
Telephone calls[1]	162,000
Pension credit applications generated as a result of the above telephone calls	19,000
Local Service visits[2]	509,000
Pension credit applications generated as a result of the above Local Service visits	87,000

[1] This is the number of outbound calls made by pension credit application line staff where they have been successful in contacting the customer to discuss their eligibility for pension credit.
[2] These are effective visits following direct approach made by Local Service staff to provide the customer with a full benefit entitlement check (which includes pension credit). Initial contact to customers by Local Service staff was made by invitation letter or telephone call to discuss entitlement to financial benefits including pension credit.

All figures are rounded to the nearest thousand. Local Service data show combined invitation letters and telephone calls.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the take-up rate of *(a)* savings credit only, *(b)* guarantee credit and savings credit and *(c)* all pension credit; and if he will make a statement. [70290]

James Purnell: The latest information on the take-up of pension credit, including estimates for the separate elements of pension credit, is available in the DWP report entitled: "Pension Credit Estimates of Take-Up in 2004/2005". A copy of the report is held in the Library.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many telephone calls the Pension Service has made since September 2004 to invite pensioners to explore the possibility that they may be eligible for pension credit *(a)* after 6.30 pm on weekdays and *(b)* at weekends, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [64507]

James Purnell: Between September 2003 and March 2006, a total of 14,000 calls have been made to customers from the Pension Service inviting them to apply for pension credit on Saturday morning. No calls were made on Sunday.

Information on calls made after 6.30 pm on weekdays is not available.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many telephone calls have been made by the Pension Service informing pensioners of the possibility that they were eligible for pension credit in each month since October 2003. [64520]

James Purnell: The information requested is in the following table.

Month	*Total successful calls*
October 2003	0
November 2003	180
December 2003	22,000
January 2004	34,000
February 2004	28,000
March 2004	48,000
April 2004	20,000
May 2004	30,000
June 2004	15,000
July 2004	27,000
August 2004	30,000
September 2004	22,000
October 2004	18,000
November 2004	27,000
December 2004	56,000
January 2005	59,000
February 2005	35,000
March 2005	19,000
April 2005	31,000
May 2005	35,000
June 2005	24,000
July 2005	13,000
August 2005	25,000
September 2005	21,000
October 2005	23,000
November 2005	4,000
December 2005	11,000
January 2006	16,000
February 2006	31,000
March 2006	15,000
Total	738,000

Notes:
1. Pension credit was introduced from October 2003.
2. Data relate to the number of successful calls the Pension Service made by telephone, in order to discuss eligibility for pension credit with the customer.
3. A successful call is when the Pension Service has been able to get in touch with the customer by telephone.
4. Data are rounded to the nearest thousand.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners were living in relative poverty in *(a)* 1996-97, *(b)* 2003-04, *(c)* 2004-05 and *(d)* 2005-06; and if he will make a statement. [70289]

James Purnell: The seventh annual 'Opportunity for all' report (Cm 6673) sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and reports progress against a range of indicators.

Specific information regarding relative low income for pensioners is available in the latest publication of the 'Households Below Average Income 1994/95—2004/05'. The threshold of below 60 per cent. of relative or contemporary median income is the most commonly used in reporting trends in low income.

Figures for 1996-97, 2003-04 and 2004-05, the latest year for which figures are available, showing the number of pensioners living in households with incomes below 60 per cent. of the contemporary median, are in the following table.

Number of pensioners living in contemporary low-income households

	Before housing costs (million)	*After housing costs (million)*
1996-97	2.2	2.8
2003-04	2.2	2.0
2004-05	2.0	1.8

Notes:
1. Figures are for Great Britain.
2. Results from Households Below Average Incomes publication.
3. Figures show the number and proportion of pensioners in households below 60 per cent. of median net income (after direct taxes including council tax).
4. Pensioners are all females aged 60 years or over, and all males aged 65 years or over.

Source:
Family Resources Survey.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps the Government are taking to ensure that more women receive a full basic state pension in the future. [70058]

James Purnell: On 2 November the Government published the report, "Women and pensions: The evidence". The report shows that today, only around 30 per cent. of women reaching state pension age (SPA) are entitled to a full basic state pension. However, women's basic state pension records are continuing to improve with the combined effect of increased labour market participation and home responsibilities protection.

We know that more needs to be done. The Pensions Commission has provided the right framework for debate and will help build consensus for delivering a long-term settlement for tomorrow's pensioners, in particular, one that is fairer for women. We will bring forward our proposals in a White Paper which will be published by the end of the month.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in each London borough receive the full basic state pension. [70107]

James Purnell: The number of state pension recipients who receive the full basic state pension in each London borough as at September 2005 is in the following table:

London borough	*Number*
Barking and Dagenham	15,200
Barnet	25,300
Bexley	24,300

London borough	Number
Brent	11,400
Bromley	36,400
Camden	10,200
City of London	600
Croydon	26,200
Ealing	16,900
Enfield	23,100
Greenwich	17,700
Hackney	6,900
Hammersmith and Fulham	8,700
Haringey	10,000
Harrow	16,800
Havering	28,300
Hillingdon	21,800
Hounslow	14,000
Islington	9,100
Kensington and Chelsea	7,500
Kingston upon Thames	12,200
Lambeth	11,300
Lewisham	16,700
Merton	14,500
Newham	10,000
Redbridge	19,900
Richmond upon Thames	15,700
Southwark	13,300
Sutton	18,600
Tower Hamlets	8,000
Waltham Forest	16,200
Wandsworth	15,200
Westminster	10,500

Notes:
1. Caseloads are rounded to the nearest 100.
2. Numbers are based on a 5 per cent. sample, and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
3. A basic state pension is paid to those who fully or partially satisfy the contribution conditions for a category A or category B pension.
4. The full basic state pension as at September 2005 was £82.05 per week.
5. Local authorities are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant Office for National Statistics postcode directory.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate—5 per cent. sample.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Gender Equality

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what his policy is towards the proposed establishment of a European Institute for Gender Equality. [68572]

Meg Munn: I have been asked to reply.

It is important that the institute offers value for money, that it does not duplicate existing bodies and that it adds value to ensure that it will be as efficient and effective as possible. We strongly believe that the new institute must work together with the Fundamental Rights Agency rather than seek to replicate it, and in doing so aim to be budget-neutral.

TV Licences

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he had with the BBC prior to its decision to discontinue the Post Office contract to supply TV licences. [70922]

Jim Fitzpatrick: None. The decision to discontinue the Post Office contract to supply TV licences was a commercial one made by the BBC, following a competitive tender exercise.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the impact on post offices of the decision to end the contract for post offices to supply TV licences. [71174]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The supply of TV Licences through post offices was governed by a commercial contract between Post Office Ltd. and the BBC. The impact of the decision not to renew the contract is an operational matter for the company. I have asked Alan Cook, the Managing Director of Post Office Ltd, to reply direct to the hon. Member.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Arts Council

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how long each member of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland has been in post. [71051]

Maria Eagle: All of the Arts Council members have been in post since July 2003 with the exception of Mr. Martin Bradley who has served as a member since 1996. Mr. Bradley was subsequently appointed vice-chair to the Council in July 2003 through open competition.

Child Poverty

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children in Northern Ireland were living in poverty in *(a)* 1995 and *(b)* 2005. [69183]

Mr. Hanson: Defining poverty as households whose income is less than 60 per cent. of the median household income, the reports on households below average income in Northern Ireland indicate that there were 101,000 children in poverty in 2004-05 compared with 108,000 in 2003-04 and 113,000 in 2002-03, the only years for which data is available. Copies of these reports will be placed in the House of Commons Library.

The Government are committed to eradicating child poverty throughout the UK by 2020. In line with this, we have set targets to reduce by half in Northern Ireland the number of children living in poverty between 1998-99 and 2010-11 on the way to eradicating child poverty by 2020.

To that end, Government target significant resources at tackling child poverty in Northern Ireland. For example, working tax credit and child tax credit both provide financial assistance for working families on low incomes. In addition, working tax credits also provide help for child care benefiting around 11,000 families with an average of around £58 per week.

In addition, the Government are placing significant emphasis on initiatives that focus on the early years of life, such as Sure Start and Book Start and the Pre-School Education Expansion programme. Building on these initiatives, the Northern Ireland Priorities and Budget 2006-08, launched on 14 December 2005, established two new ring-fenced priority funding packages—the Children and Young People and Skills and Science Funds.

The Children and Young People's Fund announced in March 2006 and the Skills and Science Fund announced in February 2006 and worth around £100 million and £35 million respectively over the next two years, will play an important role in giving children the best start in life and tackling child poverty.

Civic Forum

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total cost was of the Northern Ireland Civic Forum in each year since it was created. [69227]

Mr. Hanson: The total cost of the Northern Ireland Civic Forum in each year since it was created is as follows:

	Cost (£)
2000-01	145,000
2001-02	450,000
2002-03	328,000
2003-04	128,000
2004-05	1,000

Expenditure in 2003-04 and 2004-05 relates to the payment of expenses incurred prior to suspension, though not claimed until afterwards.

A cost is not yet available for the year 2005-06.

Departmental Expenditure

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* each department in Northern Ireland and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Office in each of the last three years. [70460]

Mr. Hanson: The following amounts were spent on advertising in *(a)* each of the Northern Ireland departments and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Office, in 2003-04 and 2004-05:

Department	*Expenditure (£)*	
	2003-04	*2004-05*
Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister	324,053	191,800
Agriculture and Rural Development	371,573	371,227
Culture, Arts and Leisure	24,758	11,517
Education	80,266	73,137
Employment and Learning	149,210	498,570
Enterprise, Trade and Investment	154,656	88,420
Environment	977,821	280,789
Finance and Personnel	298,260	347,494
Health, Social Services and Public Safety	355,141	1,333,024
Regional Development	24,282	22,364
Social Development	107,793	2,919
Totals	2,867,813	3,221,261
Northern Ireland Office	192,978	279,697
Grand Totals	3,060,791	3,500,958

These figures are compiled using the total media spend for all forms of advertising.

The figures requested for the remaining year have not yet been completed and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whom is conducting the recently announced review of senior Northern Ireland civil servants' travelling expenses; what the terms of reference of the review are; what stage the review has reached; what discussions the review team have had with senior civil servants as part of the review. [67504]

Mr. Hanson: I am not aware of any recently announced review of senior civil servants' travelling expenses.

The Department of Finance and Personnel has been conducting a routine policy review of the Travel and Subsistence policy for all NI civil servants in the 11 Departments, as set out in the Travel and Subsistence Part of the Northern Ireland Civil Service Staff handbook, with the following terms of reference:

"to examine the existing regulations and make recommendations for improvements in the Staff Handbook to ensure a consistency of approach by Departments. The review will also consider the various existing mileage, subsistence and removal rate's and determine where there is a need to update these."

Following consultation with the 11 NI Government Departments each of the four chapters of the Travel and Subsistence Part of the NICS Staff Handbook have now been re-drafted and, in accordance with normal industrial relations practice, will be issued to the civil service unions for consultation in the near future. There have been no discussions with senior civil servants as part of the review.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have been medically retired in *(a)* each department in Northern Ireland and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Office in each of the last five years. [68007]

Mr. Hanson: The following table details the number of staff medically retired by employing departments in Northern Ireland in each of the last five financial years.

Information on Agencies sponsored by Departments is included with their Department unless separately identified.

Figures relating to the Northern Ireland Office include both the members of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and Home Civil Servants working in that Department.

	Ill-health retirements				
Department/agency	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
Department of Education	6	5	3	5	5
Department of Finance and Personnel	15	16	12	14	15
Department of the Environment	41	11	13	51	48
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	22	27	22	26	30
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	4	11	8	59	
Child Support Agency	5	3	8	6	5
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	1	5	0	2	1
Department for Regional Development	9	50	44	25	15
OFM and DFM	31	5	1	1	
Department for Social Development	3	3	3	6	3
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Industry	1	2	3	1	2
Department of Learning	3	11	6	12	9
Social Security Agency	20	42	42	37	32
Northern Ireland Office	5	6	6	2	6
NI Prisons	15	29	32	34	19
Totals	153	222	207	227	200

Global Point Newtownabbey

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects to announce commencement of work on Global Point Newtownabbey. [71312]

Maria Eagle: The announcement of commencement of work at Global Point is dependent on the findings of the Public Inquiry into the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP). The Plan is a material consideration in determining current planning applications for Global Point. No decision has yet been reached in respect of the proposals.

The Department of the Environment has formally written to the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) requesting a Public Inquiry into BMAP. Following acceptance of the request the organisational arrangements for the Public Inquiry will become the responsibility of the PAC.

Intertrade Ireland

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 489W, on Intertrade Ireland, what affirmative action measures have been approved by Intertrade Ireland. [67136]

Maria Eagle: Affirmative action measures, suggested by the Equality Commission and approved and adopted by Intertrade Ireland are (i) the placement of job advertisements in newspapers read by the Protestant community, (ii) the inclusion of a statement in job advertisements specifically welcoming applications from that community and (iii) the circulation of job vacancies throughout Job Clubs and community organisations.

Irish Hare

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for North Down of 27 January 2006 on the protection of the Irish hare. [68550]

David Cairns: I am advised by the Department of the Environment that, unfortunately, it has no record of receiving the letter to which the hon. Member refers. However, if the hon. Member provides a copy of her letter, the Department will respond to the issues she wishes to raise.

Male Health

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many clinics and other healthcare providers in Northern Ireland promote male health and early detection of health problems particularly encountered by men. [70918]

Paul Goggins: Information is not available in the form requested. However, health care providers promote male health in a number of ways, for example some GPs run "Well Men" clinics, which cover general health issues including male cancers such as testicular and prostate. Other examples include holistic clinics at farmers markets, special awareness days aimed at men and men's health evenings where male-specific health issues are covered.

Mixed Sex Wards

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which hospitals in Northern Ireland operated mixed sex wards in March *(a)* 2000 and *(b)* 2005. [70424]

Paul Goggins: The following table shows which hospitals in Northern Ireland operated mixed sex wards in *(a)* March 2000 and *(b)* March 2005.

Trust/hospital	Did the hospital operate mixed sex wards in: (a) March 2000	(b) March 2005
Craigavon Area		
Craigavon Area	Yes	Yes
Lurgan	Yes	Yes
South Tyrone	Yes	Yes
Down Lisburn		
Lagan Valley	Yes	Yes
Downe	Yes	Yes
Downshire	Yes	Yes
Lagan Valley PNU	Yes	Yes
Thompson House	Yes	Yes
Sperrin Lakeland		
Tyrone County	Yes	Yes
Erne	Yes	Yes
Tyrone and Fermanagh	Yes	Yes
Newry and Mourne		
Daisy Hill	Yes	Yes
Greenpark		
Forster Green	Yes	Yes
Musgrave	Yes	Yes
Forest Lodge	Yes	Yes
Ulster Community		
Ards	Yes	Yes
Bangor	Yes	Yes
Ulster	Yes	Yes
Armagh and Dungannon		
Mullinure Hospital	No	No
Longstone	Yes	Yes
St. Luke's	Yes	Yes
Homefirst		
Holywell	Yes	Yes
Whiteabbey PNU	Yes	Yes
N and W Belfast		
Muckamore Abbey	Yes	Yes
Foyle		
Gransha	Yes	Yes
Waterside	Yes	Yes
Stradreagh (now Lakeview)	Yes	Yes
Royal Group		
Royal Victoria	Yes	Yes
RBHSC	Yes	Yes
Causeway		
Causeway (inc Ross Thomson Unit)	Yes	Yes
Dalriada	No	No
Robinson Hospital	No	No
Craigavon and Banbridge		
Craigavon PNU	Yes	Yes
S and E		
Knockbracken	Yes	Yes
Young Peoples Centre	Yes	Yes
Shaftesbury Square	No	No
Belfast City		
Belfast City Hospital	Yes	Yes
Belvoir Park NICCO	Yes	Yes
Windsor House	Yes	Yes
Altnagelvin		
Altnagelvin Hospital	Yes	Yes
Waterside (Ward 5)	Yes	Yes
Mater		
Mater Hospital	Yes	Yes
United Hospitals		
Antrim	Yes	Yes
Braid Valley	Yes	Yes
Mid Ulster	Yes	Yes
Moyle	Yes	Yes
Whiteabbey	Yes	Yes

Source:
Health and Social Services Trusts

Many trusts stated that where a mixed sex ward was in operation, within such a ward, patients were cared for in single sex bays. Bays would only be mixed sex in exceptional circumstances such as intensive care unit/high dependency unit beds or to allow a patient to be admitted to a ward rather than wait on a trolley in accident and emergency. In such cases, patients would be moved to a suitable bed as soon as practically possible.

Physiotherapists

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many newly-qualified physiotherapy graduates have been employed in each of the health board areas as junior physiotherapists in each of the last five years. [70945]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is not available.

Not all trusts were able to separately identify newly-qualified junior physiotherapist appointments from other appointments to this grade. The number of junior physiotherapists joining trusts within each health board area in each of the last five years, including some staff who will not have been newly-qualified, is detailed in the following table.

Number of junior physiotherapists joining trusts within each of the health board areas in the last five years

Board area	*Headcount*	*Whole-time equivalent*
2001		
Eastern	39	38.58
Northern	n/a	n/a
Western	8	8.00
Southern	15	15.00
Total	66	65.58
2002		
Eastern	44	44.00
Northern	25	24.00
Western	2	2.00
Southern	15	15.00
Total	86	85.00
2003		
Eastern	57	56.77
Northern	38	38.00
Western	7	7.00
Southern	14	14.00
Total	116	115.77
2004		
Eastern	57	57.00
Northern	20	19.33
Western	8	8.00
Southern	18	18.00
Total	103	102.33
2005		
Eastern	50	50.00
Northern	15	15.00
Western	8	7.80
Southern	13	12.70
Total	86	85.50

Notes:

1. The figures detailed above do not represent all junior physiotherapists joining the NI HPSS during the period but will include all newly-qualified graduates, some graduates qualified in previous years who had been unable to obtain a post at the time of qualifying, some returning to work following a career break or some returning to the NI HPSS after working elsewhere.
2. The figures include both permanent and temporary appointments.

Source: HPSS trusts' figures for junior physiotherapists joining Mater Hospital HSS Trust within the Eastern Board area, were extracted from the centrally held HRMS database.

Planning

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many planning applications were received by the divisional planning office of each borough and district council in Northern Ireland in *(a)* the month preceding 16 March and *(b)* each of the preceding three months. [71324]

David Cairns: The following table details the total number of planning applications received by the Planning Service for each Northern Ireland borough and district council area for each month between November 2005 and February 2006.

District council area	*November 2005*	*December 2005*	*January 2006*	*February 2006*
Antrim	96	75	80	99
Ards	101	88	71	96
Armagh	87	99	109	115
Ballymena	108	90	82	105
Ballymoney	64	51	49	61
Banbridge	100	95	114	113
Belfast	192	169	198	180
Carrickfergus	32	19	11	23
Castlereagh	46	38	41	39
Coleraine	100	98	90	110
Cookstown	109	71	86	174
Craigavon	87	81	86	83
Derry	74	85	78	88
Down	110	89	102	95
Dungannon	143	142	171	390
Fermanagh	184	203	188	334
Larne	44	31	32	32
Limavady	61	64	39	46
Lisburn	103	121	96	106
Magherafelt	85	106	88	86
Moyle	38	37	34	29
Newry and Mourne	234	245	250	258
Newtownabbey	61	50	37	38
North Down	62	73	58	72
Omagh	129	132	111	296
Strabane	129	59	98	100
Planning Service total	2,579	2,411	2,399	3,168

Roe Valley and Sperrins

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what publicly-funded modernised facilities are available for those using travelling caravans and campers to holiday in the Roe Valley and Sperrins. [69266]

Maria Eagle: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) has provided financial assistance to two sites with facilities for touring caravans and campers in the Roe Valley and Sperrins areas, namely Benone Camping and Caravanning Tourist complex and the Six Towns Cross Community Group's Touring Caravan and Camping site in Draperstown.

School Building Programme

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the reasons are for the delay in the proposed building work at St. Joseph's high school, Crossmaglen; and when he expects work *(a)* to commence and *(b)* to be completed. [70531]

Maria Eagle: A feasibility study for a major capital scheme at St. Joseph's high school, Crossmaglen was submitted to the Department of Education by the school's Design Team in March 2006 and is currently under consideration. The feasibility study informs the Economic Appraisal which will be completed by the Department. St. Joseph's High School will not be in a position to compete for capital funding until the Economic Appraisal process is completed and the next phase of capital investment is being announced. No time scales have been set for this. Separate minor works to address security issues at the school are being addressed urgently and work is in progress to replace two mobile classrooms and upgrade existing sports facilities.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which schools are affected by the backlog in the school building programme; how many of these are involved in providing partnership initiative funding initiatives; and what steps he is taking to eliminate the backlog. [70558]

Maria Eagle: Over recent years, the funding made available by Government to the Department of Education for the schools estate has increased substantially. The Department, in conjunction with its education partners, has 146 major capital schemes under development. The Department is using both conventional and public-private partnership (PPP) procurement routes to deliver those projects. With such a high volume of projects in planning, delays have been encountered in some projects, both under conventional and PPP procurement, due to site issues, uncertainty over long-term enrolments and advancing policy in the area of PPP procurement. The Department is currently working with school authorities to expedite progress and overcome the delays experienced.

Details of those projects that have been delayed, together with their procurement route and the reason for delay, are shown on the following tables.

Details of conventional capital projects that have been delayed

Project	*Announced*	*Reason for delay*
St. Clares/St. Colman's Primary Schools, Newry	2000	Problems with acquiring a suitable site and issues with Roads Service, together with a review and reduction of the long-term enrolment (LTE) figure have caused delays in the project.
St. Eugene's Primary School, Londonderry	2002	Difficulty in finding a suitable site to decant to while extension/ refurbishment works are ongoing has caused delay.
Drumragh Integrated College, Omagh	2002	Problems in satisfying the Planning Service and Roads Service requirements has resulted in the need to purchase third party land to provide acceptable site lines. This has caused delay in progressing the scheme.
East Lisburn Primary Schools	2003	Site acquisition and Planning Service/Roads Service issues have caused delay.
Suffolk Primary School, Belfast	2003	The initial plans for the new school were to an incorrect specification. The enrolments at the school have fallen and as a result the requirements of the scheme have to be reviewed.
St. Teresa's Primary School, Lurgan	2003	Difficulties in acquiring a site have caused delay.
St. Joseph's Primary School, Newry	2003	Planning has been suspended while the enrolment position is reviewed.
St. Patrick's Primary School, Saul	2003	Difficulty in obtaining Planning Office and Roads Service approval.
Holy Family Primary School, Magherafelt	2003	Issues relating to the site and appropriate positioning of school on site have caused delay.

Details of PPP projects that have been delayed

Project	*Announced*	*Reason for delay*
Holy Cross College, Strabane	2001	The need to review and agree an appropriate long-term enrolment (LTE) caused delay. Further delay was caused while a decision on the treatment of ancillary services (such as cleaning) was awaited. The Secretary of State has now decided that cleaning services should be excluded from the contract and remain with the public sector. The Department is currently considering representation from the Trustees concerning the removal of cleaning from the contract.
Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College	2001	The need to review and agree an appropriate LTE caused delay. Further delay was caused while a decision on the treatment of ancillary services (such as cleaning) was awaited. The Secretary of State has now decided that cleaning services should be excluded from the contract and remain with the public sector. The Department is currently considering representations from school authorities concerning the removal of cleaning from the contract.
Derry Diocesan PPP Project	2001	Problems in acquiring a suitable site for one of the schools, and achieving agreement on the use of that site, caused delay. This has now been overcome and the project is at Invitation to Negotiate' stage.
Coleraine College	2001	The removal of schools from the project due to falling enrolments and the need for the North Eastern education and library board to examine the overall requirement for secondary provision in the area has caused delay.

Details of PPP projects that have been delayed

Project	*Announced*	*Reason for delay*
Lagan College/Tor Bank Special School	2002	Problems in agreeing a lease with the National Trust (Lagan College occupies a NT site) on the use and maintenance of the site have caused delay. These problems have now been overcome and the project is at Invitation to Negotiate[1] stage.
Down and Connor/De La Salle PPP Project	2002	Change in the scope of the project for two of the schools involved from extension refurbishment to new build has caused delay. This has now been resolved and the project is at Invitation to Negotiate[1] stage.
Belfast Strategic Partnering Project	2003	A change in the scope of the project and the need to redraft project documentation to take account of new procurement methods has caused delay. This project is now at Invitation to Negotiate[1] stage.

[1] Invitation to Negotiate is a stage in the procurement procedure under which the client invites a selected number of tenderers to negotiate the terms of a public-private partnerships contract.

Section 106 Agreements

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what form of *(a)* planning gain and *(b)* Section 106 Agreements operate in Northern Ireland. [70741]

David Cairns: There are no specific planning gain provisions in place in Northern Ireland. However, Article 40 of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 (as substituted by the Planning (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003) provides similar powers to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, which applies to England and Wales. Article 40 enables the Department to enter into planning agreements with any person who has an estate in land for the purposes of:-

"facilitating, or restricting the development or use of land in any specified way;

requiring specified operations or activities to be carried out in, on, under or over land;

requiring the land to be used in any specific way (either indefinitely or for a period as may be specified); or

requiring a sum or sums to be paid to the Department on a specified day, date or periodically."

Special Advisers

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 25 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1043W, on special advisers, what the grade is of each of the two special advisers employed as temporary civil servants within his Department; and whether the posts they hold were advertised. [71375]

Mr. Hain: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the Prime Minister's written ministerial statement on special advisers of Thursday 21 July 2005. This statement gave details of the pay bands for the special advisers. These appointments were carried out in accordance with the ministerial code.

Temporary Classrooms

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in the East Londonderry constituency are using temporary classroom accommodation. [70439]

Maria Eagle: As at 31 March 2006 there were 31 primary and seven secondary schools in the East Londonderry constituency using temporary accommodation.

Tor Bank Special School

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the summer scheme at Tor Bank Special School in Dundonald will take place in 2006. [70433]

Maria Eagle: The South-Eastern Education and Library Board, at a meeting in March 2006, agreed that the 2006 Summer Activity Scheme for pupils with severe learning difficulties would proceed. The Board, however, having agreed its budget for 2006-07, is now considering a series of proposals to live within that budget. One of the proposals is to stop the Summer Activity Scheme.

The Board's Education Committee will reconvene on 22 May 2006 to consider the proposals. Board officers are currently engaged in making provisional arrangements for the scheme to run this summer, subject to the decision of the Board.

Unspent Budget

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much of the budget for *(a)* each department in Northern Ireland and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Office remained unspent in the 2005-06 financial year. [70458]

Mr. Hanson: Details of expenditure for 2005-06 relating to *(a)* Northern Ireland departments and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Office are not yet available. Information on performance against budget will be available in June of this year once provisional outturn data has been received and analysed. This information will be placed in the Library when available.

Valuation and Lands Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will place in the Library a copy of the revised "Health and Safety in the Field" policy document produced by the Valuation and Lands Agency. [70592]

Mr. Hanson: The Valuation and Lands Agency has recently revised its "Health and Safety in the Field" policy. This document was placed in the Library in early May 2006, in response to an earlier PQ.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the Valuation and Lands Agency's domestic rates Automated Valuation Model uses *(a)* a location factor or factors in its multiple regression analysis and *(b)* geo-spatial statistical analysis in Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal. [70593]

Mr. Hanson: The answer to both *(a)* and *(b)* is "yes". The location factor is derived from analysis of sales using the multiple regression technique and is calibrated at neighbourhood level.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the Valuation and Lands Agency's domestic rates Automated Valuation Model *(a)* uses and *(b)* holds data on (i) local authority ward boundaries and (ii) numbers of criminal offences committed in each area. [70594]

Mr. Hanson: The Automated Valuation Model used by VLA is a CAMA (Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal) system comprising SPSS/Spatialest/GIS. The Agency's Automated Valuation Model uses and holds data on local authority ward boundaries. It does not use and hold data on numbers of criminal convictions committed in each area.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the conferences to be held oversees which Valuation and Lands Agency staff will attend in the next 12 months. [70596]

Mr. Hanson: Valuation and Lands Agency (VLA) staff will attend the following conferences overseas during the next 12 months:

International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO) Conference in USA.

The IAAO is the lead professional organisation for those involved in property tax assessment. The Chief Executive of VLA has agreed to speak at this conference.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Alcohol-free Zones

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to encourage local authorities to extend alcohol-free zones. [66465]

Mr. Byrne: The Government are working with local authorities to reduce alcohol-fuelled violence by sharing good practice. Designated Public Place Orders (DPPOs) have been part of this good practice. The benefits of a DPPO have been highlighted in publications such as "Lessons Learned from the summer 2004 Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign". They continue to be highlighted both on the "Together Tackling Antisocial behaviour" website and on the DPPO website. To date around 170 authorities have adopted the power to introduce a DPPO, with around 360 orders published.

Animal Rights Terrorists

Mrs. Lait: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he is taking *(a)* in co-operation with the Department for Trade and Industry and *(b)* otherwise to detain animal rights terrorists who use shareholder registers to threaten individual shareholders. [70870]

Mr. Coaker: We have a clear cross-departmental strategy working with DTI and other Government Departments to put an end to the animal rights extremist threat and protect those targeted by it. We have introduced tough new legislation, supported the appointment of a dedicated senior police officer as national co-ordinator for domestic extremism and provided additional resources for the police to tackle the problem nationally. These steps have led to an increase in arrests, a reduction in incidents and a number of successful prosecutions which have seen leading activists receive lengthy custodial sentences.

We are looking at what more can be done. The Company Law Reform Bill already proposes protection for members by providing that companies do not have to release details of their registers of shareholders if a court is satisfied that the information requested is not being sought for a proper purpose. Following recent attempts to defraud or intimidate members of a number of leading companies, we are looking at what measures can be taken to strengthen shareholder protection further in the Bill. We also intend to consult on how to stop malicious applicants from getting members' details through Companies House rather than from the company.

Antisocial Behaviour

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he plans to take to publicise action taken to tackle antisocial behaviour to members of the public in Kingston-upon-Hull, North. [69786]

Mr. Byrne: Kingston-upon-Hull is one of the Government's Action Areas, committed to tackling antisocial behaviour. The council, Humberside police and their partners have worked together to promote initiatives to tackle alcohol-related disorder, nuisance vehicles and to promote It's Your Call, a dedicated phone line for the community to report and receive feedback on action taken to prevent and tackle antisocial behaviour.

The Respect Action Plan sets out our intention to do more to empower local communities to challenge and tackle antisocial behaviour by making services more responsive and accountable to local priorities. We will ensure effective dialogue between local people and services by introducing regular and systematic "face the people" briefing sessions, involving senior representation from the police and local authorities. The Community Call for Action will make it easier for the public to hold services to account where they fail to deliver.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many breaches of antisocial behaviour orders came to court in 2005-06; and what the average time was between the offence being committed and a court hearing taking place. [69762]

Mr. Byrne: Antisocial behaviour order (ASBO) breach data only cover breach proceedings where there has been a conviction and are currently available from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003 for ASBOs issued since 1 June 2000. Information is not available on the amount of time taken from an offence being committed to a conviction for breach of ASBO.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received on the use of antisocial behaviour orders to tackle the abuse of shopworkers; and if he will make a statement. [71045]

Mr. Byrne: We have not received any such representations. However antisocial behaviour orders have been used in a number of local areas to combat antisocial behaviour in retail environments.

Workers serving the public have the right to work without fear of being attacked or harassed. The Respect Action Plan sets out programmes to promote a two-way respect between workers serving the public and the individuals and communities to whom they provide a service.

Arson

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents of arson there have been in Suffolk in each year since 1997. [69821]

Mr. Byrne: The requested information is given in the table.

Recorded offences of arson in Suffolk police force area

	Number of arson offences
1997	236
1998-99[1]	238
1999-2000	372
2000-01	542
2001-02	696
2002-03[2]	551
2003-04	656
2004-05	571

[1] Numbers affected by changes in the counting rules and expanded coverage of recorded crime.
[2] Numbers affected by the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standards which came into effect in 2002-03.
Note:
Data not comparable with earlier years.

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers have been refused National Asylum Support Service support because their illness was not deemed to prevent travel in the last 12 months; and how many of these *(a)* were at risk from a recurrence of tuberculosis, *(b)* were pregnant, *(c)* had children under a year old and *(d)* had a mental health condition. [68573]

John Reid: If an asylum seeker is offered accommodation from the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) and fails to travel to the allocated accommodation claiming medical grounds as a reason for failing to travel, NASS caseworkers take advice from the NASS medical adviser, a practising GP, about whether the ailment would have prevented the applicant from travelling. They will take account of this advice alongside any other circumstance that may have prevented the applicant from travelling on that occasion, before deciding whether the explanation was reasonable.

When NASS considers that the applicant's explanation for not travelling is unsatisfactory, caseworkers issue a warning letter and rearrange travel. When the applicant fails to travel on a subsequent occasion, without a valid reason, their support is suspended until they agree to travel to their allotted accommodation. At no stage is support permanently withdrawn.

NASS does not keep records of the numbers of supported asylum seekers who fail to travel citing medical grounds. It does not refuse to support asylum seekers who fail to travel to allocated accommodation, but keeps it available to them at the allocated accommodation. This approach is set out in NASS's published Policy Bulletin 17 which can be downloaded from the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) Home Office website.

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of asylum seekers have *(a)* failed to return voluntarily and *(b)* not been removed within six months of the final refusal of their applications in the last 12 months. [68574]

John Reid: No accurate management information exists on the numbers of applicants who have failed to return voluntarily. Information on asylum seekers is published every quarter.

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of failed asylum seekers refused to make a declaration agreeing to co-operate in their voluntary return in the last 12 months. [68575]

John Reid: We do not centrally record this information.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many failed asylum seekers have been returned to *(a)* Eritrea, *(b)* Ethiopia, *(c)* Sudan, *(d)* Democratic Republic of Congo, *(e)* Cote d'Ivoire, *(f)* Chad, *(g)* Somalia, *(h)* Liberia, (i) Central African Republic, *(j)* Burundi, *(k)* Sierra Leone, *(l)* Uganda, *(m)* Nigeria and *(n)* Angola in the last 12 months; how many of these returns were (A) voluntary and (B) enforced; and what mechanisms are in place to monitor the welfare of returned asylum seekers. [70132]

Mr. McNulty: The accompanying tables show the number of returns to the specified countries during 2005, broken down by voluntary and enforced removals, and by principal and dependant applicants.

We do not routinely monitor the return of individual failed asylum seekers and others who are removed from the UK. The asylum decision-making and independent appeals processes exist to ensure that those who are at risk of persecution or serious mistreatment in their country of origin will not be removed there. However, if specific allegations are made that any returnee has experienced ill treatment on return from the UK, these will be followed up through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as a matter of urgency.

Published statistics on immigration and asylum are available on the Home Office's Research and Development and Statistics website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Removals and voluntary departures[1] of asylum applicants, returned to Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo Democratic Republic, Eritrea, and Ethiopia, 2005[2,p]

Number of asylum seekers

Destination	*Total*	*Of whom:* *Principal applicants[3]*	*Dependants of asylum applicants*
Angola			
Total asylum applicants removed	165	120	45
of whom: persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programme	40	30	10
of whom: persons removed as a result of enforcement action[5,6]	125	85	35
Burundi			
Total asylum applicants removed	20	15	5
of whom: persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programme	15	•	—
of whom: persons removed as a result of enforcement action[5,6]	•	10	5
Central African Republic			
Total asylum applicants removed	•	•	—
of whom: persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programme	—	—	—
of whom: persons removed as a result of enforcement action[5,6]	•	•	—
Chad			
Total asylum applicants removed	20	20	—
of whom: persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programme	5	5	—
of whom: persons removed as a result of enforcement action[5,6]	15	15	—
Congo Democratic Republic			
Total asylum applicants removed	40	40	•
of whom: persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programme	5	5	—
of whom: persons removed as a result of enforcement action[5,6]	35	35	•
Eritrea			
Total asylum applicants removed	•	•	—
of whom: persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programme	—	—	—
of whom: persons removed as a result of enforcement action[5,6]	•	•	—
Ethiopia			
Total asylum applicants removed	40	40	•
of whom: persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programme	15	15	•
of whom: persons removed as a result of enforcement action[5,6]	25	25	—

[1]Includes persons departing Voluntarily after enforcement action had been initiated against them, persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration, those who it is established have left the UK without informing the Immigration Authorities.
[2]Figures rounded to the nearest five, with — = 0, • = 1 or 2, and may not sum due to rounding.
[3]Persons who had sought asylum at some stage, excluding dependants.
[4]Persons leaving under Voluntary Assisted Return Programmes run by the International Organization for Migration. May include some on-entry cases and some cases where enforcement action has been initiated.
[5]Including persons departing Voluntarily after enforcement action had been initiated against them, and those whom it is established have left the UK without informing the Immigration Authorities.
[6]Excludes Assisted Voluntary Returns.
[p]Provisional figures.

Bruche Police Training Centre

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he has taken to ensure that Centrex co-operates with *(a)* the local authority and *(b)* local residents when planning the future use of the site of the Bruche police training centre. [64745]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 24 April 2006]*: The Bruche site will continue to be used as a police training centre up until 26 May this year. The situation remains that there are no options as to future use on which to consult locally yet. Any such options will be determined largely by who takes an interest in purchasing the site when it is put onto the market. The Home Office continues to work closely with Centrex on that process and, once options begin to emerge, we will be in a position to engage with local people over the future use of the site. The Centrex estates and facilities management team, along with staff working on behalf of my Department, have already begun preliminary discussions with local planning authorities around all three Centrex sites that are closing and will be focusing more effort on these discussions over the coming months.

Any change in the use of sites will, of course, require planning permission and the local authority will then need to involve residents in consultation over their decisions on any applications that are made. We welcome the involvement, in all such discussions and consultations, of members representing those communities that are affected by the closure of Centrex sites.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the answer of 2 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1405W, on Bruche police training centre, what discussions his Department has had with Centrex on the future use of the Bruche police training centre; when these discussions took place; and whether any companies have expressed an interest in purchasing the site. [68711]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* As the sponsor department for Centrex, dialogue is, of course, ongoing between the Home Office and Centrex in relation to the disposal of the police training centre at Bruche. However, as the property has not yet been put on the market, no clear options as to future use have yet emerged for discussion.

Cannabis

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will reclassify the drug cannabis by moving it from Class C to Class B. [68950]

Mr. Coaker: No, cannabis will not be reclassified from a Class C to a Class B drug. On 19 January, the former Home Secretary announced in Parliament that he had considered very carefully the advice which he had asked for from the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs and on behalf of the Government had accepted the council's recommendation to keep the current classification of cannabis as a Class C drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

Capita Group

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much business his Department has placed with *(a)* Capita Group plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries in each of the last five years; what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries by his Department; for which current tenders issued by his Department (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries have been invited to bid; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have seconded staff (1) temporarily and (2) on a longer-term basis to (X) his Department and (Y) its agencies. [61073]

Mr. Byrne: The information on the total value of contracts held with the Capita group which is available for the last three financial years is as follows:

	£
2003-04	35,651,040
2004-05	60,386,458
2005-06	47,758,223

Information on 2001-02 and 2002-03 is not held centrally and to obtain this information would incur disproportionate cost.

Information on contracts and participation in procurements by Capita and its subsidiaries is not held centrally and to obtain information on the value of outstanding contracts and current tenders would incur disproportionate cost.

Information on seconded staff is not held centrally and to obtain this information would incur disproportionate cost.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the value of contracts held by his Department with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries was in the last three financial years. [61462]

Mr. Byrne: The information on the total value of contracts held with the Capita group in the last three financial years is in the following table.

	£
2003-04	35,651,040
2004-05	60,386,458
2005-06	47,758,223

Information on the individual value of contracts held by the Department with Capita plc and/or its subsidiaries is not held centrally and could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate cost.

Similarly where a contract relates to spend in more than one year, we are unable to distinguish the proportion of spend applicable to each of the three years requested.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many contracts his Department holds with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries which still have a potential duration of five years or more. [61464]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not held centrally and could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate cost.

Careless Driving

Mr. Touhig: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* police forces and *(b)* campaign organisations on sentencing of those convicted of careless driving following incidents in which a person died. [71371]

Mr. Sutcliffe: In 2005, the Government published a consultation exercise entitled "A Review of Road Traffic Offences involving Bad Driving" which examined this issue. During that consultation, a number of interested parties including the police, judges and road safety groups were consulted. A full summary of responses is available in the Library. Proposals arising out of the consultation have been included in the current Road Safety Bill. These include a new offence of causing death by careless driving with a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment.

Chip and PIN

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance he has given to retailers on the protection from fraud of customers using Chip and PIN technology; and if he will make a statement. [70469]

Mr. Coaker *[holding answer for 15 May 2006]:* Chip and PIN is a finance and retail industry initiative introduced to help tackle counterfeit, lost and stolen card fraud. The Government have actively supported the introduction of Chip and PIN. I have not issued guidance to retailers on protection from fraud of customers using Chip and PIN technology but the banking industry makes available a large amount of fraud prevention advice to meet the needs of both merchants and cardholders.

The impact of Chip and PIN has been seen in industry figures[1] published in March which show that in 2005 counterfeit fraud fell by 25 per cent. and fraud on lost or stolen cards fell by 22 per cent. compared to 2004.

[1] APACS

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what reports he has regarding the incidence of Chip and PIN fraud; what steps he is taking to tackle such fraud; and if he will make a statement. [71351]

Mr. Coaker: Chip and PIN is a finance and retail industry initiative introduced to help tackle counterfeit and lost and stolen card fraud. The Government have actively supported the introduction of Chip and PIN.

We understand from APACS (the UK payment industry) that despite recent reports of fraud at a Chip and PIN outlet this is likely to be an isolated episode and does not signify a systematic failure of the Chip and PIN system.

The incident is being investigated by the Dedicated Cheque and Plastic Crime Unit, a specialist police unit which investigates cheque and card fraud where there is a link to organised crime. Government money helped establish the unit, which is now fully funded by the banking industry and an excellent example of partnership working to tackle crime.

Community Support Officers

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police community support officers have been introduced in *(a)* Kingston-upon-Hull North constituency, *(b)* the Kingston-upon-Hull division and *(c)* Humberside since the scheme began; and what assessment he has made of the impact of community support officers on crime and antisocial behaviour. [69769]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of police community support officers (PCSOs) at basic command unit level is collected annually. At the end of June 2005 the Kingston-upon-Hull division had six police community support officers and the Humberside police had 20 PCSOs on 30 September 2005. The deployment of PCSOs within the Hull division is a matter for the divisional commander. Data is not collected below divisional level.

"A National Evaluation of Community Support Officers"—Research Study No. 297, was published on 25 January. A copy of the report has been placed in the Library. PCSOs have been well received by the public. They are helping to restore respect in local communities by providing reassurance and tackling antisocial behaviour and low level crime.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many community support officers there are in the Avon and Somerset police force. [70235]

Mr. Byrne: On 30 September 2005, there were 146 police community support officers (full-time equivalents) in Avon and Somerset.

Mr. Touhig: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many community support officers have been employed in *(a)* Gwent, *(b)* South Wales, *(c)* Dyfed Powys and *(d)* North Wales police forces since 1997. [71369]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested on community support officers is only available from March 2003 onwards and is provided in the following table.

The number of community support officers (fte)[1] employed in each of the Welsh police force areas in 2003, 2004 and 2005

	March 2003	*March 2004*	*March 2005*	*September 2005*
Dyfed Powys	0	5	25	24
Gwent	30	45	77	81
North Wales	0	0	46	61
South Wales	0	59	107	116

[1] This table contains full-time equivalent (including those staff on career breaks or maternity/peternity leave) figures that have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Because of rounding there may be apparent discrepancy between totals and the sums of constituent items in this and other similar tables.

Correspondence

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter of 21 February 2006 from the hon. Member for Walsall, North regarding a constituent, HO ref: B1077614 and B1057074 and M13862/5. [68789]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* I wrote to my hon. Friend the Member for Walsall, North on 10 May 2006

Criminal Records Bureau

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people applying for positions within residential care and nursing homes in *(a)* Kingston upon Hull, North, *(b)* the Humberside police area and *(c)* England are awaiting clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau. [69772]

Mr. Byrne: The information sought by my hon. Friend is not available. The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) is unable to provide information on Disclosure applications based on specific employment sectors and geographical areas.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department to how many people the Criminal Records Bureau has not given clearance since it was established. [69952]

Joan Ryan: The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) does not give clearance to work in a particular job or occupation. Neither does it make the decision on the suitability of applicants to undertake work following the issue of disclosures; this is solely a matter for the employer or licensing authority.

The latest available figure shows that the CRB has issued 8,990,597 disclosures since its launch in 2002 and up to 31 March 2006.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether an individual *(a)* with multiple employment with children or vulnerable adults and *(b)* who engages with children or vulnerable adults in a number of different vocational fields is required to undergo more than one Criminal Records Bureau check. [70262]

Joan Ryan: The disclosure process may include a check against section 142 of the Education Act 2002, the Protection of Children Act and Protection of Vulnerable Adults (PoCA and PoVA) lists. Legislation governing these lists, as set by the Department for Education and Skills and Department of Health, requires fresh checks of the lists for certain positions involving work with children and vulnerable adults, regardless of any previous existing checks. In such circumstances, employers must obtain a new CRB check regardless of any existing disclosures that an individual may hold.

The overriding consideration must always be the safety of those whom the disclosure service is designed to protect and the employer, using a full range of pre-recruitment checks, is ultimately best placed to assess whether a new disclosure is required for a specific position, bearing in mind their legal and other responsibilities.

Departmental Child Care Facilities

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many nursery and crèche places are provided for people working in his Department; what charges are made for the provision of such services; and what other facilities are provided for the children of employees of his Department. [67361]

Mr. Byrne: The Home Office provides childcare support as part of a range of worklife balance benefits for staff and in order to promote diversity and equality of opportunity for all staff.

As part of the provision, a limited number of subsidised workplace nursery and play scheme places are provided for staff in London, Croydon and on Merseyside. The following table sets out the nurseries and play schemes used, the cost to staff and the total annual cost of the subsidy provided by the Department.

In addition the Home Office runs a Childcare Voucher salary sacrifice scheme. The scheme was introduced in June 2005 for Home Office staff with pilots being run for staff in the Prison Service and the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. The scheme provides more choice and flexibility for staff than the existing workplace nursery and playscheme provision and with the roll out to all Home Office, IND and Prison Service staff completed in April 2006 it provides more equitable support for staff in all areas of the Department.

Currently, 102 Home Office staff and 173 Prison Service staff use the salary sacrifice scheme.

Identity and Passport Service staff have access to a Childcare Voucher salary plus scheme, which provides them with vouchers to the value of £20 per week for pre- school children age 0-4 and £15 per week for after school and holiday care for children aged 5-12. Additionally-staff are able to use the salary sacrifice scheme to enable them to obtain the maximum benefit from the tax and national insurance exemption.

Some 130 IPS staff currently benefit from the salary plus scheme, with 21 staff using the salary sacrifice scheme. The total cost to IPS in the last financial year was £110,500.

Workplace nursery places	*Location*	*Number of places available*	*Number of places in use*	*Cost to staff of a full time nursery place (£)*	*Cost to the Home Office—total annual subsidy[1] (£)*
Buffer Bear Network	Central London and the South East	32	18	123	67,014
Sunbeam Nursery	Croydon	71	56	89.00	103,000
Early Days Nursery	Liverpool	10	4	80.50	9,000

Holiday playschemes	*Location*	*Number of places available*	*Number of places in use (days)*	*Cost to staff of a place (daily rate) (£)*	*Cost to the Home Office—total annual subsidy (£)*
Westminster Holiday Playscheme	Central London		[2]463	15	6,691
Happy Hours Playscheme	Crosby		[2]15	9.25	139

Holiday playschemes	Location	Number of places available	Number of places in use (days)	Cost to staff of a place (daily rate) (£)	Cost to the Home Office—total annual subsidy (£)
Sunbeam Playscheme	Croydon		[2]4,060	10.00	23,000

[1] The value of the subsidy varies as it depends on the age of the child and the location of the nursery. The total cost of the annual subsidy for all the places used in the financial year 2005-06 has therefore been provided.
[2] As use of the playscheme varies the total number of days used by staff in the financial year 2005-06 has been provided.

Departmental Staff

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men are employed in the Department; what the average pay was for (i) women and (ii) men in the Department in (A) 1997 and (B) 2006; what women's average pay is as a percentage of men's average pay; and how many (1) women and (2) men the Department employed in each of the last five years, broken down by grade. [67776]

Mr. Byrne: The data requested is too detailed to be provided in answer format so I have arranged for the information to be placed in the Library.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many full-time equivalent staff are being transferred from his Department to the new Department for Communities and Local Government. [70715]

Mr. Byrne: The number of full-time equivalent staff being transferred is being negotiated between the two Departments concerned. Machinery of Government changes on this scale are a serious matter and require careful planning. Once the negotiations are complete and the figures known, I will place the information requested into the House Library.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of his private office staff are *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled. [68970]

Mr. Byrne: The percentage of private office staff that are *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled are shown in the following Table:

Percentage at 31 March 2006

	Home Office including Immigration and Nationality Directorate (excluding agencies)	HM Prison Service	Identity and Passport Service	Total
(a) Male	46.50	65.82	36	58.20
(b) Female	53.50	34.18	64	41.80
(c) Disabled	2	3.35	2	2.86

Note:
Overall average totals are weighted by size of organisation.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of the staff in his Department are *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled, broken down by grade. [68971]

Mr. Byrne: The percentage of staff that are *(a)* male, *(b)* female, *(c)* disabled in the Home Office are broken down by grade in the following table.

Percentage at 31 March 2006

	Home Office including Immigration and Nationality Directorate	HM Prison Service	Identity and Passport Service	Total
(a) Male	46.50	65.82	36	58.20
(b) Female	53.50	34.18	64	41.80
(c) Disabled	2	3.35	2	2.86

Note:
Overall average totals are weighted by size of organisation.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Respect Unit will be transferred from his Department to the new Department for Communities and Local Government. [70714]

Mr. Byrne: The Respect Task Force has a cross-departmental remit which reflects the Government's determination to ensure that all government departments are working effectively to tackle antisocial behaviour and its causes. The Task Force is based at the Home Office and there are no plans to transfer the team to the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Diversity Champion

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the role and responsibilities are of the Home Office Diversity Champion; what the cost to public funds of his activities has been to date; and if he will make a statement. [68764]

Mr. Byrne: The primary role of the Home Office Diversity Champion is to support the Group Executive Board (GEB) to take personal ownership of race and diversity and to demonstrate leadership within their areas of command.

The role of Home Office GEB Diversity Champion is carried out by Derrick Anderson who was appointed as a non-executive director of the Home Office as a local government advisor in 2001 and took on the role of Diversity Champion on a voluntary basis for which no additional remuneration is paid.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated cost to public funds is of his Department's five-year race and diversity programme; and if he will make a statement. [68765]

Mr. Byrne: The Home Office promotes its equality and diversity agenda in developing policies on its range of public responsibilities and in its treatment of its staff through a five-year race and diversity programme. The annual cost of the team which has responsibility for delivering the programme is approximately £900,000. The programme covers the Home Office group and devolved areas including the Immigration and Nationality Directorate, Her Majesty's Prison Service and UK Passport Service.

DNA

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria were used in deciding to use low copy number DNA analysis in police investigations; and if he will make a statement. [69787]

Joan Ryan: Police forces typically only consider using low copy number DNA in serious crime when other options have been exhausted. Low copy number (LCN) DNA analysis is a specialist DNA service and the decision to use it is purely a police operational matter. In view of the additional complexity of interpretation and cost implications of using LCN DNA analysis, each submission to a laboratory during an investigation will be considered on a case-by-case basis following discussion with the force Scientific Support Unit. Forces are now developing strict evaluation criteria for its use in serious crime.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what safeguards the Government have put in place to ensure that DNA mismatches of people on the National DNA Database who were not present at the crime scene do not occur; and if he will make a statement. [69788]

Joan Ryan: The discriminating power of the 10 marker system for profiling DNA (SGM+) is very high and while the probabilities vary with the features of the particular profile, e.g. if the profile is degraded or only a partial profile, the probability of a "chance" or "adventitious" match with a full SGM+ to SGM+ is generally less than one in a billion. In any event, the Crown Prosecution Service makes it very clear that in every case involving a DNA profile there must also be appropriate supporting evidence before a case can proceed. It follows that any prosecution should be based on a DNA profile and other admissible and credible evidence.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times crime scene DNA has been matched with the DNA of an innocent passer-by since the introduction of the National DNA Database; and if he will make a statement. [69792]

Joan Ryan: There is no known case of an innocent passer-by being wrongly convicted solely on the basis of their DNA being found at a crime scene. A match between DNA taken from an individual and that from a crime scene is intelligence, indicating that the individual has been present at the scene. The police and Crown Prosecution Service take account of the fact that there may be an innocent explanation for this. Home Office Circular 58/2004 to chief officers states that there should be further supporting evidence, in addition to the match, before someone is charged. This is also reflected in guidance issued by the Association of Chief Police Officers, and additionally the Crown Prosecution Service make it very clear that in every case involving a DNA profile, there must also be appropriate supporting evidence before a case can proceed.

Europol

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received from *(a)* the Austrian presidency, *(b)* the European Commission, *(c)* the European Parliament, *(d)* Europol and *(e)* other European partners on the future of Europol; and if he will make a statement. [69448]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* I have received no direct representations relating to the future of Europol.

Fireworks

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many penalty notices have been issued in relation to the illegal use of fireworks in *(a)* Kingston upon Hull, North, and *(b)* the Humberside police force area since the relevant legislation was introduced. [69776]

Mr. Byrne: Data from the penalty notices for disorder (PND) database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform showing the number of males and females issued with penalty notices for fireworks in Humberside police force area 2004, as well as provisional data for 2005, are provided in the following table.

The provisions for the new offences in the Fireworks Regulations 2004 came into force on 7 August 2004. The offences were added to the PND scheme with effect from 11 October 2004. The offence of throwing fireworks has been included in the scheme from the start.

It is not possible to identify the number of penalty notices issued in Kingston upon Hull, North as the data is broken down by police force area only and is not available at that level of detail.

Number of penalty notices for disorder issued for fireworks offences, Humberside Police force area, 2004 and 2005 provisional data

	2004	[1]2005
Throwing fireworks	5	5
Breach of fireworks curfew	1	1
Possession of a Category 4 firework	1	1
Possession by under 18 of adult firework	—	3

[1] Provisional data

Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform

Forensic Science Service

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many copies of the Forensic Science Service Annual Report and Accounts 2004-05 were distributed by his Department; if he will list those who were sent copies; at what cost; how many copies were printed; at what cost; who was awarded the contract to undertake the printing; how *(a)* hon. Members, *(b)* members of the House of Lords and *(c)* members of the public may obtain a copy; at what cost; and if he will make a statement. [71017]

Joan Ryan: For the year 2004-05, Forensic Science Service Ltd. (FSS) printed 1,000 copies of the Forensic Science Service Annual Report and Accounts. Two hundred and fifty copies were issued to The Stationery Office. Of the remaining copies, an initial quantity of approximately 250 copies were distributed internally to eight laboratory facilities across the FSS. The UK Criminal Justice System Division has sent either hard or soft (cd rom) copies of the annual report to police forces upon request in response to police tenders or other enquiries. Forty copies have also been distributed to non-police customers of FSS Ltd. by the New Business Division.

Other copies have been given out to visitors to the FSS, and at exhibitions and events. There are 150 hard copies in total remaining within the FSS Communications and Business Planning Departments.

The total cost of preparing the Annual Report and Accounts for 2004-05 was £12,570.

Hon. Members, Members of the House of Lords and members of the public may either purchase a hard copy from the Stationery Office or Amazon for £13.50, or alternatively a copy may be downloaded from the website of FSS Ltd., www.forensic.gov.uk .

Home Detention Curfew

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders who have been released on Home Detention Curfew since April 2005 were not tagged on the day they were released. [67692]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The number of people released on Home Detention Curfew between 1 April 2005 and 30 April 2006 was 17,843. These statistics are based on information recorded on the central prison IT system on 30 April 2006. Further updates and amendments may be made to records in future resulting in revised figures.

The statistics on the number of cases where the tag was not fitted on the day of release have been provided by the electronic monitoring service providers. A total of 1,244 (7 per cent.) did not have their tag fitted on the day of release.

In the great majority of those cases (1,039, or 5.8 per cent. of the total) this was because the offender was not present at the curfew address or the monitoring company was refused access. A second failed attempt to fit the tag will result in the offender being recalled to prison.

Home Office Responsibilities

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list areas of policy responsibility which have been transferred *(a)* from the Home Office to other departments and *(b)* to the Home Office from other departments since 1997. [68904]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The information requested is as follows.

A. Areas of policy responsibility transferred from the Home Office since 1997:

1. Transfer from the Home Secretary to the Lord Chancellor:

(a) the Monarchy

(b) titles

(c) ceremonial matters

(d) the relationship between the administration of any of the Channel Islands or of the Isle of Man and the Crown or a Minister of the Crown

(e) human rights

(f) bodies or organisations established or incorporated by Royal Charter

(g) appointments

(h) ecclesiastical matters

(i) marriage

(j) access to information (including, in particular, the subject matter of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000), and

(k) buildings and structures in London

2. Functions passing from the Home Secretary to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport:

(a) gambling

(b) horse-racing

(c) liquor licensing,

(d) late night refreshment

(e) public entertainments

(f) video recording (including, in particular, the subject matter of the Video Recordings Act 1984), and

(g) films (including, in particular, the subject matter of the Cinemas Act 1985).

3. Functions passing from the Home Secretary to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry:

(a) street trading and pedlars, and

(b) fairs

4. Functions passing from the Home Secretary to the (then) Secretary of State for Transport, Local Government and the Regions:

(a) fire services and fire precautions (including, in particular, the subject matter of the Fire Services Act 1947 and the Fire Precautions Act 1971 and any provision which relates, or in so far as it relates, to a fire authority)

(b) elections, and

(c) bye-laws

5. Functions passing from the Home Secretary to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs:

(a) animals

B. Areas of policy responsibility transferred to the Home Office since 1997

1. Functions passing from the (then) Secretary of State for Education and Employment to the Home Secretary:

(a) work permit functions.

2. Functions passing from the Secretary of State for Scotland to the Home Secretary

(a) appointing a member of the Poisons Board under Schedule one to the Poisons Act 1972.

3. Functions passing from the Lord Chancellor to the Home Secretary

(a) appointing a Conservator under section 12 of the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Act 1871.

Infant LIfe (Preservation) Act 1929

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were (i) prosecuted and (ii) convicted of an offence under the Infant Life (Preservation) Act 1929 in each year since 1976. [69607]

Mr. Byrne: Data from the Court Proceedings Database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform for the number of males and females (i) prosecuted and (ii) convicted of an offence under the Infant Life (Preservation) Act 1929 in England and Wales for the years 1984 to 2004 can be found in the following table.

Data prior to 1984 is unavailable.

Data for 2005 will be available in the autumn of 2006.

Number of males and females prosecuted at magistrates courts and convicted at all courts, under the Infant Life (Preservation) Act 1929 in England and Wales, 1984 to 2004[1]

	Prosecuted		Convicted	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
1984	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
1985	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
1986	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
1987	[2]	[2]	1	[2]
1988	2	[2]	[2]	[2]
1989	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
1990	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
1991	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
1992	1	[2]	[2]	[2]
1993	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
1994	1	[2]	[2]	[2]
1995	[2]	1	[2]	1
1996	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
1997	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
1998	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
1999	[2]	[2]	1	[2]
2000	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
2001	1	[2]	[2]	[2]
2002	1	[2]	[2]	[2]
2003	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
2004	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis.
[2] Nil

Juvenile Offenders

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what estimate he has made of the average weekly cost of a young person on remand *(a)* in a young offender institution and *(b)* on a foster remand placement; [70903]

(2) what resources he is making available in the 2006-07 financial year to increase the number of remand foster placements as an alternative to young offender institutions for young people on remand; [70904]

(3) how many remand foster placements are available as an alternative to young offender institutions for young people on remand; [70905]

(4) what steps he is taking to increase the number of remand foster placements; [70908]

(5) what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of remand foster placements as an alternative to young offender institutions for young people on remand. [70950]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* Remand fostering in England and Wales is the responsibility of local social services departments and funding is provided through the existing grant to Youth Offending Teams (YOT). Information on the numbers of placements are not held centrally.

There is a summary of a recent evaluation of pre-trial accommodation available on the Youth Justice Board (YJB) website. The Home Office and the YJB are committed to ensuring that there is suitable accommodation for young offenders and those at risk of offending. The YJB have been developing an accommodation strategy for this group and a key part of this will be looking at ensuring that there are no remands to custody as a result of a lack of suitable accommodation. I will ensure that the hon. Member receives a copy of this when it is published.

The average weekly cost of a remand or sentenced placement at a Young Offenders Institution (YOI) is £1,000. This figure is based on the Service Level Agreement between the Prison Service and the YJB.

Mobile Phones (Drivers)

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many fixed penalty notices have been issued for offences involving using a hand-held mobile telephone when driving a motor vehicle in *(a)* South Wales, *(b)* Gwent, *(c)* North Wales and *(d)* Dyfed Powys police force areas. [67166]

Mr. Byrne: In 2004 the number of fixed penalty notices issued for offences of use of hand-held mobile phones while driving were as follows:

	Number
(a) South Wales	134,743
(b) Gwent	25,228
(c) North Wales	71,678
(d) Dyfed Powys	14,752

The figures have been taken from the annual Home Office publication "Offences relating to motor vehicles, England and Wales Supplementary tables 2004" (latest available). Copies are available from the Library.

Data for 2005 will be available early in 2007.

Motoring Offences

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance he has issued to police forces on their duty to contact the owners of rented properties whose tenants are wanted for moving road traffic offences. [70180]

Mr. Coaker: None. The investigation of offences, including the inquiries made to trace suspected offenders, is an operational matter for individual chief officers of police. Police would generally obtain a driver's address from DVLA's register of vehicle keepers. This does not identify the nature of an address, nor whether it is owned or rented; it has no information on those linked to a vehicle keeper such as a landlord.

National Identity Register

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate the Government have made of the commercial value to the Government of the information stored about individuals in the National Identity Register. [67286]

Joan Ryan: The Government have made clear that commercial organisations will not have access to the information held on the National Identity Register and the Identity Cards Act 2006 does not make provision for such access. Thus, no such valuation has been conducted. The Identity and Passport Service plans to recover the majority of operational costs from fees. This will include the cost of the Identity Verification Service, which will be established under section 12 of the Identity Cards Act and will allow verification of identity by organisations such as banks, with the consent of the individual.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what restrictions the Government plan on the use of the National Identity Registration Number by private sector bodies. [67287]

Joan Ryan: The Government have made clear that the National Identity Registration Number would be a general identifier under the terms of schedule 1, part 2, paragraph 4 of the Data Protection Act 1998, which states:

> "personal data which contain a general identifier falling within a description prescribed by the Secretary of State by order are not to be treated as processed fairly and lawfully unless they are processed in compliance with any conditions so prescribed in relation to general identifiers of that description".

This means that the use of the number by other organisations would have to be specified in regulations. Additionally, before these regulations were tabled, the Secretary of State would be under a duty to consult the Information Commissioner as required by section 67(3) of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who the data controller will be for the National Identity Register. [67288]

Joan Ryan: The Secretary of State will be the data controller for the National Identity Register.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will supply complete answers to parliamentary questions to which answers have previously been refused on grounds of commercial confidentiality once a contractor for the National Identity Register has been selected. [67290]

Joan Ryan: The award of contracts for the National Identity Register will not necessarily change the impact that release of information may have on the Department's commercial interests. The Identity and Passport Service would need to undertake further consideration regarding the information at the time of contract award. However, it is likely that at the contract award stage, the release of certain cost estimates previously withheld will no longer prejudice commercial interests, and it may be possible for this information to be made public without prejudicing the Department's commercial interests.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the expected cost is to public funds of vetting the staff employed by contractors operating the National Identity Register; and what the expected cost is to the operation of the National Identity Register of the time taken to carry out such vetting. [67291]

Joan Ryan: Measures will be put in place to ensure that the National Identity Register operates to the level of security commensurate with being part of the critical national infrastructure. The published operating cost estimates for the scheme include staff-related costs of operating the National Identity Register.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the expected average salary is of persons who will have *(a)* any access to the National Identity Register and *(b)* physical access to the equipment which stores it. [67292]

Joan Ryan: Overall estimates with regard to staff costs have been made within the business case for the National Identity Scheme. However, precise details regarding the deployment of staff in specific roles or associated compensation packages are dependent on the final design of the scheme, which can only be finalised after negotiations with suppliers in the forthcoming procurement process are completed.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the public sector bodies that will have access to data held on the National Identity Register without specific citizen consent; and for what purposes. [70712]

Joan Ryan: No organisation will have direct access to information recorded on the National Identity Register, with or without the consent of the individual.

Sections 17-21 of the Identity Cards Act 2006 permit the Secretary of State to provide information from the National Identity Register without the consent of the individual to certain public sector organisations under certain circumstances.

Those organisations are:

the Security Services, the Secret Intelligence Service, Government Communications Headquarters and the Serious Organised Crime Agency when the request is connected with the carrying out of any of the functions of those organisations.

the police, when the request is (a) in the interests of national security or (b) for purposes connected with the prevention or detection of crime. However, in the case of information held under paragraph 9 of Schedule 1 of the Act, it can only be provided to the police when the request is related to the prevention or detection of serious crime.

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, when the request is (a) in the interests of national security, (b) for purposes connected with the prevention or detection of crime, (c) for purposes connected with the prevention, detection or investigation of conduct in respect of which the Commissioners have power to impose penalties, or with the imposition of such penalties, (d) for the purpose of facilitating the checking of information provided to the Commissioners in connection with anything under their care and management, or with any other matter in relation to which the Commissioners have duties under any enactment, (e) for purposes connected with any of the functions of the Commissioners in relation to national insurance contributions or national insurance numbers. However, as in the case with the police, information held under paragraph 9 of Schedule 1 can only be provided when the request is related to the prevention or detection of serious crime.

The provision of information from the National Identity Register in these circumstances can only occur when conditions established under Section 21 of the Identity Cards Act have been met. Furthermore, the National Identity Scheme Commissioner and, where appropriate, the Intelligence Services Commissioner will provide independent oversight of the National Identity Scheme.

The provision of information without consent of the individual to the aforementioned organisations for any other purpose or to any other Government department, Northern Ireland department or public authority cannot occur without the prior approval of Parliament through secondary legislation subject to the affirmative resolution procedure.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate the Government have made of the cost to an individual of *(a)* losing their identity card and *(b)* it being stolen. [67285]

Joan Ryan: The schedule of fees for Identity and Passport Service products after the introduction of identity cards is not yet settled. Currently, an individual must pay for the replacement of a lost or stolen passport.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of parliamentary questions on the subject of the identity cards scheme Ministers have *(a)* refused to answer and *(b)* given an incomplete answer to on grounds of commercial confidentiality in the current parliamentary session. [67289]

Joan Ryan: In the current parliamentary session, Ministers have answered all parliamentary questions that have been tabled by hon. Members. Out of a total of 271 parliamentary questions tabled, the answers to 16 (less than 6 per cent. of the total) were qualified to ensure that they did not prejudice the Government's ability to secure value for money.

Passports

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department where in the Anglesey and North Gwynedd area the secure webcam for passport application interviews will be located; and if he will make a statement. [70432]

Joan Ryan *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* Locations for interviews have not yet been determined in any of the areas in which the remote community service will be available, including the Anglesey and North Gwynedd area. A procurement exercise will be undertaken to engage partner organisations with suitable premises and establish the detailed arrangements.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many pensioners in Hendon received free passports in 2005; and if he will make a statement. [41615]

Joan Ryan: The United Kingdom Passport Service (UKPS) does not keep records by address of how many British Nationals have received free passports.

In 2005, nationally, UKPS issued a total of 172,080 passports free of charge to British Nationals born on or before 2 September 1929.

Police

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department from which *(a)* police forces and *(b)* police authorities he has received a request for amalgamation with a neighbouring police force. [31515]

Mr. Byrne: None. The Home Secretary's written Ministerial statement on 6 February 2006 set out the latest position and undertook to keep the House up to date about the detailed plans for all areas as options for each are refined.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers there were in *(a)* Kingston upon Hull, North constituency, *(b)* Kingston upon Hull division and *(c)* Humberside in each year since 1997. [69770]

Mr. Byrne: Statistics by constituency are not collected centrally. Figures for police officers have only been collected by basic command unit since March 2002. The available data for the number of police officers deployed in the Kingston-upon-Hull basic command unit is provided in the table along with the figures for Humberside.

I understand from the chief constable that in 2003 and 2004, criminal justice administration teams, command centres, dog handlers and scenes of crime officers were transferred from all of Humberside's basic command units to central force control. This accounts for the reduction in police officer numbers in Kingston-upon-Hull basic command unit.

Police officer strength (full-time equivalent) by year (1997-2005)

As at 31 March each year	Kingston-upon-Hull[1]	Humberside[2]
1997	—	2,045
1998	—	2,021
1999	—	1,974
2000	—	1,932
2001	—	1,917
2002	704	2,058
2003	761	2,105
2004	740	2,213
2005	699	2,230

[1] FTE includes those on career breaks or maternity/paternity leave. Data only available from 2002.
[2] Figures include those on Secondment to NCIS, NCS and Central Services, FTE excludes those on career breaks or maternity/paternity leave

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects HM Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) report into the performance of Nottinghamshire Police to be published. [70901]

Mr. Byrne: It is hoped that HMIC will be in a position to publish the report in approximately one month (i.e. mid-June).

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what circumstances the police retain DNA samples of people who have been arrested but not charged with an offence. [71102]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, as amended, the police may take and retain DNA samples from persons who have been arrested for a recordable offence and detained in a police station. The decision whether or not to retain samples taken in these circumstances is an operational one for the police force concerned although it would be the norm to do so. Once taken, these samples may only be used for the purposes of prevention and detection of crime, the investigation of an offence, the conduct of a prosecution or for the purposes of identifying a deceased person.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many DNA samples the police collected on a voluntary basis in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [71103]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The number of DNA samples provided by volunteers to the police for elimination purposes is not held centrally by the Home Office and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

As at the end of April 2006, the number of persons who have voluntarily given a DNA sample to the police and who have also consented to their DNA profile being loaded onto the National DNA database was 16,173.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what circumstances the police retain DNA samples of people who have been assisting a victim of crime. [71110]

Mr. Sutcliffe: DNA samples taken from a volunteer as part of the investigation of an offence are destroyed once they have fulfilled the purpose for which they were taken unless the volunteer gives written permission for them to be retained on the National DNA database.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the new headquarters of Gloucestershire constabulary at Quedgeley in its function as a major incident facility. [64737]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary are planning to review the operation of the facility in due course.

Nick Herbert: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will list the consultants employed by *(a)* each police authority and *(b)* each police force in England and Wales to advise on police force amalgamations; and what the cost was in each case. [47314]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not held centrally.

Nick Herbert: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will list the consultants employed by his Department to advise on police force amalgamations; and what the cost was in each case. [47315]

Mr. Byrne: Consultants from a number of organisations have been employed to assist in the process of assessing the financial case for change, including:

Office for Government Commerce
Deloitte
Avail (Tribal Vale)
Ernst and Young

KPMG
Accenture
IBM
Mott MacDonald
Methods
Walker-Cox
Mentis

To date this consultancy support has cost £656,864.

Nick Herbert: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the consultants employed by non-governmental organisations funded by his Department to advise on police force amalgamations; and what the cost was in each case. [47316]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* This information is not held centrally.

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to delay decisions on the merging of police forces to enable more extensive local consultation on the implications of such changes to take place. [30418]

Mr. Byrne: The House will be kept up to date about the detailed plans for all areas as options for each are refined. In the meantime, the Home Secretary expects police authorities to continue to engage with their communities on this issue.

Mr. Fraser: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what consideration has been given to the location of police headquarters in the event of the Norfolk Constabulary being merged with other forces to create a strategic force in the Eastern region. [38863]

Mr. Byrne: This will be an issue for the chief officer and police authority of any new strategic force.

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the letter of 5 April from the Minister of State to Sir Ronnie Flanagan commissioning the O'Connor report, for what reasons the intention of the Government was that this stage of the review of policing structure be low key in terms of publicity. [27095]

Mr. Byrne: The White Paper "Building Communities, Beating Crime", published in November 2004, stated clearly (at paragraph 5.62-5.64) that the former Home Secretary (Charles Clarke) had commissioned Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) to examine the issue of force structures in England and Wales and that HMIC had been asked to report its initial findings by the end of January 2005. The further work commissioned from HMIC in my letter of 5 April 2005 to Sir Ronnie Flanagan was the next stage in the process mapped out in the White Paper and, as such, did not call for a further announcement at that stage.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the merits of 24-hour help desks in police stations. [65147]

Mr. Byrne: The Home Office has not commissioned or evaluated any research on the merits of 24-hour help desks in police stations.

The management of the police estate and allocation of resources are matters for each police authority and the chief officer, who are responsible for assessing local needs. The ownership of police stations is vested in the local police authority, not the Home Office. Their use is a matter for local decisions.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance he has issued to police forces on the provision of 24-hour help desks at police stations. [65189]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The management of the police estate and allocation of resources are matters for each police authority and the chief officer, who are responsible for assessing local needs. The ownership of police stations is vested in the local police authority, not the Home Office. Their use is a matter for local decision.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether police precepts will be harmonised throughout the local authority areas covered by the new regional police force in Yorkshire and the Humber; and if he will make a statement. [67509]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* Yes. Work is taking place on transitional arrangements to allow for convergence of precepts over several years.

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how police force mergers in Wales will be funded. [66079]

Mr. Byrne: We are committed to paying 100 per cent. of reasonable set-up, revenue and capital costs of restructuring, net of reasonable savings.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether existing North Yorkshire police force and police authority *(a)* revenue and *(b)* capital balances will be ring-fenced for use exclusively within the North Yorkshire and York local authority areas. [67611]

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether existing plans for police capital expenditure within North Yorkshire and York will be honoured by the new Yorkshire and Humberside regional police authority. [67512]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* Budget setting and management for any reorganised police area will be a matter for the new strategic police authority and the chief officer, who will be responsible for prioritising local needs.

Prisons

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much compensation has been paid to prisoners in each of the last eight years; and what the reason was in each case. [71203]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table covers the financial years 2004-05 and 2005-06 as data prior to this is unreliable. The data relates to public sector establishments only as litigation in private sector prisons is a matter for the individual contractor.

The Amount of Compensation Paid to Prisoners by the Public Sector Prison Service in England and Wales in 2004-05 and 2005-06

	2004-05		2005-06	
				£
Type of Prisoner Claim	*Awards made by Courts*	*Settlements out of Court*	*Awards made by Courts*	*Settlements out of Court*
Abuse/Harassment	0	500	0	7,000
Assault by Prisoner	0	79,409	0	13,270
Assault by Staff	0	180,408	0	113,250
Slip, Trip & Fall	2,750	96,975	2,500	72,155
Sport Injury	0	0	0	2,950
Miscellaneous injury	22,750	233,351	0	3,445,650
Medical Negligence	350	1,437,500	0	215,700
Property	0	14,355	3,585	13,685
Unlawful Detention	0	100,307	0	76,945
Other	0	17,725	20,000	56,628
TOTAL	25,850	2,160,530	26,085	4,017,233

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the impact on education provision in prisons of the level of transfers of inmates between establishments. [62124]

Phil Hope: I have been asked to reply.

The throughput of prisoners in establishments (i.e. numbers of prisoners received and discharged on a daily basis) has increased significantly. It is to be expected that when prisons face operational pressures there may be an impact on a range of activities, including education and training, particularly in hard-pressed local prisons. However, since April 2002, over 150,000 basic skills qualifications have been achieved by learners in prison.

The Home Office and DfES have established the Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) project which will introduce a new service of education and skills for offenders in both custody and the community. This, combined with plans set out in the "Reducing Re-offending through Skills and Employment" Green Paper launched in December 2005, will enable more offenders in custody and those serving their sentences in the community to complete their education and training successfully.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of incentive and earned privileges programmes on the prison estate. [62761]

Mr. Sutcliffe: All prisons operate a local scheme of incentives and earned privileges based upon a national framework. National policy requires that all establishments review and evaluate their own schemes annually.

A central review of the scheme is currently being conducted which will result in a revised issue of the Incentive and Earned Privileges guidance.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many copies of the Prison Service annual report and accounts 2003-04 were distributed by his Department; if he will list those who were sent copies; at what cost; how many copies were printed; at what cost; who was awarded the contract to undertake the printing; how *(a)* hon. Members, *(b)* Members of the House of Lords and *(c)* members of the public may obtain a copy; at what cost; and if he will make a statement. [70872]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Her Majesty's Prison Service (HMPS) printed 3,000 copies of its annual report and accounts for the financial year 2003-04. Most of these were issued free of charge to Parliament, colleagues elsewhere in the Home Office and criminal justice system and senior managers within HMPS. HMPS provided 350 copies to the Stationery Office, the official publishers, who offered these for sale through their retail outlets at a cover price (fixed by TSO) of £23. The distribution list used by HMPS is shown in the following table.

The total cost of producing 3,000 copies of the annual report and accounts 2003-04 was approximately £26,000. The contract for design work was awarded to the Brightside Partnership and the contract for printing was awarded to Formara Printers. Distribution costs were mostly covered by HMPS' internal mail and messenger services. Normal postage costs applied to copies distributed externally and would have amounted to no more than £80.

Copies of the document are held in the Library. Printed copies of the document may still be available from TSO outlets at a cost of £23. Alternatively, the document is viewable on the HMPS internet website (hmprisonservice.gov.uk).

Annual report and accounts distribution list 2003-04

Recipient	*Approximate number of copies*
Ministers and Private Office	6
Public Accounts Committee	2
Prison Service Pay Review Body	25
Home Office	50
HM Treasury	2
National Offender Management Service	15

Annual report and accounts distribution list 2003-04

Recipient	Approximate number of copies
CJS Planning Contacts	20
Special Advisers	2
National Probation Service	20
Prison Health Unit	20
Offender Learning and Skills Unit	10
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons	10
Her Majesty's Inspector of Probation	5
Prisons and Probation Ombudsman	10
Independent Monitoring Board	10
Prison Service Management Board	10
Director General's office	25
Deputy Director General's office	25
Director of Operations office	25
HMPS Area Managers	100
HMPS Heads of Groups	225
HMPS establishments	1,380
HMPS International Section (foreign visits)	100
Office for Contracted Prisons	10
Controllers at private prisons	10
Scottish and Northern Ireland Prison Services	2
TSO	350
Press Office	50
Internal communications	25
Prison Service Library	50
External libraries	6
General public and visitors (HQ reception areas)	100
Reserve (issued through the year or re-cycled)	300
Total	3,000

Roger Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many hours of education for prisoners were provided in each of the last two years. [70984]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The total number of education hours undertaken by prisoners during each of the last two years is shown in the table. Data for 2005-06 is provisional subject to end-of-year validations by establishments.

Hours of education undertaken by prisoners in England and Wales

	Education hours
2004-05	17,617,211
2005-06	19,375,614

Private Office

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of his private office was in the last year for which figures are available. [55727]

Mr. Byrne: Running costs for the Home Secretary's Private Office for the financial year 2004-2005 were £6,020,526.

Prolific and Priority Offender Strategy

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many young people in Peterborough constituency have been subject to the Prolific and Priority Offender Strategy; and if he will make a statement. [70169]

Mr. Byrne: Currently, 32 young people under the age of 18 are being targeted. This comprises 28 under the Prevent and Deter and four in the Catch and Convict and Rehabilitate and Resettle strands. Peterborough is one of 39 schemes in the eastern region that is helping to deliver the Government's national Prolific and Priority Offender programme which uses a multi-agency approach to target those offenders causing a disproportionate amount of harm to their communities through a range of interventions to reduce their offending.

Proscribed Terrorist Organisations

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans the Government have to place the *(a)* Saved Sect and *(b)* al-Ghurabaa groups on his Department's list of proscribed terrorist organisations. [66365]

Mr. Byrne: Section 21 of the terrorism Act 2006, which came into force on 13 April, expanded the criteria for proscription. All possible candidates for proscription will be assessed against these widened criteria.

Racially Motivated Attacks

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many racially motivated attacks took place in *(a)* England and Wales, *(b)* Leicester and *(c)* London in each of the last 24 months for which figures are available. [71180]

Mr. Byrne: Information is collected in the form of racially or religiously aggravated less serious wounding and racially or religiously aggravated common assault. Data for the period April 2003 to March 2005 are given in the table.

Racially or religiously aggravated less serious wounding and common assault

Month/ Year	Leicester crime and disorder reduction partnership	Metropolitan and City of London police force areas	England and Wales
2003			
April	9	251	749
May	18	261	772
June	25	260	833
July	10	284	873
August	13	216	743
September	19	253	688
October	14	230	746
November	14	225	790
December	7	157	621

Racially or religiously aggravated less serious wounding and common assault

Month/ Year	Leicester crime and disorder reduction partnership	Metropolitan and City of London police force areas	England and Wales
2004			
January	2	167	631
February	14	209	685
March	10	213	726
April	11	239	830
May	20	264	825
June	15	244	858
July	13	233	802
August	14	218	794
September	14	201	733
October	12	200	738
November	13	204	739
December	18	171	599
2005			
January	15	208	670
February	9	166	625
March	14	213	776

Research Studies

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the research studies commissioned by his Department in each of the last five years where a decision was taken not to publish the results of the research after it was completed. [47563]

Mr. Byrne: Not every piece of research that is commissioned is published by the Home Office. The Chief Scientific Adviser may decide not to publish in a Home Office series on the grounds of inadequate scientific quality following external peer review, as the results are out of date or for operational reasons. In these circumstances, the researcher is usually released to publish the results through other means. We do not have a record centrally of which reports released in this way have subsequently been published in scientific journals or other non-HO publications.

In other cases, the Department decides to publish only a summary of research and allow the more detailed report to be made available separately. A list of research findings can be found on the Home Office website.

There are a number of further cases where the commissioned research is not released where the following circumstances apply:

1. That a decision is taken that any dissemination of the research should have a limited distribution for reasons such as security considerations or practical operational reasons.

2. That the research is commissioned, but during the course of the project a decision is made to re-prioritise work to other areas, before there are publishable results.

3. There are a very limited number of projects where no suitable publication date was found for release by the Home Office. We have found one such instance in the last five years.

4. The Home Office's Communications Directorate conducts market research to help develop and evaluate public information campaigns. The research is not peer reviewed and therefore has not been considered appropriate for official Home Office publication although details are available on request.

A table showing the available information on research projects commissioned in the last five years where the above circumstances apply has been collated into a table that has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Road Trafffic Regulation Act 1984

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the operation of section *(a)* 1, *(b)* 5, *(c)* 6 and *(d)* 8 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. [69143]

Mr. Byrne: The Government are satisfied that these provisions operate effectively to regulate road use. These provisions of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 provide for the making of traffic regulation orders outside Greater London and of similar orders within Greater London. The orders are made by local authorities or the Secretary of State according to the type of road and can make a wide range of provisions as to how the road is to be used. The orders are made in the interests of avoiding danger, preventing damage, facilitating passage along the road, preventing vehicular use of the road in a way that is unsuitable for the road or surrounding area, preserving the character of a road and preserving or improving local amenities.

Sex Offenders

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the procedure is for registered sex offenders who have been fully rehabilitated to apply to have their name removed from the register. [71837]

Mr. Coaker: Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 provides for the notification requirements on offenders who receive convictions or cautions for certain sexual offences. These notification requirements are often known as the sex offenders register. The notification requirements apply for a fixed period as set out in the 2003 Act (see following table) and include lifetime registration for those sentenced to a term of imprisonment of 30 months or more or admitted to a hospital subject to a restriction order.

There is no general discretion in the application of the notification requirements and there is no power, to the police or the courts, to change the notification period which applies to an offender.

The only exception relates to those offenders who were made subject to the requirements because they were convicted for a homosexual offence that has now been abolished. These offenders may make an application to end the notification requirements placed upon them.

Description of relevant offender	*Notification period*
A person who, in respect of the offence, is or has been sentenced to imprisonment for life or for a term of 30 months or more	An indefinite period beginning with the relevant date (the date of conviction)
A person who, in respect of the offence, has been made the subject of an order under section 210F(1) of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995 (order for lifelong restriction)	An indefinite period beginning with that date
A person who, in respect of the offence or finding, is or has been admitted to a hospital subject to a restriction order	An indefinite period beginning with that date
A person who, in respect of the offence, is or has been sentenced to imprisonment for a term of more than six months but less than 30 months	10 years beginning with that date
A person who, in respect of the offence, is or has been sentenced to imprisonment for a term of six months or less	7 years beginning with that date
A person who, in respect of the offence or finding, is or has been admitted to a hospital without being subject to a restriction order	7 years beginning with that date
A person within section 80(1)(d)—subject to a police caution post 1 May 2004	2 years beginning with that date
A person in whose case an order for conditional discharge or, in Scotland, a probation order, is made in respect of the offence	The period of conditional discharge or, in Scotland, the probation period
A person of any other description	5 years beginning with the relevant date

Sexually Objectifying Material

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will assess the merits of introducing legislation similar to that protecting against incitement to racial hatred to protect women from sexually objectifying material. [64014]

Mr. Coaker: I share the hon. Member's concern at the portrayal of women in some parts of the media. However, I believe there is a significant difference between material which is intended or is likely to stir up hatred and material which may "objectify" a person and it would be a very large step to criminalise material in the second group. Moreover, in practical terms, hatred is a concept well understood by the courts—it includes behaviour which is likely directly to drive up violence and the fear of violence. It is less clear what "sexually objectifying material" is and what the direct effects of such material would be. I believe there would be genuine difficulties for the courts in defining "sexually objectifying material". This could cover a very wide range of material including much that is commonly available through the media, works of art and comedy material.

Legislation, including the Obscene Publications Act 1959, the Indecent Displays (Control) Act 1981 and the Video Recordings Act 1984 already exists to protect people against illegal and harmful sexual material.

Solicitors

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to end the practice of locking solicitors in interview rooms at police stations when they visit violent suspects. [68897]

Mr. Byrne: The management of custody suites and arrangements for all those who come into the custody suite is a matter for the chief officer of the force concerned.

The Home Office Police Buildings Design Guide recommends that interview and consultation rooms are fitted with suitable warning and alert mechanisms. Guidance issued by the National Centre for Policing Excellence on 8 February 2006 sets out the need to consider any additional risks associated from or to visitors, such as solicitors and healthcare professionals, coming into the custody suite. The guidance states that effective risk management procedures must be in place and compliant with Health and Safety legislation.

I have asked my officials to meet with interested parties to consider the potential to establish a protocol between the Law Society and the Criminal Law Solicitors Association and the police on arrangements for solicitors attending police stations.

Special Constables

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding his Department has allocated to the special constables scheme in *(a)* the Kingston upon Hull division, *(b)* Humberside and *(c)* England and Wales in each year it has been running. [69765]

Mr. Byrne: *(a)* Grants are paid to police authorities. Kingston upon Hull division is part of Humberside police and *(b)* Home Office specific grants to forces under the Special Constabulary Capacity Building Scheme began in January 2004.

Grant payments to forces during the first two years of the scheme are shown in the following table.

		£
	2004	*2005*
Humberside	70,000	70,000
All forces in England & Wales	2,044,034	2,473,009

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what average number of hours per week was worked by a special constable in *(a)* the Kingston upon Hull division, *(b)* Humberside and *(c)* England and Wales in each year since the beginning of the scheme. [69767]

Mr. Byrne: Humberside police force are unable to provide data on hours worked by special constables. Available information on the average number of special constable hours per week across England and Wales are as follows:

Average number of special constable hours per week across England and Wales (525 forces providing data[1])

	Hours
2003-04	19,452
2004-05	21,266

[1] Forces not providing data are Avon and Somerset, Cambridgeshire, Cleveland, Derbyshire, Durham, Greater Manchester, Humberside, Merseyside, Metropolitan Police, North Wales, North Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, South Wales, Suffolk, Surrey, Sussex, Thames Valley and West Midlands.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many special constables have been recruited in *(a)* the Kingston-upon-Hull division, *(b)* Humberside and *(c)* England and Wales since the beginning of the scheme. [69768]

Mr. Byrne: Home Office specific grants to forces under the Special Constabulary Capacity Building Scheme began in January 2004. In the year 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005, 143 special constables were recruited by Humberside, with 3,636 special constables recruited in England and Wales.

Figures are not collected centrally for Kingston upon Hull.

Speed Cameras

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the total revenue raised from speed camera fines in England in the most recent year for which figures are available. [70710]

Mr. Coaker: The number of fixed penalties ordered to be paid and the number of court fines for such offences in 2004 (latest available), is given in the attached table.

Information for 2005 will be available early in 2007.

Not all fines and fixed penalties will have been paid.

Fixed penalty and court proceedings data for speeding offences detected by cameras[1] England, 2004

		Number of offences		
Fixed Penalties		Court Proceedings[2]		
Number of tickets[3]	Estimated revenue(£)[4]	Number of fines	Total amount of fine(£)	Average fine (£)
1,786,600	107,196,000	59,700	5,685,700	95

[1] Offences under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and The Motor Vehicles (Speed Limits on Motorways) Regulations 1973

[2] Includes cases where fixed penalty notices were originally issued but not paid and subsequently referred to court.

[3] Only covers tickets paid where there is no further action.

[4] Estimate based on £60 fixed penalty charge.

Stop and Search

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the answer of 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2615W, on stop and search procedures, if he will ensure that a copy of the "Stop and Search Manual" published on 31 March 2005 be placed in the Library. [70186]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 12 May 2006]*: I have arranged for copies of the "Stop and Search Manual" to be placed in the Commons' Library. Copies are already available in the Lords' Library. The guidance can also be accessed online at: http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/news-and-publications/publication/operational-policing/stopandsearch-intermanual1.pdf

Terrorism

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what inquiries his Department has carried out into the leak in the press about the security services foiling a terrorist attack on Canary Wharf in November 2004; [70029]

(2) whether the security forces foiled a planned terrorist attack on Canary Wharf in November 2004. [70028]

Mr. Byrne: We do not comment on alleged leaks of information.

However, on 11 May 2006, I placed on record to the House that the police and agencies have disrupted many attacks against the UK since 9/11, including three since last July.

Terrorist Interrogations

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what involvement UK agents or operatives have had in the interrogation of alleged terrorist suspects abroad. [39750]

Mr. Byrne: It is not the Government's policy to comment on intelligence issues.

Torture

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment he has made of the role of intelligence obtained by torture abroad in legal proceedings in England and Wales; [29110]

(2) what assessment he has made of the reliability of intelligence obtained by torture abroad; [29111]

(3) what assessment he has made of the impact in England and Wales of the use of intelligence obtained by torture abroad on long-term national security. [29112]

Mr. Byrne: Evidence obtained as a result of any acts of torture by British officials, or with which British authorities were complicit, would not be admissible in criminal or civil proceedings in the UK. It does not matter whether the evidence was obtained here or abroad.

During the individual appeals against certification under powers provided under part four of the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act (ATCSA), the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC) emphatically rejected any suggestion that evidence relied upon by the Government was, or even may have

been, obtained by torture. The Court of Appeal later confirmed the view of SIAC.

On 8 December 2005 the House of Lords ruled unanimously that evidence obtained by torture was inadmissible in SIAC proceedings. The decision will not impact on the Government's ability to fight terrorism, or change current practices, as the Government's own stated policy was already not to rely on evidence which we knew or believed to have been obtained as a result of torture. It is not always possible to know where all intelligence information has come from or the precise circumstances under which it was obtained. The Security Service and Secret Intelligence Service receive material from a wide range of foreign intelligence services. The agencies evaluate the reliability of this intelligence against other information available to them. It is then passed, together with an assessment of reliability, to the Government. It may be necessary in some circumstances to rely operationally on material which may have been obtained through the use of torture where it is considered necessary to do so, in particular for preventing terrorist attack and protecting life. The House of Lords judgment confirmed that material which had or may have been obtained through torture could be used for operational purposes.

We do not condone torture in any way, nor would we carry out this completely unacceptable behaviour. However, we do have an obligation to protect national security and public safety. We would be deficient in this duty if we did not properly assess all the information available to us.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases will be affected by the Law Lords ruling that evidence extracted under torture is inadmissible in judicial proceedings. [39752]

Mr. Byrne: We have no reason to believe that any convictions will be affected by this ruling. In criminal proceedings in England and Wales, the courts have a range of powers to prevent the admission of evidence that may have been obtained improperly or illegally, including through means of torture. Courts have the discretion to exclude evidence if it is unduly prejudicial or unfair, and a judicial discretion to stay proceedings if they are considered to be an abuse of the court's process. Defendants also enjoy the protections afforded by Article 6 of the ECHR, the right to a fair trial. Article 3 of the ECHR also prohibits torture and inhuman or degrading treatment. In addition, a confession is not admissible unless it meets the requirements set out in sections 76 and 78 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE). That is, the evidence will not be admissible if it is unreliable or has been obtained by oppression. Section 76(8) of PACE states that oppression includes torture, inhuman and degrading treatment and the use or threat of violence.

Under-age Drinking

Lynda Waltho: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress is being made in reducing under-age drinking. [70174]

Mr. Byrne: The Home Office's policy in this area is directed towards reducing the sales of alcohol to under-18s. We are working very closely with both the on and off sectors of the licensed industry, and have secured commitments from both to seek to eliminate under-age sales.

The table shows the rate of test-purchase failures (i.e. where alcohol was sold to a minor) from the various Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaigns (AMECs) which have taken place, up to AMEC 3 which ran during November and December last year. This shows encouraging reductions in test-purchase failures for all sectors of the industry.

Data from the "Drug use, smoking and drinking among young people in England in 2005" survey shows that the number of children aged 11-15 who reported having drunk alcohol in the last week was 22 per cent. in 2005, down from 25 per cent. in 2003.

	AMEC1 (Summer 2004—92 BCUs[1] involved)	*AMEC2 (Winter 2004—188 BCUs[1])*	*TVCP AMEC (Summer 2005—25 BCUs[1])*	*AMEC 3 (November-December 2005—234 BCUs[1])*
Test-purchases carried out	1,864	989	909	6,697
On-licence failure rate	45	32	51	29
Off-licence failure rate (incl. supermarkets)	31	32	36	20
Supermarkets failure rate	—	—	50	17

[1] BCU: police Basic Command Unit

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Deportations

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many defendants sentenced in the Crown Court of England and Wales were recommended to the Home Secretary for deportation on completion of their sentence in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available. [67685]

Ms Harman: The number of defendants for which a recommendation for deportation was made in the Crown Court for each of the last 12 months is displayed in the table.

Number of defendants for which a recommendation for deportation was made in the Crown Court between April 2005 and March 2006

	Number of Defendants
April 2005	121
May 2005	136
June 2005	104
July 2005	173
August 2005	116

Number of defendants for which a recommendation for deportation was made in the Crown Court between April 2005 and March 2006

	Number of Defendants
September 2005	96
October 2005	131
November 2005	162
December 2005	121
January 2006	104
February 2006	123
March 2006	141
Total	1,528

Judges

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many High Court judges are serving on the bench; how many are aged *(a)* 40-45, *(b)* 46-50, *(c)* 51-55, *(d)* 56-60, *(e)* 61-65, *(f)* 66-70, *(g)* 71-75 and *(h)* over 75 years; and how many there were in each group in (i) 1996, (ii) 1997, (iii) 1999, (iv) 2002 and (v) 2004. [70087]

Ms Harman: The information requested was not held centrally prior to 2000 in a form that is readily accessible. The following table shows the information for 2002 onwards.

Number of judges

	Aged 40-45	*Aged 46-50*	*Aged 51-55*	*Aged 56-60*	*Aged 61-65*	*Aged 66-70*	*Aged 71-75*	*Aged over 75*	*High Court judges*
15 May 2006	—	4	26	30	34	12	1	—	107
1 Jan 2004	—	3	28	39	28	6	2	—	106
1 Jan 2002	—	7	29	36	20	7	1	—	100

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on diversity in judicial appointments. [67086]

Ms Harman: This Government are committed to bringing about a more diverse judiciary that better reflects and understands the communities it serves. We believe this is important to helping increase public confidence in the justice system.

We are working with the Lord Chief Justice and Chairman of the recently established Judicial Appointments Commission on the judicial diversity programme. A Written Ministerial Statement was made today, 17 May 2006, outlining the strategy.

New Court House (Colchester)

Bob Russell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the Answer of 28 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 871W, on New Court House (Colchester), when she expects work on building a new court house at Colchester *(a)* to commence and *(b)* to be completed. [63186]

Ms Harman: The position in Colchester is currently being considered. I expect to make an announcement about the court in Colchester before the summer recess.

Small Claims (Courts)

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to her Oral Statement of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 361W, on small claims (courts), what information technology projects in the civil and family courts are under consideration by the Department. [67003]

Ms Harman: The Department is working hard to both improve existing systems and to introduce new systems where appropriate, as resources permit. Key projects currently either under consideration or in hand include:

An upgrade to existing systems in the civil and family courts to enable networked courts to view or work on cases held at any other networked court, which will be piloted later this year;

A new web-based system for use by claimants for possession of property through non-payment of mortgage or rent arrears;

An Electronic Filing and Document Management system is also under consideration, but work is at a very early stage.

Suicide

Mr. Drew: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the Government plan to amend the Suicide Act 1961. [47772]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have been asked to reply.

The Government have no current plans to amend the Suicide Act 1961.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of the staff in his Department is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled, broken down by grade. [69022]

Mr. Thomas: Details of DFID's permanent and pensionable home civil service staff by gender and grade can be derived from our published staffing figures return to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as at 31 December 2005.

The following table shows the percentage of staff, by grade, who had declared a disability at 31 December 2005. Declaration of a disability is voluntary.

Grade	Total	Males	Percentage male	Female	Percentage female	Staff with declared disability	Percentage declared disabled
SCS	85	60	71	25	29	3	3.5
A1/A2 (G6/G7)	659	388	59	271	41	5	0.8
A3/B1 (SEO/HEO)	508	263	52	245	48	13	2.6
B2 (EO)	297	136	46	161	54	4	1.3
C1/C2 (AO/AA)	323	116	36	207	64	19	5.9
Total	1,872	963	51	909	49	44	2.3

Fishing

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to promote sustainable fishing in the developing world; and if he will make a statement. [70923]

Mr. Thomas: DFID recognises that fisheries can make a significant contribution to economic growth and poverty reduction in the developing world but that, in many countries, this contribution is being constrained by problems of poor management. Pressures are being generated by high demand for fish products in rich countries, by poverty and the increasing numbers of people having to resort to fishing to sustain basic livelihoods and, in some places, by developed countries subsidising their own fleets to move into the waters of poorer countries.

In the long run, the contribution of sustainable fishing to the economies of developing countries can only be realised if the rich countries take into account the impact of their policies on developing countries and if the latter have the capacity to manage their own resources in a sustainable way.

DFID is working hard to ensure that international fisheries policy takes account of impacts on developing countries. Particular problems are being caused by illegal fishing—DFID-funded research has found that countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are losing as much as $1 billion a year from this alone. DFID is now working closely with DEFRA to support the development of an international plan of action to tackle illegal fishing.

We are also ready to support poorer countries to develop their capacity to manage their fisheries resources.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for Ministers of State in his Department on foreign visits in each of the last three years; [69013]

(2) on how many occasions Ministers of State in his Department stayed overnight in *(a)* five star, *(b)* four star and *(c)* three star hotels on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [69014]

Mr. Thomas: Under the terms of the "Ministerial Code" and "Travel by Ministers", when travelling on official business Ministers are expected to make efficient and cost-effective travel arrangements.

Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. This information includes accommodation costs. Copies are available in the Library.

For both the Secretary of State for International Development and I, the detailed information requested can not be provided without incurring disproportionate costs.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development on how many occasions *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department have stayed overnight in (i) five star, (ii) four star and (iii) three star hotels in each of the last three years. [69015]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) arranges hotel accommodation centrally through our agents. We do not have the ratings of all hotels used, but any hotel will be at least three star, and enable staff to comply with the departmental cost ceiling for overnight subsistence. The total number of room nights booked was as follows:

	Number
2003-04	9,444
2004-05	8,717
2005-06	9,687

Data related to our extensive use of overseas hotels are not centrally held and could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate cost.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department staying overnight in (i) mainland Great Britain, (ii) Northern Ireland, (iii) the Republic of Ireland and (iv) other countries in each of the last three years. [69016]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) books hotel accommodation centrally for the UK and some overseas locations through our agents. Expenditure for the past three years is as follows:

	£
2003-04	838,691
2004-05	818,020
2005-06	933,698

Data related to our extensive use of overseas hotels are not held centrally. These details could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate cost.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discounts are available in relation to hotel accommodation used by *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department. [69017]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) books hotel accommodation centrally through our travel agents. They have negotiated substantial discounts with the most frequently used hotels in the UK of between 17 and 67 per cent. on the standard room rate. We do not hold a central record of any discounts agreed by our overseas offices for frequently used hotels in their countries. These details could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate costs.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 17 May 2006

TREASURY

Banana Imports

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what revenue was raised in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005 from imports into the UK of bananas (combined nomenclature 0803) from (i) Belize, (ii) Brazil, (iii) Cameroon, (iv) Colombia, (v) Costa Rica, (vi) Ivory Coast, (vii) Dominica, (viii) Dominican Republic, (ix) Ecuador, (x) Guatemala, (xi) Jamaica, (xii) Panama, (xiii) St Lucia and (xiv) St Vincent. [71501]

Dawn Primarolo: The customs duty declared in respect of bananas imported into the UK is in the following table.

£

	2004	2005
Belize	—	1,867.82
Brazil	1,684,776.78	1,860,537.69
Cameroon	53,435.11	1,726.29
Colombia	4,510,670.85	3,299,237.24
Costa Rica	9,893,361.20	7,353,796.38
Ivory Coast	—	146,823.78
Dominica	—	—
Dominican Republic	309,312.98	2,674,081.82
Ecuador	138,085.11	45,393.43
Guatemala	108,812.24	14,318.20
Jamaica	—	15,451.78
Panama	403,931.65	1,448,689.01
St. Lucia	12.84	14,395.23
St. Vincent	—	—

Birth Statistics

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many live births per 1,000 of the population there have been in *(a)* Ribble Valley and *(b)* Lancashire in each of the last 10 years; and what estimate he has made for each of the next five years. [71558]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 17 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many births per 1,000 population in *(a)* Ribble Valley and *(b)* Lancashire there have been in each of the last 10 years and what estimate has been made for each of the next five years. (71558)

Figures are currently available on births that have occurred in each year up to 2004. The table below shows rates for the years 1995 to 2004. ONS projections of the numbers of births in each area are based on the assumption that local trends in fertility observed over the period 1999 to 2003 will continue into the future. The table below also shows projected birth rates on this basis for the years 2005 to 2009.

Live birth rates per 1,000 population 1995-2009, Kibble Valley CD and Lancashire county

	Ribble Valley	[1]Lancashire
1995	9.9	11.8
1996	10.2	11.9
1997	10.3	11.6
1998	10.0	11.4
1999	9.7	11.1
2000	10.2	10.7
2001	9.3	10.7
2002	8.8	10.3
2003	9.1	10.9
2004	9.2	11.4
2005[2]	9.5	10.9
2006[2]	9.3	10.7
2007[2]	9.0	10.5
2008[2]	8.9	10.4
2009[2]	8.7	10.3

[1] In 1997 Blackburn CD and Blackpool CD ceased to form part of Lancashire. To aid comparability they have been excluded throughout the table.
[2] Figures for 2005 to 2009 are 2003-based projections.

Cancer Rates

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the rates of cancer of the *(a)* breast and *(b)* cervix were in (i) the South East of England and (ii) the rest of the UK for those aged (A) 20 to 25 years, (B) 25 to 30 years, (C) 30 to 35 years, (D) 35 to 40 years, (E) 40 to 45 years, (F) 45 to 50 years and (G) 50 to 55 years in each year since 1979; and if he will make a statement. [70879]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 17 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what the rates of cancer of the (a) breast and (b) cervix were in (i) the South East of England and (ii) the rest of the UK for those aged (A) 20 to 25 years, (B) 25 to 30 years (C) 30 to 35 years (D) 35 to 40 years (E) 40 to 45 years (F) 45 to 50 years and (G) 50 to 55 years in each year since 1979. [70879]

The most recent available figures for newly diagnosed cases of cancer registered in England and Wales are for 2003. Age-specific incidence rates by five-year age groups for both breast and cervical cancer registered in (a) London and South East Government Office Regions and (b) the rest of England and Wales for the years 1981-2003 are given in the attached tables.

Figures are not available for the United Kingdom prior to 1994 and so figures have been provided for England and Wales for consistency over the period.

Age-specific incidence rates[1] of newly diagnosed cases of breast cancer, London and South East Government Office Regions, 1981-2003

Age groups	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
20-24	0.7	1.1	1.6	1.7	0.6	0.9	1.4	1.3	1.8
25-29	5.9	5.9	7.2	7.2	6.8	8.1	8.4	7.3	8.0
30-34	22.5	21.5	22.3	18.7	24.1	24.1	21.5	23.0	25.5
35-39	40.4	46.6	46.5	52.5	52.7	56.6	61.1	51.8	61.5
40-44	101.1	100.5	100.1	88.0	103.1	95.9	98.5	107.9	113.5
45-49	134.5	141.9	143.7	140.0	155.5	151.1	162.9	154.5	174.8
50-54	143.2	164.7	148.7	142.5	172.6	166.9	166.1	189.1	204.3

Age groups	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
20-24	1.6	2.2	1.4	2.5	1.1	1.0	1.0
25-29	8.7	6.7	7.6	7.6	8.0	7.7	10.2
30-34	23.0	24.9	29.3	26.9	31.0	24.4	28.9
35-39	56.2	60.2	67.0	55.0	61.1	65.1	68.9
40-44	105.8	112.4	118.8	115.1	112.6	114.3	118.0
45-49	175.8	172.2	192.2	183.8	195.0	180.6	180.9
50-54	224.8	241.2	265.3	237.4	261.7	270.4	278.5

Age groups	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
20-24	2.3	1.4	0.2	1.6	0.6	1.8	0.6
25-29	10.3	7.9	6.8	8.4	7.0	8.4	7.9
30-34	26.8	28.2	29.2	24.5	23.4	25.8	27.3
35-39	67.9	55.2	61.1	68.4	63.0	57.8	61.0
40-44	113.7	119.8	119.7	113.7	119.7	107.9	110.9
45-49	206.5	195.2	187.5	179.6	173.6	177.5	189.8
50-54	291.9	274.5	276.3	275.9	279.0	259.2	270.6

Age-specific incidence rates[1] of newly diagnosed cases of breast cancer, England and Wales excluding London and South East Government Office Regions, 1981-2003

Age groups	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
20-24	1.0	0.6	1.0	1.4	0.6	0.8	1.6	1.3	1.3
25-29	6.9	6.6	5.9	6.1	7.2	6.8	7.0	7.7	7.6
30-34	19.8	20.0	22.5	22.6	23.3	24.3	25.4	24.3	25.3
35-39	51.7	53.2	49.8	47.6	52.1	58.3	52.4	54.1	58.2
40-44	94.5	94.9	91.4	92.7	100.2	104.1	98.6	102.8	109.1
45-49	137.9	144.8	134.9	139.2	146.9	147.6	157.3	157.8	163.6
50-54	146.1	144.1	145.9	150.0	157.0	166.0	164.8	176.7	181.0

Age groups	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
20-24	1.2	0.9	0.8	0.8	1.1	1.4	1.1
25-29	7.0	6.2	9.0	8.4	8.1	7.7	7.4
30-34	23.6	24.3	26.8	26.8	25.0	28.8	27.3
35-39	55.6	58.6	57.7	61.6	62.2	59.1	60.1
40-44	98.9	103.1	109.4	104.6	117.1	104.5	112.4
45-49	156.4	167.5	177.5	175.8	179.8	175.6	185.3
50-54	203.5	238.7	248.6	240.8	245.7	256.2	261.4

Age groups	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
20-24	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.7	1.5	0.5
25-29	9.5	8.4	9.1	9.3	7.1	6.7	6.8
30-34	29.5	26.8	28.1	26.9	28.5	27.9	26.4
35-39	61.8	60.1	63.9	61.9	65.3	64.5	65.2
40-44	112.5	115.3	121.2	119.3	113.6	108.5	121.4
45-49	191.8	183.7	189.5	185.6	183.5	179.8	176.3
50-54	275.0	271.9	293.0	280.7	279.9	268.7	276.2

Age-specific incidence rates[1] of newly diagnosed cases of cancer of the cervix, London and South East Government Office Regions, 1981-2003

Age groups	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
20-24	2.3	2.3	0.9	2.2	2.7	2.3	1.9	1.1	1.4
25-29	8.9	8.5	10.1	8.5	10.9	9.2	7.9	4.6	7.0
30-34	13.0	16.2	14.1	18.1	19.4	17.6	16.9	16.4	16.5
35-39	17.2	16.3	21.0	20.2	22.8	21.3	20.0	24.1	27.9
40-44	19.3	20.5	22.6	17.8	22.7	21.0	21.8	17.4	18.4
45-49	20.9	17.8	18.2	20.3	21.7	23.2	29.3	21.2	22.6
50-54	19.6	19.8	17.3	20.5	15.4	17.5	16.4	22.0	18.8

Age groups	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
20-24	2.0	2.5	0.7	0.9	1.3	1.4	0.8
25-29	9.8	5.9	6.5	6.6	6.1	5.7	7.1
30-34	13.9	13.5	13.5	13.0	10.9	13.5	11.7
35-39	18.7	19.4	20.6	15.1	15.7	15.8	12.3
40-44	21.9	16.2	13.2	20.4	16.0	15.4	16.5
45-49	21.2	18.4	18.7	21.5	11.4	16.4	13.6
50-54	19.5	17.3	14.6	16.3	12.1	14.9	13.1

Age groups	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
20-24	2.7	1.7	0.4	2.2	1.0	2.0	2.4
25-29	6.4	7.7	7.5	7.1	5.2	7.2	7.0
30-34	10.9	10.2	8.8	11.8	8.0	10.8	11.6
35-39	14.5	15.9	12.8	10.1	10.5	11.6	12.1
40-44	15.4	13.5	12.3	12.5	12.9	10.4	12.3
45-49	14.7	12.3	11.4	13.5	12.6	11.4	8.5
50-54	12.3	7.0	13.4	9.0	9.5	11.1	12.1

Age-specific incidence rates[1] of newly diagnosed cases of cancer of the cervix, England and Wales excluding London and South East Government Office Regions, 1981-2003

Age groups	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
20-24	1.9	2.2	2.2	1.6	2.7	2.4	3.0	3.0	2.1
25-29	13.6	11.6	15.3	13.0	14.2	15.7	11.0	13.4	11.3
30-34	22.6	20.1	23.5	27.2	29.5	28.1	27.7	29.9	25.2
35-39	21.2	21.5	22.1	27.8	28.8	30.9	28.8	34.9	30.5
40-44	24.3	24.5	24.5	24.8	27.0	26.1	29.8	26.5	25.7
45-49	23.2	21.2	19.0	24.3	26.1	27.2	25.5	26.3	24.1
50-54	23.7	20.7	21.7	22.8	24.6	23.5	22.5	27.2	21.7

Age group	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
20-24	3.0	2.2	2.3	2.1	3.9	2.1	2.6
25-29	10.1	10.3	10.7	9.0	10.6	11.4	10.5
30-34	23.6	22.5	20.3	21.3	22.2	17.3	18.3
35-39	32.6	27.2	24.6	25.9	22.8	21.1	19.9
40-44	30.3	24.3	21.2	23.1	21.0	18.3	19.4
45-49	26.0	20.7	19.1	17.3	17.8	17.2	16.8
50-54	24.9	21.1	17.0	15.6	17.1	14.1	12.7

Age group	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
20-24	2.9	2.6	2.2	3.7	3.4	2.7	4.3
25-29	12.9	10.4	11.5	10.7	10.8	10.7	13.8
30-34	16.7	17.1	17.9	15.9	17.3	17.0	17.4
35-39	19.5	21.0	18.7	16.7	18.3	19.3	14.5
40-44	18.8	18.1	22.2	18.3	18.0	14.3	14.5
45-49	14.2	14.9	14.9	15.0	16.3	11.6	12.1
50-54	12.8	13.2	13.3	11.9	11.4	10.2	10.4

Source:
Office for National Statistics
[1] Rate per 100,000 female population

Car Clubs

Colin Challen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will extend enterprise investment scheme relief to car clubs. [71503]

Dawn Primarolo: The enterprise investment scheme (EIS) provides tax relief to individuals who invest in certain unquoted, trading companies. Most trades qualify, as long as they are conducted on a commercial basis, but some are excluded, including those involving leasing or hiring. Companies whose trade involves these activities to a substantial degree do not qualify under EIS.

Car clubs are unlikely to qualify under the EIS. Many of them are organised on a not-for-profit basis and so are not trading on a commercial basis with a view to profit. And to the extent that car clubs are trading on a commercial basis with a view to profit, their trade would generally involve the leasing or hiring of vehicles.

So we would generally not expect car clubs to be qualifying companies under the EIS. Nor do we have plans to extend the scheme to provide for investment in car clubs.

Children's Trust Funds

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of families on low incomes have taken up children's trust funds. [71546]

Ed Balls: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given to him on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2253W. The next set of child trust fund statistics is due at the end of May.

Competitiveness

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the relative competitiveness of the economies of each country in the UK. [71213]

John Healey: This Government have put into place policies to make long-term sustainable improvements to the UK economy and the economies of each of the UK's constituent countries, including:

establishing a national macroeconomic framework to promote economic stability; and

devolving significant responsibilities, including aspects of economic decision-making, to each of the countries.

The ONS has published nominal gross value added of each of the four countries of the United Kingdom up until 2004. These figures show that all the countries' economies have grown strongly. Since 1997, the output per person has grown each year, on average, by between 4.4 per cent. and 4.9 per cent., as shown in the following table. Employment levels have also grown substantially in each country.

Table 1. Countries' economic performance.

Percentage

	Average annual nominal growth rate (1997-2004)	*Change in employment level (1997-2005)*
England	4.9	8.8
Northern Ireland	4.7	11.8
Scotland	4.4	8.3
Wales	4.4	9.9

Further details of the size of each of the UK's countries and regions can be found on the Office of National Statistics website at the following address:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=7359

Correspondence

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Paymaster General will reply to my letters of 14 March and 25 April 2006 concerning constituents Mr. and Mrs. Shirley of Belper, Derbyshire, and their claim for tax credits. [71905]

Dawn Primarolo: I have done so.

Data Sharing

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recommendations the Citizen Information Project made on two-way data sharing with *(a)* the National Identity Register and *(b)* other public sector databases. [70680]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the Written Statement made by my hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 18 April 2006.

The final report published by CIP on 19 April 2006 is available at www.gro.gov.uk/cip/.

Debt Collectors

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether *(a)* his Department or *(b)* its (i) executive agencies and (ii) non-departmental bodies use the services of private debt collectors. [71077]

John Healey: Neither the Treasury nor any of its agencies or non-departmental public bodies use private debt collectors. HM Revenue and Customs does have limited powers to use external bailiff companies for debt collection. HMRC currently uses these for some aspects of debt collection for indirect taxes and, in certain circumstances, for the service of legal documents.

Departmental Budget

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was spent on advertising by his Department in each of the last three years. [70553]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to the hon. Members for Sutton and Cheam (Mr. Burstow) and for Monmouth (David T.C. Davies) on 6 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 433W. The Treasury's spending on advertising in 2005-06 was £3,115,000; £3 million of this was the media spend (excluding VAT) within a publicity campaign running from September 2006 to March 2006 to raise awareness of Stakeholder savings and investment products.

Departmental Staff

Ms Katy Clark: To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men are employed in the Department; what the average pay was for (i) women and (ii) men in the Department in (A) 1997 and (B) 2006; what women's average pay is as a percentage of men's average pay; and how many (1) women and (2) men the Department employed in each of the last five years, broken down by grade. [67782]

John Healey: The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the civil service by Department. This includes data on the employment of men and women.

The average pay for Treasury staff in 1997 is not available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The average pay for January 2006 is shown in the following tables:

Figures as at January 2006

	Women (£)	Men (£)	Female salary as percentage of male salary
SCS	73,689	73,664	100
Grade 6/7	44,831	45,004	99
SEO/ HEO	28,391	29,255	97
EO	22,307	22,103	101
AO	19,132	17,854	107
AA	17,045	16,121	106

Staff in post figures for the last five years

	Male	Female	Total
SCS	72	42	114
Grade 6/7	215	115	330
SEO/ HEO	224	151	375
EO	62	74	136
AO	39	88	127
AA	3	6	9

1 April 2005

	Male	Female	Total
SCS	84	35	119
Grade 6/7	197	122	319
SEO/ HEO	218	136	354
EO	72	73	145
AO	42	101	143
AA	2	12	14

1 April 2004

	Male	Female	Total
SCS	70	28	98
Grade 6/7	189	101	290
SEO/ HEO	212	143	355
EO	72	67	139
AO	56	101	157
AA	4	13	17

1 April 2003

	Male	Female	Total
SCS	66	16	82
Grade 6/7	180	81	261
SEO/ HEO	213	121	334
EO	71	67	138
AO	58	108	166
AA	5	18	23

1 April 2002

	Male	Female	Total
SCS	67	14	81
Grade 6/7	187	74	261
SEO/ HEO	213	102	315
EO	62	64	126
AO	67	121	188
AA	4	18	22

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff surveys have been conducted in his Department in each of the last three years. [70555]

John Healey: There have been three Treasury-wide staff attitude surveys in the period, one in each year.

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what facility is available for senior civil servants in his Department to use credit cards supplied by the Department. [70556]

John Healey: HM Treasury operates a corporate credit card programme, which is available to any member of staff (subject to appropriate authorisation) who is frequently required to travel on official business.

HM Treasury also operates a Government procurement card (GPC) programme, which is available to any member of staff (subject to appropriate authorisation) to enable them to make small-value purchases on behalf of the Department.

Digital Switchover

Mark Williams: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate his Department has made of potential revenue from the sale of UHF spectrum released by the digital switchover programme. [71359]

John Healey: HM Treasury has made no such estimate, as it is not possible at this stage to make any reliable assumption of the market value or potential auction proceeds of the spectrum released by switchover.

Divorce

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many divorces there have been in the UK in each year since 2000, broken down by ethnic group. [71221]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 17 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your request for the number of divorces in the UK since 2000, broken down by ethnic group. (71221)

As ethnic group is not collected by the Court Service at the time of divorce, the information requested is not available centrally. The total number of divorces in the UK for each year since 2000 is available in Table 2.1 of Population Trends, available at www.statistics.gov.uk/poptrends.

EU Customs Union Committee

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the UK members of the EU Customs Union Committee; on which dates this Committee met during the past 12 months; and whether the minutes of the Committee meetings are published. [70907]

Dawn Primarolo: The EU Customs Union Committee met on the following dates:

5 April 2005
5-6 May 2005
21 June 2005
18 July 2005
8 September 2005
22-23 September 2005
28 October 2005
21 November 2005
6-7 December 2005
10 January 2006
26-27 January 2006
13 February 2006
23-24 February 2006
14 March 2006
27-28 March 2006
4 April 2006
20-21 April 2006
5 May 2006.

Officials from HMRC and UKRep represented the UK. The Minutes of the meetings are published on the Council Secretariat's website:

(http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.ASP?id=1&lang=en&mode=g)

Financial Reporting Advisory Board

Mr. Harper: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will appoint a representative from each of the three main political parties as a full member of the Financial Reporting Advisory Board. [71597]

Mr. Timms: No. The Financial Reporting Advisory Board (FRAB) is an independent body fulfilling the role required by the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 as the

'group of persons who appear to the Treasury to be appropriate to advise on financial reporting principles and standards'

for government. The board acts independently in setting accounting standards for government. It exists to promote the highest possible standards in financial reporting, ensuring that any adaptations of, or departures from, generally accepted accounting practice are appropriate.

FRAB submits an annual report to Parliament, outlining its activities for that year. In addition, as part of its publication scheme under the Freedom of Information Act, the FRAB publishes the minutes of its meetings (together with supporting papers) on its website (www.frab.gov.uk) once the minutes have been agreed at a subsequent meeting.

The board's membership reflects the constituents it serves (with representation from, for example, departments, audit agencies, the NHS and the devolved administrations) plus representation from the private sector. Parliament's interests are already met by having a parliamentary observer, supported by the Committee Office Scrutiny Unit.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he plans to appoint a new Parliamentary Observer to the Financial Reporting Advisory Board. [71598]

Mr. Timms: I am pleased that the hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent, South (Mr. Flello) has agreed to be the Parliamentary Observer to the Financial Reporting Advisory Board. He recently attended his first board meeting.

Government Spending

Adam Price: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total capital expenditure on roads was in England in each year since 1999-2000. [65731]

Dr. Ladyman: I have been asked to reply.

Details of capital expenditure on roads in England are published annually in "Transport Statistics Great Britain", which is a major publication within the scope of National Statistics, and can be found in the House Library. Table 1.15 of "Transport Statistics Great Britain 2005" sets out both central and local government capital expenditure on roads. The data is broken down by country and across the time series 2000-01 through to 2004-05. Data for 1999-2000 can be found in the 2004 edition.

Hairdressing Bills

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether hairdressing bills declared as an election expense are treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a benefit in kind. [71022]

Dawn Primarolo: Whether a paid expense is taxed as an employment-related benefit will depend on the circumstances in which it is provided. There are no special rules for election expenses.

HM Revenue and Customs

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will give details of Option Two mentioned in item 10 of the summary minutes of the meeting of the HM Revenue and Customs Executive Committee held on 11 October 2005; and if he will make a statement. [70673]

Dawn Primarolo: Following the postponement of the English council tax revaluation, the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) considered options for reducing its work force whilst securing the investment made in consultation with HMRC's Executive Committee prior to advising Ministers.

My hon. Friends the Minister for Communities and Local Government and the Minister for Local Government explained the approach in the Second Reading debate on the Council Tax (New Valuation Lists for England) Bill in the House on 7 November 2005. I also refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) on 21 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1701W.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what purpose HM Revenue and Customs purchased Mosaic UK data from Experian; whether the data was at *(a)* individual and *(b)* household level; and how much was spent. [70683]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs uses commercially available information to assist it in carrying out its functions in relation to the detection and prevention of crime and fraud, the assessment and collection of tax and improving the department's service to its customers. It would not be appropriate to comment in more detail on the acquisition (including cost) and use of particular datasets as to do so could prejudice law enforcement and commercial interests.

House Purchase Expenses

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether VAT is levied on local authority search fees; [70612]

(2) what estimate HM Revenue and Customs has made of the VAT revenue from *(a)* surveyor and valuation fees and *(b)* local authority search fees in the most recent year for which figures are available. [70663]

Dawn Primarolo: Local authority search fees are outside the scope of VAT.

No estimate of the VAT revenue has been made.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average stamp duty paid by first-time home buyers was in 1997. [70652]

Ed Balls: It is not possible to derive an estimate of average stamp duty for first time buyers from stamp duty land tax data as there is no requirement for taxpayers to provide information to HMRC as to whether they are a first-time buyer. However, the Department for Communities and Local Government estimates that the average stamp duty paid by first time buyers (excluding sitting tenants) with mortgages in 1997 was £280.

Income Tax

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the expected yield in income tax was from a 1p change in the UK *(a)* starting, *(b)* basic and *(c)* higher rate of income tax in each year since 1995; and what estimates have been made of the yields for future years; [70310]

(2) what proportion of the UK income tax yield was raised in Scotland in each year since 1997. [70311]

Dawn Primarolo: The latest information on expected yields from changing the starting rate, basic rate or higher rate by 1p is available in Table 1.6 "Direct effects of illustrative tax changes" which is available on HM Revenue and Customs website; http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/taxexpenditures/1_6_apr06.xls

The information is for the years 2006-07 to 2008-09 and similar updated information for previous years is not available. However, estimates for previous years based on prior economic assumptions can found in Table 4 "Direct effects of illustrative changes in income tax" from earlier editions of the publication "Tax ready reckoner and tax reliefs" which are available in the House of Commons Library.

Tax receipts figures for Scotland are not readily available. Instead, the following table provides estimates of Scotland's share of UK income tax liabilities since 1997-98.

	Income tax liabilities (£ billion)	
	Scotland?amounts of income tax liabilities (£ billion)	*Scotland's share of UK income tax liabilities (percentage)*
1997-98	6.2	7.8
1998-99	6.5	7.3
1999-2000	6.5	7.0
2000-01	7.3	6.9
2001-02	7.6	7.1
2002-03	7.8	7.1
2003-04	8.1	7.3
2004-05[1]	85	7.3
2005-06[1]	9.0	7.3
2006-07[1]	9.5	7.3

[1] Projections

The income tax information is based on the Survey of Personal Income (SPI), The latest survey year is 2003-04 and all estimates post that year are based on the 2003-04 SPI projected forward in line with Budget 2006 HM Treasury assumptions.

Inheritance Tax (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on how many estates in Northern Ireland inheritance tax was paid in each of the last five years; and how much was paid. [70910]

Dawn Primarolo: The following table supplies the information requested for the last five years for which figures are available.

Inheritance tax where country of domicile was Northern Ireland

	Number of estates paying tax	*Receipts (£ million)*
2000-01	600	37
2001-02	500	27
2002-03	500	30
2003-04[1]	600	28
2004-05[1]	500	26

[1] Receipts for 2003-04 and 2004-05 are estimated from information on the number of estates paying tax in those years.

National Insurance Contributions

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) when he expects HM Revenue and Customs to have recorded national insurance contributions for *(a)* 2003-04, *(b)* 2004-05 and *(c)* 2005-06; [70228]

(2) what targets he has set HM Revenue and Customs to record national insurance contributions in each of the last three years; and whether these targets have been met. [70232]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC achieved its PSA target to record 98 per cent. of relevant national insurance data contained in Employer's Annual Returns for both the 2002-03 and 2003-04 tax years by 31 March 2004 and 31 March 2005 respectively.

The same target applied for the 2004-05 tax year and was achieved on 30 April 2006, one month late.

For 2005-06 tax year the target is to record 100 per cent. of relevant national insurance data contained in Employer's Annual Returns by 31 March 2007 and we expect that this target will be met.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to speed up the recording by HM Revenue and Customs of national insurance contributions. [70229]

Dawn Primarolo: Last year HMRC implemented the Modernising PAYE Processes for Customers (MPPC) Programme to facilitate and encourage the filing of Employer's Annual Returns electronically. As a result the target to record relevant national insurance data contained in 2005-06 Employer's Annual Returns has been increased to 99 per cent. by 31 December 2006 and 100 per cent. by 31 March 2007.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average age was at which individuals began to pay national insurance contributions in each of the last 10 years. [70057]

Dawn Primarolo: The most common ages for individuals to pay national insurance contributions for the first time are 16, 17 and 18. However, later starters leads to a higher arithmetic average (mean) of around 20 to 22 years of age as shown in the following table.

Average age of individuals who started to pay national insurance contributions in each year

	Male	*Female*	*All*
1994-95	20	22	21
1995-96	20	21	21
1996-97	20	22	21
1997-98	20	21	20
1998-99	20	21	21
1999-2000	20	21	21
2000-01	21	21	21
2001-02	21	21	21
2002-03	21	21	21
2003-04	21	22	21

Notes:

1. The table shows the average age of individuals at the start (6 April) of the year for which they make their first national insurance contributions (Classes 1, 2 or 3).
2. Based on the 1 per cent. Lifetime Labour Market Database extract from the National Insurance Recording System in May 2005.
3. Latest available year is 2003-04, and recent years are subject to revision.
4. Since 1999, Class 1 NICs are only payable above the personal threshold although they are treated as paid on earnings between the lower earnings limit and the threshold. The figures above look only at individuals paying contributions and determine the earliest year for which they had made such a payment.
5. Average age has been rounded to the nearest year.

Personal Income Tax Allowance

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the cost to the Exchequer of raising the personal income tax allowance to £7,500, abolishing the 10p starting rate of income tax, raising the basic rate limit to £42,500 and abolishing age-related allowances. [71206]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 16 May 2006]:* Introducing the proposed tax changes simultaneously would cost about £11 billion in 2006-07.

The estimate assumes:

a universal personal allowance of £7,500,

absorbing the starting rate band on earnings and savings in the basic rate band, with tax rates on dividends unchanged,

increasing the basic rate limit to £42,500,

and abolishing the married couples allowances available for couples aged 72 and over.

The estimates are based on the 2003-04 Survey of Personal Incomes projected forward to 2006-07 in line with Budget 2006 assumptions.

The figure excludes any estimate of behavioural response to the tax changes which could be significant given the scale of the changes.

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much has been paid in *(a)* salary, *(b)* travelling expenses, *(c)* subsistence allowance and *(d)* removal expenses to special advisers in his private office in each of the last three years. [69064]

John Healey: Since 2003, the Government have published on an annual basis the names and overall cost of special advisers and the number in each pay band. For information relating to the last financial year I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement made by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 158-61WS.

Information on special advisers for this financial year is currently being collected and will be published in the normal way when it is ready.

In relation to special advisers' travel and subsistence expenses, I refer to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Leicester, East (Keith Vaz) on 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2411W. All official travel by special advisers is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Ministerial Code and the Civil Service Management Code.

There have been no special advisers' removal expenses in the last three financial years.

Rice Imports

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what revenue was raised in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005 from imports into the UK of rice (combined nomenclature 1006) from (i) Egypt, (ii) Guyana, (iii) India, (iv) Pakistan, (v) Thailand and (vi) the United States. [71500]

Dawn Primarolo: The customs duty declared in respect of rice imported into the UK is in the following table.

£

	2004	2005
Egypt	1,427,587.80	952,488.41
Guyana	218,252.42	—
India	587,123.55	735,473.92
Pakistan	491,008.58	1,043,962.57
Thailand	2,130,163.11	1,743,046.84
USA	5,699,799.08	3,900,169.50

Student Loans

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the number of people affected by problems with in-tax year changes in employer and consequent effects on student loan repayments; and if he will make a statement. [71099]

Dawn Primarolo: Approximately 13 million employees moved between jobs in the 2004-05 tax year but only a small proportion of these would be likely to be repaying a student loan. No information is available to provide the estimate requested.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many students have contacted HM Revenue and Customs in each year since 2002 with queries relating to student loans where the problem has arisen because of a change in employer during the tax year; and if he will make a statement. [71100]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available.

Tamworth

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many residents of Tamworth worked outside the constituency in *(a)* 1981, *(b)* 1991, *(c)* 2001 and *(d)* the most recent year for which figures are available. [71242]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 17 May 2006.

I am replying as National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales to your recent question asking the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many residents of Tamworth worked outside of the constituency in *(a)* 1981, *(b)* 1991 and *(c)* 2001 and *(d)* the most recent year for which figures are available. (71242)

As Tamworth Parliamentary Constituency did not exist in 1981 no data are available for this year. Data from the 2001 census are the most recent figures available.

Tamworth parliamentary constituency

	Works in Tamworth	Works Outside Tamworth
1991	[1]20,168	[1]19,406
2001	23,999	21,447

Notes:
[1]In 1991 responses to workplace questions were only processed for approximately 10% of the population. The figures in this table have been grossed up by a factor of10.16 to account for this.
Source:
1991 and 2001 Census Data

Tax Credits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit claims have been terminated due to the ending of a joint claim by a married couple or partners in each month since April 2003; and if he will make a statement. [70258]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member on 10 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 289W.

Information on the number of joint tax credit claims terminated in each month since April 2003 is not available except at disproportionate cost.

Philip Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps are being taken *(a)* to identify and *(b)* to combat tax credit fraud; and how much was spent on such steps in the last year for which figures are available. [64821]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC takes fraud very seriously and as part of its everyday activity, continually examines its approach to tackling fraud—introducing new measures and initiatives where necessary. It would be inappropriate to give specific details of these as it could aid those seeking to gain through fraud.

The operating costs for directly tackling tax credit fraud in 2005-06 was approximately £39.5 million.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much financial assistance was provided by HM Revenue and Customs to voluntary organisations to assist the public on tax credit issues in each year such assistance has been provided, broken down by *(a)* organisation and *(b)* region. [69840]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 12 May 2006]:* HMRC has provided financial assistance to voluntary organisations on tax credits issues since new tax credits were introduced in 2003. The sum of the financial support provided in each of the financial years since then is:

	£
2002-03	308,650
2003-04	323,922
2004-05	644,361
2005-06	559,926

National Organisations in receipt of funding

Citizens Advice (2002-06)
Child Poverty Action Group (2002-06)
Maternity Alliance (2002-06)
TaxAid (2002-06)
Daycare Trust (2002-04; 2005-06)
One Parent Families (2002-03; 2004-06)
The Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations (2003-04)
Contact a Family (2003-06)
Disability Alliance (2003-06)
Gingerbread (2003-06)
CEMVO (2004-06)
RNIB (2004-05)

Locally based organisations in receipt of funding

Advice Service Alliance (Northern Ireland) (2003-04; 2005-06)
Citizens Advice Motherwell (2005-06)
Citizens Advice Dalkeith (2005-06)
Citizens Advice Brighton (2005-06)
Community Links (2005-06)
Hackney Voluntary Action (2005-06)

Tax Office (Isle of Wight)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the parishes or, where smaller, the electoral divisions of the Isle of Wight; what proportion of the population of each lies within the core catchment area of the Newport, Isle of Wight tax office; where he expects other island residents to conduct their face-to-face tax transactions; what criteria inform the definition of the core catchment area and its population; what definition of Newport town centre he used for the purpose of the impact assessment for relocating the Newport tax office; and if he will place in the Library a copy of the diversity and equality screen recommended in connection with the relocation of the Newport tax office. [70144]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to my reply of 9 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 123W.

HMRC is relocating its Newport Enquiry Centre. It will continue to offer a face-to-face service in Newport and this service will continue to be available to all customers of HMRC on the Isle of Wight. HMRC is also maintaining its regular presence at the Ryde Help Centre.

Teenage Pregnancies

Tim Loughton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many girls under the age of 16 years *(a)* became pregnant and *(b)* gave birth in each of the last 10 years, broken down by age. [71653]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 17 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many girls under the age of 16 years (a) became pregnant and (b) gave birth in each of the last 10 years, broken down by age. (71653)

Conception statistics include pregnancies that result in one or more live or still births (a maternity) or a legal abortion under the Abortion Act 1967 (an abortion).

Conception statistics for girls aged under 14 by single year of age are not published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to protect the confidentiality of individual's information due to small number of events at younger ages. Therefore figures are provided for all girls aged under 14 combined.

Number of conceptions and conceptions leading to maternities for girls aged under 14, 14 and 15 for England and Wales from 1995 to 2004 (the most recent year for which figures are available) are given in the table below.

Number of total conceptions and conceptions leading to maternity, England and Wales, 1995 to 2004[1]

	Age of woman at conception					
	Under 14		*14*		*15*	
Year of conception	*Total conception*	*Conception leading to maternity*	*Total conception*	*Conception leading to maternity*	*Total conception*	*Conception leading to maternity*
1995	382	150	1,834	878	5,835	3,190
1996	451	192	1,961	838	6,445	3,468
1997	365	149	1,964	866	5,942	3,149
1998	423	170	1,988	821	6,041	3,032
1999	406	174	1,866	785	5,673	2,803
2000	397	161	1,890	790	5,827	2,779
2001	400	179	1,890	729	5,613	2,584
2002	390	149	1,858	719	5,627	2,629
2003	334	128	1,888	676	5,802	2,611
2004[1]	341	132	1,751	648	5,521	2,486

[1] Provisional.

Telephone Advice Lines

Mr. Love: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many telephone advice lines his Department and its non-departmental public bodies support; how many telephone advisers each employs; and *(a)* how much funding is provided to each by his Department and its non-departmental public bodies, *(b)* other Government Departments, *(c)* the private sector and *(d)* the voluntary sector. [66582]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is as follows

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

HMRC operates a wide range of help and advice lines for members of the public. These are directly managed and funded by the Department through a network of some 29 Contact Centres currently employing around 9,100 full time equivalent staff and handling in the region of 50 million calls a year. It would only be possible to provide information on individual lines at disproportionate cost.

Valuation Office Agency (VOA)

The Valuation Office Agency supports two telephone advice lines that are in operation when business needs dictate. The last two uses were for the 2005 Non-Domestic Revaluation for England and Wales and the 2005 Welsh Council Tax revaluation.

The staff operating these lines are Valuation Office Agency staff who return to other duties when the lines are not in use. The staffing budget does not show a separate figure for staff employed on this duty.

General Register Office (GRO)

The GRO has four Advice lines that cover: certificate requests, Births, Marriages and the Local Register. A total of 36 staff are employed on these advice lines and they are funded entirely by the GRO.

Office for National Statistics (ONS)

The ONS has four main advice lines and employs 22 staff. These lines cover: National Statistics Customer Contact Centre (one UK line and one EU line that is 70 per cent. funded by EU money); Public Enquiry Line; Census Customer Service Retail and Prices Index Help Line.

All of the lines except for the small piece NS Customer contact 2 for EU is funded by ONS.

Royal Mint

The Royal Mint has a dedicated line that deals with public enquiries. It also has access to 43 further lines that are normally used to deal with telephone orders from retail customers. Some of these lines are periodically used to deal with public inquiries if an increase in demand deems it necessary. The cost of these lines is totally funded by Royal Mint.

Government Actuaries Department (GAD)

GAD publishes two telephone numbers to enable people to contact GAD direct. GAD does not employ a 'telephone adviser', but manages all inquiries on an ad-hoc basis redirecting them to the specific area of responsibility to answer. The Press Officer, who deals primarily with press-related calls, assists this service. Costs for this service are fully absorbed into the normal running of the department.

Debt Management Office (DMO)

Computershare Investor Services plc provides a phone advice line as part of their contract with HM Treasury for the registration and administration of Government Stocks. The phone line, which usually has four staff, is not separately costed.

Office of Government Commerce (OGC)

The public advice line for OGC is 0845 000 4999 and is staffed by seven OGC telephone advisors. The line is 100 per cent. funded by OGC.

National Savings and Investments

NS&I outsourced its operations to Siemens Business Services UK. As such NS&I does not employ telephone advice lines or staff to give advice.

Troncs

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the cost has been to his Department of the National Insurance Contributions exemptions on the payment of troncs in each year since 1997; [71331]

(2) with whom Treasury officials have met to discuss the *(a)* retention, *(b)* reform and *(c)* replacement of the tronc system; and from whom his Department has had representations on this system; [71332]

(3) how many people *(a)* have received payments and *(b)* have received payments solely through a tronc system in each year since 1996; [71333]

(4) how many troncmasters there were in the UK in each year since 1996. [71334]

Dawn Primarolo: Information on the cost of national insurance contributions exemptions on the payment of troncs, the number of people receiving payments through a tronc system and the number of troncmasters in the UK is not available.

There have not been any meetings on the retention, reform or replacement of troncs nor have Treasury officials received representations about the system. HMRC officials have had meetings about revisions to the guidance booklet 'E24 Tips, Gratuities, Service Charges and Troncs'.

Unemployment

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the unemployment rate is, broken down by *(a)* sex and *(b)* ethnic group. [71231]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell dated 17 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment rates by gender and ethnic origin. (71231)

The attached table gives the rates of unemployed people aged 16 and over by gender and ethnic origin, for the three months ending February 2006.

Estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistics's Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Unemployment rates[1] of people aged 16 and over by sex and ethnic origin

			Percentage
Three months ending February 2006	*All*	*Men*	*Women*
All origins[2]	5.0	5.5	4.6
White	4.5	4.9	4.1
All ethnic minority groups	11.0	11.7	10.1
Mixed	13.0	17.8	8.4
Asian or Asian British	9.6	9.4	10.0
Black or Black British	12.3	13.4	11.2
Chinese	7.9	7.5	8.3
Other stated ethnic origins	13.4	16.1	9.9

[1] Unemployed aged 16 and over as a percentage of economically active aged 16 and over.
[2] Includes those who did not state their ethnic origin.
Source
ONS Labour Force Survey

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 530W, on the Valuation Office Agency, what assessment the *(a)* Valuation Office Agency and *(b)* HM Revenue and Customs has now made of other uses of the automated valuation model. [70560]

Dawn Primarolo: The Valuation Office Agency (VGA) believes that the automated valuation model can be effective as a tool to support decision making.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library a copy of the Valuation Office Agency's electronic data sharing agreement with the Land Registry. [70677]

Dawn Primarolo: The Memorandum of Understanding between the Valuation Office Agency and HM Land Registry has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Office for National Statistics has access to *(a)* the Valuation Office Agency's Council Tax Valuation Lists and *(b)* dwellinghouse coding details. [70682]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, date 17 May 2006:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking whether the Office for National Statistics has access to *(a)* the Valuation Office Agency's Council Tax Valuation Lists and *(b)* dwellinghouse coding details.

A number of areas within the Office for National Statistics (ONS) have at times had access to the Valuation Office Agency's Council Tax Valuation Lists and dwellinghouse coding details. For example, ONS provided a bureau service to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now Department for Communities and Local Government) and the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) to geo-reference 2001, 2002 and 2003 valuation list data which enabled aggregated and non-disclosive dwellings statistics by council tax bands for small areas to be disseminated on the Neighbourhood Statistics website.

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=9616&Pos=&ColRank=1&Rank=272

This required access to valuation lists and coding details to which VOA retained ownership. ONS is no longer required to provide a bureau service.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Valuation Office Agency's 2005-06 annual report will be published. [70687]

Dawn Primarolo: It is expected that the Agency's 2005-06 annual report and accounts will be laid before Parliament in the week commencing 12 June.

VAT Fraud

Mr. Davey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what guidance his Department has produced for *(a)* businesses and *(b)* consumers regarding missing trader intra-community (carousel) VAT fraud. [71348]

(2) what estimate he has made of the revenue lost through missing trader intra-community (carousel) VAT fraud in each year since 2001; and what *(a)* plans he has and *(b)* resources he has allocated to tackle such fraud. [71349]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 2 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1455-56W, to the hon. Member for Twickenham (Dr. Cable).

HMRC have committed significant additional resources to strengthen their strategy, and there are now over 1,000 staff engaged in tackling Missing Trader Intra-Community (MTIC) VAT fraud.

HMRC have published 'Notice 726—Joint and Several Liability in the Supply of Specified Goods' and VAT Strategy: Input Tax deduction without a valid VAT invoice—Statement of Practice July 2003'. These contain guidance for businesses on specific measures that have been introduced to tackle VAT fraud, including reasonable checks that they can make in order to satisfy themselves of the bona fides of their trading activity and those with whom they trade. Both these publications are available on HMRC's internet site at www.hmrc.gov.uk.

In addition HMRC are working closely with the Joint VAT Consultative Committee to develop guidance aimed at helping businesses to identify the hallmarks of MTIC fraud.

HEALTH

Accenture

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent by *(a)* the national health service and *(b)* her Department on management consultant services from Accenture in each of the last five years. [68372]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Detailed information about contracts for management consultants engaged by NHS bodies is not held centrally.

The expenditure by the Department directly on management consultancy services provided by Accenture is shown in the table. The Department's current financial system does not hold information or years prior to 2004 and could not obtain this information without incurring disproportionate costs.

	£000
2004-05	105
2005-06	96

Acute Hospital Trusts

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the annual capital servicing charges are for each acute hospital trust in England. [64331]

Andy Burnham: The capital charges paid by each national health service trust have been placed in the Library. Figures are for 2004-05, which is the latest year available.

Ambulance Services

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to announce her decision on the possible merger of Staffordshire Ambulance Service with other ambulance services. [71271]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 16 May 2006]:* An oral statement was made to the House on the subject of ambulance and primary care trust configuration on 16 May 2006.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many times ambulances attended emergency mental health cases in each London borough in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement; [69785]

(2) what average time ambulances took to convey patients from point of pick-up to hospital in each London borough in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [69786]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not collected centrally.

However, the Department does collect data on the number of emergency calls received by each ambulance trust and data on ambulance response times. These data are published in the statistical bulletin "Ambulance Services, England: 2004-05", which is available in the Library and on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/36/79/04113679.pdf. This publication includes data for the London Ambulance National Health Service Trust, which cover the London boroughs.

Autism

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has commissioned into the causes of autism. [69398]

Andy Burnham: None. The main agency through which the Government supports medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Innovation.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many finished consultant episodes involving a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorders there were between 1990-91 and 1996-97. [70748]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Diagnoses of autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs) in hospitals are available from hospital episode statistics, as shown in the table.

Number of finished consultant episodes involving a diagnosis of ASDs, England, 1995-96 to 1996-97

1996-97	3,325
1995-96	2,760

ICD-10 code: pervasive developmental disorders

Number of finished consultant episodes involving a diagnosis of ASDs, England, 1990-91 to 1994-95

1994-95	1,469
1993-94	1,563
1992-93	1,381
1991-92	1,232
1990-91	1,051

ICD-9 code: infantile autism

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), The Information Centre for health and social care, as provided by Data Standards, NHS Connecting for Health

ASDs include childhood autism, atypical autism, Asperger's syndrome, Rett's syndrome, and other less common ASDs.

The two sets of information are not comparable, as up to 1994-95 figures show diagnoses for children only, and after 1995-96 figures show diagnoses for all ages.

Cancer Services

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent on cancer services in Brentford and Isleworth in each year since 1997. [71161]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not held centrally.

Children's Health Services

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps have been taken to provide choice to those needing to use child and adolescent mental health services. [67647]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department has commissioned a Choice in Mental Health programme, which is run by the Care Services Improvement Partnership and the National Institute for Mental Health England. The programme aims to extend the scope, range and equity of choices available for people across the spectrum of care, including child and adolescent mental health services.

In December 2005, choice local implementation teams were asked to submit a themed review on choice in all age mental health and learning disability services, as part of the mental health national service framework autumn assessment process. A report summarising the key findings of the themed review, including local developments in providing choice to children and adolescent service users, is currently being finalised ahead of publication in June 2006.

Children's Hospices

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what recent discussions she has had with *(a)* ministerial colleagues, *(b)* primary care trusts and strategic health authorities and *(c)* outside organisations on the funding of children's hospices; [55060]

(2) if she will make a statement on the *(a)* short-term and *(b)* long-term funding of children's hospices. [55061]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: My predecessor Liam Byrne visited the Donna Louise Trust Children's Hospice in Stoke and Great Ormond Street hospital to see the different options available in palliative care for children and young people. He also met with a delegation from Butterwick Hospice and has held a seminar on children's palliative care with a wide range of organisations. A full list of organisations who attended the seminar is shown in the following list. My predecessor has also discussed this issue with ministerial colleagues, including my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State.

List of attendees—children and young people's palliative care seminar, 9 February 2006.

Representatives from:

Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority (SHA)

Cheshire and Merseyside SHA

North East London SHA

Surrey and Sussex SHA

The Council for Disabled Children

Contact a Family

Association for Children with Life Threatening of Life Limiting Access (ACT)

Association for Children's Hospices (ACH)

Healthcare Commission

Commission for Social Care inspection

Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

Royal College of Nursing

Claire House Children's Hospice, Wirral

East Anglia Children's Hospice

Chase Hospice Care for Children

Haven House Hospice, London

Richard House Children's House, London

Palliative care for children and young people with a life threatening or life limiting condition requires a wide range of services provided in a variety of settings: home—to look at the level and type of palliative care services for children and young people needed in the different areas and to facilitate how this can be drawn together; school; and hospital or hospice—to enable them to live as normal a life as possible. It is for local decision how these services will be provided but we have published guidance to support primary care trusts, in working with local authorities and other partners (including hospices), to commission high quality services.

Our manifesto commitment to double funding for end of life care will increase choice about where to receive palliative care for children and young people with life-limiting conditions. A statement will be made about funding the commitment shortly.

Choose and Book System

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer to question 54872, on the choose and book pilot scheme, how many patients opted to receive a service outside of their own primary care trust (PCT), broken down by PCT. [64085]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent estimate she has made of the proportion of general practitioners using the choose and book service in *(a)* England and *(b)* Taunton constituency. [64256]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Over 95 per cent., of general practitioners (GPs) in England are currently registered to use choose and book and 4,489 (52 per cent.) GP practices in England have made at least one booking using the choose and book service. In the Taunton Deane primary care trust area, 93 per cent. (14 out of 15) of GP practices have made at least one booking using the choose and book service.

Mr. Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Health why the choose and book system within the NHS is not used for mental health; and whether there are plans to extend its use to that area. [65812]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Choose and book is not currently widely used for mental health services, because the majority of referrals for these services are not from general practitioners to consultants. Where this is the referral route, the system is available for use. At the end of April 2006, choose and book had been used to make 266 bookings to services for the adult mental illness and old age psychiatry specialties.

However, the national choice consultation in autumn 2003 highlighted the choices which mental health service users feel would most enhance their user experience, these focused on choice of treatment rather than choice of service provider. These findings informed the detailed work carried out to formulate the Government's choice at referral policy and led to the decision not to require mental health services to offer choice of four providers at the point of referral.

In the light of the national choice consultation's findings, the Department commissioned the choice in mental health programme, which is being run by the National Institute of Mental Health in England. This programme aims to extend the scope, range and equity of treatment choices available across service user pathways.

Dorset and Somerset Strategic Health Authority

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding her Department allocated per head of population in *(a)* Taunton constituency, *(b)* Dorset and Somerset strategic health authority and *(c)* England in each year since 2001. [64307]

Andy Burnham: The Department makes revenue allocations to primary care trusts (PCTs), not constituencies or strategic health authorities (SHAs).

Allocations were first made to PCTs in 2003-04. Prior to this, funding was allocated to health authorities (HAs).

Allocations per head of population to PCTs covered by Dorset and Somerset SHA and the England average are shown in tables 1 and 2.

The majority of the population of Taunton constituency is resident in Taunton Deane PCT.

Table 1: HA allocations per head of population

(£)

Organisation	*2001-02*	*2002-03*
Dorset HA	742	813
Somerset HA	695	757
England	738	817

Table 2: PCT allocations per head of population

(£)

PCT	*2003-04*	*2004-0*	*2005-06*	*2006-07*	*2007-08*
Bournemouth Teaching	949	1,036	1,229	1,328	1,439
Mendip	776	847	1,019	1,111	1,232
North Dorset	822	885	1,053	1,128	1,221
Poole	905	985	1,170	1,264	1,371
Somerset Coast	827	902	1,080	1,214	1,345
South and East Dorset	897	972	1,154	1,253	1,364
South Somerset	843	912	1,080	1,163	1,262
South West Dorset	887	965	1,130	1,225	1,338
Taunton Deane	819	887	1,063	1,147	1,250
England	903	986	1,172	1,274	1,388

Notes:
It is not possible to compare allocations rounds for the following reasons: organisational changes and changes made to the weighted capitation formula for each allocations round, mean that comparisons between allocations rounds would not be on a like with like basis; changes in the services for which PCTs are responsible for funding changes over time. For example, 2006-07 is the first year that primary medical services were incorporated into revenue allocations.

Foster Review

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when she expects to publish the findings of the Foster Review of non-medical healthcare regulation; [70820]

(2) when she expects to publish the regulatory impact assessment of proposed changes to the regulation of osteopaths; [70821]

(3) what discussions she has had with the osteopathic profession regarding changes to the regulation of osteopaths; and what assessment she has made of the merits of changes to patient care. [70822]

Andy Burnham: We will publish our decisions on the review of non-medical professional regulation and on the Chief Medical Officer's review of medical revalidation and related subjects in due course. A statement will be made at that point. The reviews used a wide range of evidence, including from the osteopathic profession.

General Practitioners

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her Department's press release of 21 March 2006 on the proposed general practitioner Systems of Choice initiative, what assessment she has made of the impact that the initiative will have on contracts with local and national service providers which commit the NHS to buy a minimum volume of services and systems. [63946]

Caroline Flint: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on Monday 27 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 452W.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her Department's press release of 21 March 2006 on the proposed general practitioner Systems of Choice initiative, whether general practitioners will be able to claim back their costs from primary care trust budgets. [63947]

Caroline Flint: Under the general practitioner Systems of Choice (GPSoC) proposals funding would be provided for general practice systems that have achieved a GPSoC level of compliance. Capital funding for any necessary hardware improvements, and revenue funding for compliant systems provided by existing system providers, would be included in primary care trust allocations. The NHS Connecting for Health agency will continue to fund local service provider-supplied systems.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of general practitioner practices in West Lancashire make referrals using the choose and book system. [64295]

Caroline Flint: About 40 per cent. (10 general practitioner practices out of a total of 25) have made at least one booking through the choose and book system.

Source:
Connecting for Health

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners covered out-of-office hours in *(a)* England and *(b)* Taunton constituency in each year since 1997. [64345]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information is not collected by the Department. It is for individual primary care trusts to ensure that out-of-hours provision in their areas continues to be improved and developed into a better service for patients.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her statement of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 4, on the general practitioner contract, what the evidential basis was for her statement that thousands of people were alive and well as a result of the contract. [65511]

Caroline Flint: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 4 May, *Official Report*, column 1776W.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of urban dwellers who live more than one mile from their nearest GP practice or outreach surgery. [69750]

Andy Burnham: None. However, under section 16CC(1) of the National Health Service Act 1977, primary care trusts must, to the extent that they consider necessary to meet all reasonable requirements, ensure the provision of primary medical services in their localities.

Gershon Review

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much she expects Information and Communication Technology changes to contribute to the Gershon efficiency savings in her Department in 2007-08. [63514]

Caroline Flint: The Gershon report "Releasing Resources to the Front Line" identified three main contributors to front line service (productive time) efficiency—information and communication technology (ICT), process redesign and work force reform. Overall, we expect this part of the efficiency programme to deliver savings of at least £2,700 million per year by March 2008.

Our delivery strategy for this programme recognises that efficiencies are achieved by technology, process and work force changes being delivered together. The national health service uses an integrated service improvement programme (ISIP) to plan and manage service improvement. This programme is a key element of implementing the national programme for information technology. More information is available at www.isip.nhs.uk.

The approach to measuring benefits reflects this delivery strategy. It therefore measures overall outcome changes rather than the separate contribution of ICT or work force or process change. This approach is explained in the Department's efficiency technical note which is available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/41/37/04124137.pdf.

Health Trusts

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what plans she has to review the market forces factor used in the allocation of funding to health trusts; [71129]

(2) who the members are of the Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation. [71130]

Andy Burnham *[holding answers 15 May 2006]:* The Department has commissioned a review of the market forces factor (MFF) component of the weighted-capitation formula. This review will inform revenue allocations to primary care trusts (PCTs) post 2007-08.

The review is being overseen by the advisory committee on resource allocation (ACRA). ACRA is an independent body consisting of national health service management, general practitioners and academics.

The ACRA members are shown in the table.

ACRA membership as of September 2005

	Organisation
Chair	
Mr. D. Fillingham	Chief Executive, Bolton Hospital NHS Trust
Members	
Mr. K. Derbyshire	Department of Health, Senior Economic Advisor
Professor I. Diamond	Chief Executive, Economic and Social Research Council
Mr. F. Dickinson	Department of Health, Economic Advisor
Dr. S. Drage	General Practitioners Committee, BMA
Dr. M. D'Souza	Head of the Unit of General Practice, NH and LI Imperial College, Surrey
Professor H. Glennerster	Professor Emeritus of Social Administration and Co-Director of CASE, London School of Economics
Dr. R. Hussey	Director of Health Strategy, Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority
Professor Sir B. Jarman	Emeritus Professor of the Department of General Practice, Imperial College of Medicine
Mr. P. Lilley	Chief Executive, Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Ms R. MacDonald	Chief Executive, Bath and North Somerset Primary Care Trust
Dr. N. Rice	Reader, University of York
Mr. D. Roberts	Unit Manager, The Information Centre for health and social care
Dr. I. Trimble	General practitioner, Nottingham
Mr. C. Vincent	Department of Health, Finance

Healthcare Commission

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many lay associates have been trained by the Healthcare Commission for handling complaints against the NHS; how much it cost the commission to provide the training; and how much has been paid to associates attending mandatory training courses; [71395]

(2) how many independent panels involving lay associates have been convened by the Healthcare Commission for the investigation of complaints against the NHS. [71397]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 16 May 2006]:* The chairman of the Healthcare Commission has confirmed that when the commission took on its present role in the independent review of complaints in July 2004, it recruited approximately 250 lay panel members. All those recruited underwent three days training for which they received expenses of £250 a day. In addition, there were costs associated with the room hire and some speakers at the training events. These costs are not reported separately from wider commission expenditure on such items, but the commission estimates that expenditure on venues, speakers and accommodation might have been about £100,000.

The chairman of the Healthcare Commission has confirmed that lay panels were involved in only four of the 7,400 cases completed in 2005-06 and that it is unlikely that there will be a significant number of panels in the future. The chairman has added that the commission is seeking alternative ways of using the valuable experience of some lay panel members. Approximately 100 lay panellists worked as office-based case managers in 2005-06. The commission is also developing options for using lay panellists as home-based associate case managers.

Independent Care Sector

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions his Department has had with the independent care home sector over the past 12 months on financial measures to reward high-quality care. [70126]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Ministers and departmental officials meet regularly with representatives of the care home sector, when issues such as funding are raised and discussed.

However, responsibility for commissioning social care services rests with local councils. The Department allocates funding to councils for social care services. Councils are responsible for using these resources in a way which best meets the needs of their local populations. Contracting arrangements between councils and independent-sector providers of care are a matter for local decision. The Department does not set or recommend rates at which councils contract with nursing and residential homes, nor does it set quality standards. It is important that councils are able to tailor contracts as necessary to suit specific local circumstances. Many councils do pay financial premiums for high-quality services.

There have been substantial increases in the level of funding provided for social services. Between 1996-97 and 2002-03, the overall level of funding for social services increased by 20 per cent., an average real-terms annual increase of around 3 per cent. Funding to councils for personal social services has increased by an annual average of 6 per cent. In real terms from 2003-04 to 2005-06; councils can and do use this money to increase the fees they pay to care homes.

Insulin

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 2 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 919W, on insulin, whether data pertaining to accidental insulin overdoses includes the type of insulin being used. [71654]

Andy Burnham: The data collected on accidental insulin overdose does not identify the type of insulin used.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many deaths have occurred in the UK where the insulins *(a)* Hypurin Porcine isophane, *(b)* Human Insulatard and *(c)* Lantus were suspected to be a cause or contributory factor since 2002 as show on Yellow Card Adverse Reaction Reports; and if she will make a statement; [69615]

(2) if she will investigate the impact of the insulin analogue Lantus on patient health and well-being since its introduction in 2002; and if she will make a statement. [69620]

Andy Burnham: The human insulin analogue Lantus (insulin glargine) was granted a marketing authorisation valid throughout the European Union by the European Commission in June 2000. Clinical trials submitted at the time of licensing examined the safety and efficacy of insulin glargine in diabetic patients treated for up to 12 months. Generally, the side effects observed with insulin glargine were similar to those seen with other human insulins, with the most commonly observed side effects being hypoglycaemia, visual disturbance and injection site reactions. A European public assessment report, which details the basis for the decision to license insulin glargine and all subsequent changes to the license, is available on the website of the European Medicines Agency (EMEA) at www.emea.eu.int.

The safety of all insulins in routine clinical practice in the United Kingdom (UK) is closely monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Any possible new safety issue to emerge is evaluated and any new prescribing advice is issued to health professionals and patients, following discussion with other European regulatory agencies and EMEA as appropriate. The patient information leaflet for insulin glargine contains suitable advice on use of the product and warnings about possible adverse effects.

The MHRA receives reports of suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) via the UK yellow card scheme. A total of 373 reports of suspected ADRs have been received in association with insulin glargine since January 2002 and of these 15 had a fatal outcome. Where cause of death was reported there is no particular pattern. There have been a total of five reports of a suspected adverse reaction with Human Insulatard in this time period, of which one had a fatal outcome. There has been one report of a suspected adverse reaction to Hypurin Porcine Isophane in this time-period; this did not have a fatal outcome. These figures reflect only those reports where the products Human Insulatard or Hypurin Porcine Isophane have been specified by the reporter.

The reporting of a suspected adverse reaction does not necessarily mean it was caused by the drug. The suspected reaction may relate to other factors such as underlying illness or other medicines taken concurrently. It is not valid to compare the number of reports of suspected adverse reactions between products as a number of different factors affect the level of reporting of adverse reactions including the level of usage of the product, how long the product has been on the market and any publicity surrounding the product.

IT Interoperability

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research she has commissioned into healthcare information technology programmes in other countries, with particular reference to system interoperability. [66073]

Caroline Flint: The national programme for information technology has been designed and developed, and is being implemented, in accordance with international and European Union-wide standards. These standards have also been adopted by the United Kingdom e-Government Interoperability Framework. The Department's NHS Connecting for Health agency, which is responsible for delivering the programme, works closely with the World Health Organisation and with European and international standards bodies to ensure interoperability subject to adherence to standards and strict security and confidentiality safeguards. The interoperability standards are regularly updated and are made readily available to suppliers of information technology systems. Departmental officials have regular contact and dialogue with healthcare organisations across the world. The national health service is taking a leadership role in the promotion of SNOMED CT, a terminology system that has now been adopted by several other jurisdictions.

LIFT Schemes

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the answer of 28 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 926W, on local improvement finance trust (LIFT) schemes, what progress she has made towards the targets set for LIFT. [66724]

Andy Burnham: The national health service local improvement finance trust, along with other existing primary care procurement routes, is a mechanism to support the delivery of the following targets set out in the NHS Plan:

Up to £1 billion investment in primary care facilities;

Up to 3,000 family doctors' premises substantially refurbished or replaced by 2004; and

500 one stop primary centres delivered by 2004, which has been extended by delivering

the NHS Plan to 750 by 2008.

Progress against these targets has been made as follows:

Over £1 billion additional investment is supporting the development of primary care facilities;

2,848 family doctors' premises were substantially refurbished or replaced by the end of 2004; and

510 one stop primary care centres were delivered by the end of 2004, with the latest figure being 566 centres delivered by December 2005.

Maternity Care

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the efficacy of whole-scale 12-week scans during pregnancy; and if she will make a statement. [70991]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) produced guidelines "Antenatal Care: Routine Care for the Healthy Pregnant Woman" which recommend an early ultrasound scan between 10 to 13 weeks for gestational age assessment.

The benefits of the whole-scale 12-week scans are well documented. Early detection and appropriate care management is important for women with multiple pregnancies and will produce a healthier outcome for both the mother and baby. The benefits of early screening also extend to screening for other conditions such as sickle cell anaemia and Thalassaemia, so that screening and the follow on diagnosis can take place at the correct time.

The early scan will also detect some serious abnormalities such as neural tube defects. In relation to national screening programmes, an early dating scan is a set standard agreed by an expert working group who recommend that all women prior to Down's syndrome screening must have a dating scan to ensure the quality of the screening test. Guidance for health professionals on more accurate tests for Down's syndrome screening was published by the Department in November 2003. This guidance, based on advice from the national screening committee, which advises Ministers on all aspects of screening, complements and supports national health service implementation of the NICE guideline.

Mental Health

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her latest estimate is of the extent of perinatal mental health provision in *(a)* England and *(b)* Northamptonshire. [71548]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has not made a direct assessment of perinatal mental health provision in Northamptonshire or England. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence has been commissioned to produce guidelines on routine postnatal care, which is due for publication in June 2006, and antenatal and postnatal mental health, which is due in February 2007.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many prescriptions for anti-depressants have been given to children in the last 12 months; and if she will list the drugs prescribed; [69392]

(2) what percentage of children being treated for depression were prescribed drugs by *(a)* GPs and *(b)* consultants in the last period for which figures are available. [69393]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Information on the number of prescriptions of anti-depressants issued for children in 2005 is shown in the following table:

We do not collect information on the number of children in respect of which these prescriptions were issued, nor whether the prescriber was a general practitioner or consultant. Not all the prescriptions will have been treating depression as these drugs are also used to treat disorders such as nocturnal enuresis, anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorders and phobic states.

Total number of anti-depressant items (000's) dispensed to children in the community in England for 2005. Source PCA

Number of items	*Drug name*	*2005*
Amitriptyline Hydrochloride	Amitriptyline HCl_Liq Spec 10mg/5ml	•
	Amitriptyline HCl_Oral Soln 10mg/5ml S/F	•
	Amitriptyline HCl_Oral Soln 25mg/5ml S/F	2
	Amitriptyline HCl_Oral Soln 50mg/5ml S/F	•
	Amitriptyline HCl_Tab 10mg	20
	Amitriptyline HCl_Tab 25mg	11
	Amitriptyline HCl_Tab 50mg	4
	Triptafen_Tab	•
	Triptafen-M_Tab	•
Citalopram Hydrobromide	Cipramil_Oral Dps 40mg/ml S/F	•
	Cipramil_Tab 10mg	•
	Cipramil_Tab 20mg	•
	Cipramil_Tab 40mg	•
	Citalopram Hydrob_Tab 10mg	9
	Citalopram Hydrob_Tab 20mg	16
	Citalopram Hydrob_Tab 40mg	2
Clomipramine Hydrochloride	Anafranil Sr_Tab 75mg	•
	Anafranil_Cap 10mg	•
	Anafranil_Cap 25mg	•
	Anafranil_Cap 50mg	•
	Clomipramine HCl_Cap 10mg	•
	Clomipramine HCl_Cap 25mg	•
	Clomipramine HCl_Cap 50mg	•
Dosulepin Hydrochloride	Dosulepin HCl_Cap 25mg	5
	Dosulepin HCl_Liq Spec 25mg/5ml	•
	Dosulepin HCl_Tab 75mg	4
	Dothapax 75_Tab 75mg	•
	Prothiaden_Cap 25mg	•
	Prothiaden_Tab 75mg	•
Doxepin	Sinequan_Cap 10mg	•
	Sinequan_Cap 25mg	•
	Sinequan_Cap 50mg	•
Duloxetine Hydrochloride	Cymbalta_Cap G/R 30mg	•
	Cymbalta_Cap G/R 60mg	7
Escitalopram	Cipralex_Tab 10mg	2
	Cipralex_Tab 20mg	2
	Cipralex_Tab 5mg	53
Fluoxetine Hydrochloride	Fluoxetine HCl_Cap 20mg	•
	Fluoxetine HCl_Cap 60mg	9
	Fluoxetine HCl_Oral Soln 20mg/5ml	•
	Oxactin_Cap 20mg	•
	Prozac_Cap 20mg	•
	Prozac_Liq 20mg/5ml	•
	Prozit_Oral Soln 20mg/5ml	•
	Ranflutin_Cap 20mg	•
Flupentixol Hydrochloride	Fluanxol_Tab 1mg	•
	Fluanxol_Tab 500mcg	•
Fluvoxamine Maleate	Faverin 50_Tab 50mg	•
	Fluvoxamine Mal_Tab 100mg	

Total number of anti-depressant items (000's) dispensed to children in the community in England for 2005. Source PCA.

Number of items	*Drug name*	*2005*
	Fluvoxamine Mal_Tab 50mg	*
Imipramine Hydrochloride	Imipramine HCl_Liq Spec 25mg/5ml	*
	Imipramine HCl_Tab 10mg	3
	Imipramine HCl_Tab 25mg	7
	Tofranil_Syr 25mg/5ml	*
	Tofranil_Tab 25mg	*
Lofepramine Hydrochloride	Gamani_Tab 70mg	*
	Lofepramine HCl_Tab 70mg	3
	Lomont_Oral Susp 70mg/5ml S/F	*
Maprotiline Hydrochloride	Ludiomil_Tab 25mg	*
	Ludiomil_Tab 75mg	*
Mianserin Hydrochloride	Mianserin HCl_Tab 10mg	*
	Mianserin HCl_Tab 30mg	*
Mirtazapine	Mirtazapine_Tab 15mg	*
	Mirtazapine_Tab 30mg	2
	Mirtazapine_Tab 45mg	*
	Zispin_SolTab 15mg	2
	Zispin_SolTab 30mg	2
	Zispin_SolTab 45mg	*
Moclobemide	Moclobemide_Tab 150mg	*
	Moclobemide_Tab 300mg	*
Nortriptyline	Allegron_Tab 10mg	*
	Allegron_Tab 25mg	*
	Motival_Tab	*
Oxitriptan	Tript-OH_Cap 50mg	*
Paroxetine Hydrochloride	Paroxetine HCl_Tab 20mg	5
	Paroxetine HCl_Tab 30mg	1
	Seroxat_Liq 20mg/10ml S/F	1
	Seroxat_Tab 20mg	*
	Seroxat_Tab 30mg	*
Phenelzine Sulphate	Nardil_Tab 15mg	*
Reboxetine	Edronax_Tab 4mg	*
Sertraline Hydrochloride	Aremis_Tab 100mg	*
	Aremis_Tab 50mg	1
	Besitron_Tab 100mg	*
	Besitron_Tab 50mg	1
	Lustral_Tab 100mg	2
	Lustral_Tab 50mg	8
	Sertraline HCl_Tab 100mg	*
	Setraline HCl_Tab 50mg	2
Tranylcypromine Sulphate	Tranylcypromine Sulph_Tab 10mg	*
Trazodone Hydrochloride	Molipaxin_Cap 100mg	*
	Molipaxin_Cap 50mg	*
	Molipaxin_Liq 50mg/5ml S/F	*
	Molipaxin_Tab 150mg	*
	Trazodone HCl_Cap 100mg	*
	Trazodone HCl_Cap 50mg	1
	Trazodone HCl_Cap 150mg	*
Trimipramine Maleate	Surmontil_Cap 50mg	*
	Surmontil_Tab 10mg	*
	Surmontil_Tab 25mg	*
	Trimipramine Mal_Cap 50mg	*
	Trimipramine Mal_Tab 10mg	*
	Trimipramine Mal_Tab 25mg	*

Total number of anti-depressant items (000's) dispensed to children in the community in England for 2005. Source PCA.

Number of items	*Drug name*	*2005*
Tryptophan	Optimax Wv_Tab (Wt) Vit	*
Venlafaxine Hydrochloride	Efexor XL_Cap 150mg	3
	Efexor XL_Cap 75mg	4
	Efexor_Tab 37.5mg	1
	Efexor_Tab 75mg	*

Notes:
PCA Data Prescription information are taken from the Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) system, supplied by the Prescription Pricing Authority (PPA), and is based on a full analysis of all prescriptions dispensed in the community i.e. by community pharmacists and appliance contractors, dispensing doctors, and prescriptions submitted by prescribing doctors for items personally administered in England. Also included are prescriptions written in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man but dispensed in England. The data do not cover drugs dispensed in hospitals, including mental health trusts, or private prescriptions.
Prescription Items Prescriptions are written on a prescription form. Each single item written on the form is counted as a prescription item.
Exemption Category Estimates
The exemption data is identified from the box ticked on the back of the prescription form and relies on the form being completed correctly which may not always be the case. Information for categories that are not required to pay a charge (e.g. children) is based on a 1 in 20 sample of all exempt prescriptions dispensed by community pharmacists, appliance contractors and dispensing doctors. The information we have is therefore an estimate and subject to sampling errors. To reflect this we have rounded the exemption figures appropriately-figures less than 1,000 are shown as "*"; figures between 1,000 and 100,000 have been rounded to the nearest 1,000 and figures between 100,000 and 1 million have been rounded to the nearest 10,000.
Data for total of all ages has not been rounded since it is not exemption data.
Due to rounding, the sum of the components may not equal the totals.
Children are defined as 0-15 year olds, and as 16-18 year olds in full time education.
Dispensing Doctors
Data up to 2000 are not strictly comparable with data from later years. Up until September 2000 only patients having their prescriptions dispensed by the community pharmacists and appliance contractors were required to complete the back of the prescription form, but from October 2000 this requirement was extended to patients of dispensing doctors. Therefore data prior to October 2000 do not include prescriptions dispensed by dispensing doctors.

Multiple Sclerosis

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions she has had with her counterparts in other EU member states on the efficacy, cost and availability of treatments for multiple sclerosis; and if she will make a statement. [70926]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We have had no recent discussions with my counterparts in other European Union member states on the efficacy, cost and availability of treatments for multiple sclerosis.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to ensure the allocation of ring-fenced funds for specialist services for myalgic *(a)* encephalomyelitis and *(b)* encephalopathy should primary care trusts seek to reduce provision. [70869]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In January 2004 funding of £8.5 million was announced for specialist services for those living with chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME). This funding, £2.5 million for 2004-05, and £6 million for 2005-06, was specifically intended to cover the costs of setting-up services where none already existed. At the end of this period funding for these centres will be from primary care trust general allocations. It is the responsibility of local health bodies to meet the health and social care needs of their local population.

The national service framework for long-term conditions (NSF) sets out a clear vision of how health and social care organisations can improve the quality, consistency and responsiveness of their services and help improve the lives of people with neurological conditions, including CFS/ME. National health service organisations are expected to demonstrate that they are making progress towards achieving the level of service quality described in the NSF.

The Healthcare Commission and the Commission for Social Care Inspection may undertake performance reviews to assess progress on local implementation of the NSF.

NHS Deficits

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the year-end gross NHS deficit for 2005-06. [70008]

Andy Burnham: For 2005-06 month six, the national health service as a whole is forecasting a gross deficit of around £948 million. Some NHS organisations have generated surpluses of around £325 million. Therefore, the NHS at 2005-06 month six is forecasting a net deficit of around £620 million.

NHS Finance

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the International Monetary Fund's warning of a £50 billion gap in NHS finances; and if she will make a statement; [63922]

(2) what estimate she has made of healthcare spending between 2007 and 2050; what assessment she has made of the International Monetary Fund's estimate that healthcare spending could rise by up to six percentage points of gross domestic product over this period; and if she will make a statement. [63931]

Andy Burnham: The Government's latest long-term fiscal projections are contained in the 2005 long-term public finance report, published alongside the pre-Budget report in December 2005. On the basis of the projections presented in the report, healthcare spending is projected to increase from around 8.2 per cent. of gross domestic product in 2007 to around 9.7 per cent. in 2050. The actual level of public long-term health spending is however a matter for future budgets and spending reviews.

NHS Finance

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the budgets are for each *(a)* primary care trust, *(b)* NHS trust and *(c)* other NHS organisation in 2006-07. [63943]

Andy Burnham: Primary care trusts (PCTs) receive most of their budget through revenue allocations. PCTs also receive operational capital funding.

Revenue budgets for national health service trusts are agreed locally with PCTs. NHS trusts and care trusts also receive operational capital funding for building and equipment purchases.

Strategic health authorities (SHAs) receive strategic capital allocations for major capital developments, and capital will be allocated to PCTs and NHS trusts at the discretion of the SHA. Allocations for 2006-07 have been placed in the Library.

Central budgets for 2006-07, including SHA running costs budgets, have been agreed at board level within the Department. The detail of individual budgets will be confirmed shortly.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which strategic health authorities have authorised the top-slicing of primary care trust allocations in the *(a)* 2006-07 and *(b)* 2007-08 financial years; what proportion of primary care trust allocations are being withheld in each case; and under what legislation strategic health authorities have the authority to top-slice primary care trust allocations. [66603]

Andy Burnham: The plans for the creation of local reserves at strategic health authority level was set out in "The NHS in England: The operating framework for 2006-07" published by the Department on 26 January 2006 which is available in the Library and on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/73/15/04127315.pdf

The level of reserve transferred from primary care trusts to be held at strategic health authorities will be agreed by the Department as part of the national health service financial planning process for 2006-07.

Transfers of funding will be made by the Department on the basis of these agreed plans under section 97 of the NHS Act 1977 as amended.

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the total public expenditure per head of population on the *(a)* capital and *(b)* running costs of the national health service was in (i) London and (ii) each of the English regions in each of the last 10 years; [67322]

(2) what the total public expenditure per head of population on the *(a)* capital and *(b)* running costs of the national health service was in the metropolitan areas of (i) Greater Manchester, (ii) West Yorkshire, (iii) South Yorkshire, (iv) West Midlands, (v) Merseyside and (vi) Tyne and Wear in each of the last 10 years. [67325]

Andy Burnham: Expenditure per head of population from 1997-98 to 2004-05 by strategic health authority (SHA) area and for England is shown in the tables. Capital expenditure is taken as the total expenditure on purchased additions of fixed assets in each year by national health service bodies. Running costs are the total expenditure by health authorities, SHAs and primary care trusts.

Table 1. Expenditure per head by unweighted population on the purchased additions of fixed assets (£)

SHA name	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	19.42	32.77	65.96	31.97	54.42	50.76	43.49	33.93
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	20.29	23.12	14.97	25.99	42.62	20.96	44.43	26.51
Birmingham and The Black Country	34.67	25.67	28.58	33.79	40.34	70.85	77.12	64.38
Cheshire and Merseyside	27.42	24.72	19.28	29.37	51.97	82.59	58.91	67.98
County Durham and Tees Valley	9.62	11.86	19.71	56.71	52.29	59.00	39.01	41.15
Cumbria and Lancashire	22.98	21.61	22.39	30.19	37.90	53.19	47.41	48.26
Dorset and Somerset	18.99	12.79	19.17	21.08	50.10	36.99	37.74	46.27
Essex	17.62	14.81	28.44	37.82	50.83	43.22	55.57	48.42
Greater Manchester	20.93	46.47	26.75	47.27	58.05	48.99	53.84	37.95
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	12.23	15.08	25.51	32.73	87.84	45.04	55.83	67.45
Kent and Medway	38.46	21.37	15.28	25.40	32.89	65.46	44.56	44.29
Leics, Northants and Rutland	18.44	14.85	18.62	24.08	48.77	62.82	48.98	48.23
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	24.68	14.40	16.49	31.06	30.40	82.43	52.51	33.88
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	17.14	19.41	111.72	31.09	35.69	50.72	41.93	41.77
North Central London	26.92	50.46	108.67	89.65	126.54	77.39	68.38	65.40
North East London	14.92	28.11	27.68	32.30	30.38	55.42	89.05	80.54
North West London	34.59	32.84	63.79	44.33	74.61	67.89	81.95	88.68
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	22.89	23.13	34.72	76.04	51.46	72.79	66.48	52.62
Shropshire and Staffordshire	15.46	15.02	19.54	28.30	35.55	68.54	59.14	43.28
South East London	36.90	22.90	53.79	48.53	54.68	131.22	64.71	62.76

Table 1. Expenditure per head by unweighted population on the purchased additions of fixed assets (£)

SHA name	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
South West London	21.47	23.02	43.20	87.53	54.35	49.64	62.70	41.76
South West Peninsula	26.72	15.56	18.90	28.11	60.40	51.24	60.92	42.34
South Yorkshire	30.98	29.40	34.61	41.67	43.01	56.60	54.19	26.99
Surrey and Sussex	27.09	20.59	28.30	24.14	27.00	77.52	53.75	52.68
Thames Valley	17.92	19.11	43.83	44.38	42.61	49.24	56.17	50.60
Trent	14.30	19.69	19.02	27.39	71.08	51.17	49.12	40.23
West Midlands South	35.83	22.13	16.93	19.17	23.71	52.54	42.57	38.97
West Yorkshire	24.64	13.28	21.41	30.15	26.63	51.10	47.40	38.58
England	23.40	22.89	33.44	36.98	49.10	60.39	55.62	49.18

Sources:
Audited annual accounts of the health authorities 1997-98 to 1998-99
Audited health authority summarisation forms 1999-2000 to 2001-02
Audited SHA summarisation forms 2002-03 to 2004-05
Audited primary care trust summarisation schedules 2000-01 to 2004-05
Audited NHS trust summarisation schedules 1997-98 to 2004-05

Table 2. Total expenditure per head by unweighted population for strategic health authority areas (£)

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	569.38	603.47	696.27	764.69	837.62	913.62	1,058.43	1,149.54
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	564.37	597.93	677.38	729.06	957.73	855.15	951.46	1,089.15
Birmingham and The Black Country	627.55	699.02	777.51	826.01	1,015.54	965.01	1,169.31	1,278.32
Cheshire and Merseyside	620.81	686.47	791.42	885.33	964.69	1,152.74	1,180.44	1,354.97
County Durham and Tees Valley	596.10	664.12	792.22	850.91	932.33	1,084.31	1,192.95	1,337.34
Cumbria and Lancashire	614.10	679.92	819.63	894.22	1,021.73	1,215.84	1,277.22	1,260.32
Dorset and Somerset	579.03	618.90	715.61	915.78	1,123.84	797.80	1,012.24	1,146.10
Essex	554.80	605.51	706.34	772.78	788.10	803.07	973.72	1,115.64
Greater Manchester	616.28	675.64	786.41	850.27	939.33	1,070.68	1,220.29	1,326.87
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	553.64	594.08	667.29	729.88	885.43	865.41	1,021.94	1,146.79
Kent and Medway	576.63	609.94	735.76	758.42	810.67	867.94	976.86	1,123.55
Leics, Northants and Rutland	541.85	590.17	696.68	728.53	783.79	870.92	981.90	1,093.20
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	548.45	596.71	687.07	727.78	817.70	997.51	1,054.67	1,150.02
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	588.29	640.25	726.01	771.23	837.92	906.27	1,001.51	1,142.03
North Central London	730.48	815.11	914.53	1,078.17	1,105.05	1,394.68	1,415.81	1,550.81
North East London	703.32	786.51	912.88	981.73	1,060.50	1,111.02	1,303.88	1,428.90
North West London	735.84	799.16	895.91	962.95	1,044.04	1,198.62	1,335.59	1,440.70
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	649.89	719.64	842.77	890.61	993.26	1,094.71	1,202.15	1,351.37
Shropshire and Staffordshire	558.27	598.72	694.25	740.03	923.09	870.69	975.36	1,132.57
South East London	705.15	788.22	940.51	1,009.23	1,092.94	1,207.78	1,348.69	1,503.33
South West London	660.35	709.31	826.66	884.90	948.29	1,039.46	1,172.11	1,283.18
South West Peninsula	598.79	635.87	745.47	796.01	851.11	985.33	1,060.87	1,204.71
South Yorkshire	676.41	738.73	878.70	926.77	1,018.92	1,143.82	1,256.73	1,412.39
Surrey and Sussex	618.46	656.23	780.66	815.77	903.64	960.55	1,097.02	1,181.31
Thames Valley	519.76	544.01	626.46	685.84	772.39	786.00	959.52	1,066.88
Trent	585.51	636.93	720.04	775.60	936.51	842.41	1,044.16	1,157.56
West Midlands South	594.38	623.80	714.92	753.76	840.65	880.32	975.04	1,109.93
West Yorkshire	627.04	677.70	773.71	831.40	899.83	1,025.71	1,151.63	1,269.29
	607.85	659.76	763.79	825.38	926.129	991.07	1,116.32	1,236.10

Notes to Table 2:
Total expenditure is the expenditure by health authorities, strategic health authorities and primary care trusts in England, shown by current strategic health authority area. Expenditure on general dental services and pharmaceutical services accounted for by the Dental Practice Board and Prescription Pricing Authority, respectively, are excluded. This expenditure cannot be included within figures for individual health bodies as they are not included in commissioner accounts.

Sources:
Audited annual accounts of the health authorities 1997-98 to 1998-99
Audited health authority summarisation forms 1999-2000 to 2001-02
Audited SHA summarisation forms 2002-03 to 2004-05
Audited primary care trust summarisation schedules 2000-01 to 2004-05

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her comments in *The Guardian* of 11 May 2006 on support for overspending trusts, if she will agree to write off the £11.27 million deficit of the University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay Trust. [71560]

Andy Burnham: National health service bodies must live within their means, and we will not be writing off debt when a particular trust has failed to operate within its budget.

It is the responsibility of strategic health authorities (SHAs) both to deliver overall financial balance for their local health communities and to ensure each and every body achieves financial balance. However, there is a degree of flexibility in how this is managed at a local level. SHAs can agree a recovery plan which phases the recovery of deficits over a number of years. This would require other NHS organisations within the health economy to under spend over the same period. Any such arrangements would have to be subject to the agreement of local providers, commissioners and the managing SHA.

NHS IT Programme

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the effect that system interoperability would have on the costs of the NHS information technology programme; [63919]

(2) what assessment she has made of the ability of the single-system approach used by the NHS IT programme to respond to user demands and changing requirements. [63920]

Caroline Flint: The strategy for the national programme for information technology requires a consistent information architecture that can make patient treatment information available when and where it is needed. This does not rely on a single information system but involves the integration of multiple systems and applications operating together within that architecture to functional and technical interoperability standards.

Contracts with local service providers require them to ensure their systems and services meet these standards. This requirement covers interoperability both between systems and between localities, with the aim of supporting clinical networks and patient flows across communities, as well as providing the flexibility to meet emerging models of care that provide plurality of supply, choice and convenience for patients. Interoperability standards are shared with existing suppliers who are able to demonstrate compliance.

The commercial and organisational models chosen for delivering the national programme have produced exceptional value for the taxpayer by avoiding multiple procurements and significantly reducing unit costs for applications and systems.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the merits of using service-oriented architecture in the NHS information technology programme; [63924]

(2) what assessment she has made of the potential impact of service-oriented architecture on competition for provision of services in the NHS information technology programme. [63925]

Caroline Flint: Service-oriented architecture has been in use for well over a decade in large enterprises, and encouragement has been given to the use of its design principles in connection with the development of national programme for information technology systems and services wherever doing so would improve the quality of the product. There have been no material changes in service-oriented architecture since the procurement phase of the national programme, and there is therefore no obvious scope for its impacting on competition for the provision of services at this stage.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the annual cost of the NHS information technology programme is to *(a)* primary care trusts, *(b)* NHS trusts and *(c)* other NHS organisations; [63927]

(2) what percentage of the budget of *(a)* primary care trusts, *(b)* NHS trusts and *(c)* other NHS organisations she expects to be spent on the NHS IT programme in (i) 2006-07 and (ii) in the next five years. [63942]

Caroline Flint: Information about local national health service spending by primary care trusts, NHS trusts and other NHS organisations on the national programme for information technology to complement the investment from central funding is not collected centrally. A survey of total NHS information technology (IT) expenditure is conducted annually and the results are published on the NHS Connecting for Health's website at

www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/publications/funding.

There is no specific numerical target for year-on-year spending by NHS organisations on the programme. However, we have always made it clear that we anticipate the NHS as a whole increasing its overall spending on IT broadly in line with the recommendations in the 2002 Wanless report.

NHS Reconfiguration

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 146W, on NHS Reconfiguration, what estimate she has made of the total cost involved in the structural reorganisation of strategic health authorities. [66057]

Andy Burnham: Total costs of change are dependent on a number of factors, including the number of new organisations, number of people in the new organisations and their pay as well as changes in estate costs following reconfiguration. When complete the reconfiguration of strategic health authorities will cost less to run than the previous arrangements and free resources for frontline services.

Nuffield Speech and Language Unit

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if a Minister in her Department will meet a delegation of hon. Members, speech and language therapists and parents to discuss the future of the Nuffield speech and language unit. [69310]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I would be happy to meet the delegation to hear their concerns regarding the future of the Nuffield speech and language unit.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the arrangements to publicise the public consultation on the future of the Nuffield speech and language unit; and what discussions she has had since 25 April 2006 with the Royal Free hospital on its conduct of that consultation. [69312]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: No discussions have been held since 25 April 2006 with the Royal Free hospital on its conduct on the public consultation on the future of the Nuffield speech and language unit and no assessments have been made of the trust's arrangements to publicise the consultation.

It is the duty of the local national health service to involve and consult patients, the public and their representatives in the planning of services, the development of proposals to change services and in decisions affecting the operation of services.

Nurses/Doctors

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to allow nurses to prescribe medicines to patients without the consent of a doctor; if she will list the medicines nurses will be allowed to prescribe; what consultation she has undertaken; what representations she has received; and if she will make a statement. [70370]

Andy Burnham: Over 29,000 community practitioner nurse prescribers are able to prescribe from a list of dressings, appliances and some medicines for patients in the community. These are listed in Part XVIIB(i) of the Drug Tariff.

Nearly 7,000 qualified nurse independent prescribers are able to prescribe any licensed medicine independently for any medical condition within their competence, including some controlled drugs that are listed in the Drug Tariff in Part XVIIB(ii).

Regulations to enable this came into effect on 1 May 2006, following public consultation beginning on 28 February 2005, which examined options for the future of nurse prescribing. A summary of responses to this consultation is publicly available on the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's website at www.mhra.gov.uk, a copy of which will be placed in the Library.

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* nurses and *(b)* doctors there were in Brentford and Isleworth constituency in (i) 1997 and (ii) 2006. [64086]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The following table shows the number of nurses and doctors there were in the North West London area in 1997 and 2004. Information on the number of doctors and nurses in 2005 was available on 24 April 2006. The 2006 work force census will be conducted in September 2006.

England

	numbers headcount	
	1997	*2004*
North West London		
All doctors	4,422	5,494
of which:		
Hospital and Community Health Services (HCHS) doctors	3,213	4,262
General medical practitioners (excluding retainers)	1,209	1,232
Nurses	12,602	16,509
of which:		
HCHS nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	11,909	15,774
General practitioner (GP) practice nurses	693	735
Central and North West London Mental Health National Health Service Trust		
All doctors	n/a	228
of which:		
HCHS doctors	n/a	228
General medical practitioners (excluding retainers)	n/a	n/a
Nurses	n/a	1,148
of which:		
HCHS nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	n/a	1,148
GP practice nurses	n/a	n/a
Hounslow primary care trust		
All doctors	n/a	141
of which:		
HCHS doctors	n/a	3
General medical practitioners (excluding retainers)	n/a	138
Nurses	n/a	300
of which:		
HCHS nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	n/a	221
GP practice nurses	n/a	79
West Middlesex University NHS Trust		
All doctors	166	248
of which:		
HCHS doctors	166	248
General medical practitioners (excluding retainers)	n/a	n/a
Nurses	604	857
of which:		
HCHS nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	604	857
GP practice nurses	n/a	n/a

n/a = not available.

Operations

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* in-patient and *(b)* day case operations were carried out in each year since 1997 (i) in England and (ii) in each NHS trust. [69611]

Andy Burnham: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Patient/Public Involvement

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding has been allocated to the Patient and Public Involvement Resource Centre; when she expects the Resource Centre to begin its work; and if she will make a statement. [71474]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is looking for a supplier to design, develop and have operational responsibility for a new centre to support the delivery of patient and public involvement in the healthcare delivery system. The procurement process is ongoing and until it is complete, we are unable to provide further details as they are commercially sensitive.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the budget is for the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health in 2006-07; and what she estimates the cost of abolishing the commission by the summer of 2007 to be. [71475]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The budget for the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH) for the financial year 2006-07 has recently been agreed at £28 million. The budget for 2007-08 will not be set until later in the current financial year.

The cost of abolishing the CPPIH, including staff redundancy costs, will be contained within the overall budgets for 2006-07 and 2007-08 with final costs being assessed later in the year when the full implications for the CPPIH of the recent review of patient and public involvement have been assessed.

Population Statistics

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what account primary care trusts funding formulae take of the proportion of over 25-year olds in a local population. [68394]

Andy Burnham: The weighted capitation formula, which informs revenue allocations to primary care trusts, includes adjustments for age related need to reflect that demand for healthcare varies according to the age structure of the local population.

Each component of the formula has its own age weights which are shown in the tables.

Table 1: Hospital and community health service age weights

Age band	Weighting (£)
0-4	542
5-14	269
15-44	526
45-64	655
65-74	1,245
75-84	1,976
85+	2,799

Table 2: Prescribing age-sex weights

Age band	Male	Female
0-4	1	0.8
5-14	1.4	1.2
15-24	1.7	2.1
25-34	2	2.4
35-44	2.8	3.2
45-54	4.4	5.4
55-64	7.6	7.2
65-74	10.1	9.6
75+	11.8	10.6

Table 3: Primary medical services age-sex weights (expressed as the ratio to males aged five to 14)

Age band	Male	Female
0-4	3.97	3.64
5-14	1.00	1.04
15-44	1.02	2.20
45-64	2.16	3.37
65-74	4.23	4.95
75-84	6.01	6.95
85+	7.22	8.85

Premature Babies

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many babies have been born prematurely in each of the last five years; and what research her Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated into links between premature birth and (i) areas of deprivation and (ii) environment. [69347]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The available information about length of gestation at delivery is published annually in table 21 of the statistical bulletin NHS Maternity Statistics: England. Copies of the bulletins, the latest of which relates to 2003-04, are available in the Library and also on the Department's website at

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/1070/61/04107061.pdf.

The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Innovation. The MRC supports a large portfolio of reproductive tract research and underpinning reproductive medicine and paediatric research.

The Department funds research to support policy and to provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the national health service. The policy research programme in particular supports the national perinatal epidemiology unit. Much of the unit's work on the compromised foetus and baby focuses on or is linked to preterm birth.

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is currently devolved to and managed by NHS organisations. Details of individual projects including a number concerned with premature birth are available on the national research register at

www.dh.gov.uk/research.

Self-harm

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many children have been treated in hospital for self-harm in each of the last five years; [69342]

(2) how many children self-harmed in each of the last five years; [69378]

(3) how many children were admitted to hospital following incidents of self-harm in each of the last five years. [69379]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In 2002, a survey by the Office for National Statistics of 12,000 five to 15-year-olds has found that 1.3 per cent. had tried to harm themselves. The available information on children admitted and treated in hospital is shown in the table.

Total finished admission episodes and total patients for under-18s admitted to hospital due to deliberate self-harm in the past five years in NHS hospitals England, financial years 2000-01 to 2004-05:

Children admitted by data year

Data year	*Total episodes*	*Total patients*
2004-05	11,237	9,804
2003-04	11,189	9,834
2002-03	10,189	8,762
2001-02	10,005	8,678
2000-01	9,469	8,188

Specialised Commissioning

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the review of specialised commissioning. [69309]

Andy Burnham: The review of commissioning arrangements for specialised services is an independent review commissioned by Health Ministers and will be considered appropriately when the report is received.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which interested parties will be consulted as part of her Department's review of specialised commissioning; and over what time period the review will take place. [69311]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The review of commissioning arrangements for specialised services received 144 written submissions. A list of the written submissions has been placed in the Library. Additionally, the review ran an accelerated policy-making day with over 80 attendees and attended workshops with groups such as the NHS Confederation, the National Specialist Commissioning Advisory Group and the Specialised Healthcare Alliance. Meetings were also held with officials from various bodies, for example specialised commissioning groups, Monitor (the independent regulator of NHS foundation trusts), the Audit Commission and the Healthcare Commission. The review report will be submitted to Ministers shortly.

Strategic Health Authorities

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff are employed by each strategic health authority; and at what cost in 2005-06. [69823]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is shown in table one. This relates to the current 28 strategic health authorities (SHAs) that from 1 July 2006 will be reduced to 10 (as set out in written ministerial statement on 16 May 2006).

Table 1: National health service hospital and community health services: NHS staff by SHA and by main staff groups in England as at 30 September 2005

	Headcount
	All NHS staff
England	4,438
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA	133
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA	85
Essex SHA	116
North West London SHA	149
North Central London SHA	171
North East London SHA	155
South East London SHA	174
South West London SHA	105
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear SHA	140
County Durham and Tees Valley SHA	103
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire SHA	133
West Yorkshire SHA	101
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	156
Greater Manchester SHA	295
Cheshire and Merseyside SHA	239
Thames Valley SHA	156
Hampshire and Isle of Wight SHA	222
Kent and Medway SHA	102
Surrey and Sussex SHA	141
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA	164
South West Peninsula SHA	166
Dorset and Somerset SHA	84
South Yorkshire SHA	293
Trent SHA	139
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA	214
Shropshire and Staffordshire SHA	110
Birmingham and The Black Country SHA	244
West Midlands South SHA	148

Source:
The Information Centre for health and social care, medical and dental workforce census
The Information Centre for health and social care, non-medical workforce census

The total staff costs for permanent staff at the SHAs for 2004-05 are shown in table two. Source for the data is the 2004-05 audited summarisation forms for the SHAs. 2005-06 data will be available in the autumn.

Table 2

SHA name	*Staff costs (£000)*
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA	5,665
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA	4,709
Essex Strategic HA	5,455
North West London Strategic HA	6,542
North Central London Strategic HA	6,580
North East London Strategic HA	7,695

Table 2

SHA name	*Staff costs (£000)*
South East London Strategic HA	7,555
South West London Strategic HA	6,020
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Strategic HA	4,827
County Durham and Tees Valley SHA	2,938
North and East Yorkshire and N Lines SHA	3,687
West Yorkshire Strategic HA	6,286
Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic HA	4,982
Greater Manchester Strategic HA	12,423
Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic HA	6,646
Thames Valley Strategic HA	8,719
Hampshire and Isle Of Wight Strategic HA	7,548
Kent and Medway Strategic HA	4,456
Surrey and Sussex Strategic HA	5,899
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA	6,477
South West Peninsula Strategic HA	4,940
Dorset and Somerset Strategic HA	3,642
South Yorkshire Strategic HA	15,580
Trent Strategic HA	3,592
Leics, Northants and Rutland SHA	2,909
Shropshire and Staffordshire SHA	4,742
Birmingham and The Black Country SHA	12,983
West Midlands South Strategic HA	4,788
England total	178,285

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the oral answer from the then Under-Secretary of State of 25 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 549, from what sources the figures for waiting times for in-patient treatment were taken. [71138]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* The figures quoted for waiting times for in-patient treatment in the North Central London Strategic Health Authority area during the Adjournment debate held on 25 April on the future of the Nuffield speech and language unit were obtained from the monthly monitoring return submitted to the Department by the local national health service. I have written to the hon. Member on this subject.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting list time in *(a)* the Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust and *(b)* England was in each year since 2003. [71389]

Andy Burnham: The median waiting times in Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust and England are shown in the tables:

Estimated average waiting times, all specialties, 2003 to 2006—Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust—Commissioner based

In-patients	*Average waiting time for elective admission*
Quarter ended March:	*Median wait (weeks)*
2003	11.5
2004	10.3
2005	8.9
2006	7.1

Estimated average waiting times, all specialties, 2003 to 2006, England—Commissioner based

In-patients	*Average waiting time for elective admission*
Quarter ended March:	*Median wait(weeks)*
2003	11.9
2004	10.2
2005	8.5
2006	7.3

Source:
Department of Health forms QF01

Working with Children

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what criteria she uses when deciding who should be placed on her Department's list of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children. [44478]

Mr. Dhanda: I have been asked to reply.

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills has the power under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 to bar an individual from working with children in schools, further education colleges and local authority education services. Education organisations are under an obligation not to allow an individual to work in contravention of the bar. The list of those individuals subject to a bar is known as "List 99".

There are three circumstances in which the Secretary of State must issue a direction barring someone automatically:

(i) Firstly, if on or after 1 November 1995, a person

has pleaded guilty to or been found guilty of a specified offence (or an attempt to commit such an offence) against or involving a child under the age of 16 before or by a court in the United Kingdom;

was carrying out work to which section 142 of the 2002 Act applies before or at the time he committed or was convicted of the offence; and

was aged 18 or over at the time the offence was committed;

(ii) Secondly, if the person is permanently included in the Protection of Children Act List;

(iii) Thirdly, if on or after 1 June 2003,

(a) a person is made subject to a disqualification order (i.e. disqualified by the courts); and

(b) was carrying out work to which section 142 of the 2002 Act applies before or at the time they committed or were convicted of the offence to which the disqualification order relates.

A précis of this information was included in the report of 19 January.

The Department also administers the PoCA list. Following a valid referral the Department can only place an individual on the PoCA list (otherwise than provisionally) if the following criteria apply:

(a) The Secretary of State is satisfied that the referring organisation reasonably considered the individual to have been guilty of misconduct which harmed a child or placed a child at risk of harm (whether or not in the course of his employment); and

(b) The Secretary of State considers the individual to be unsuitable to work with children.

In the 19 January and 1 March statements the Secretary of State referred to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Bill which was introduced before Parliament on 28 February. The key measures of the cross-Government Bill include

introducing a new vetting and barring system bringing relevant information together in one place for the first time. This will integrate the current List 99 (for teachers), and the Protection of Children Act lists (for those working in child care settings) and also provide for a new list of people barred from working with vulnerable adults to replace the Protection of Vulnerable Adults list.

making it possible for domestic employers such as parents to check whether private tutors, nannies, music teachers and care workers are barred.

for the first time, enabling employers to make a 'real-time' instant check of whether a prospective employee is barred with secure online access rather than the current paper-based process.

updating barring decisions as soon as any new information becomes available, and where possible, notifying relevant employers if an employee becomes barred.

removing responsibility for barring decisions from Ministers entirely and transferring this to a new independent statutory board which will take decisions on whether to include someone on the barred list.

In the meantime and also referred to in the statements, the Secretary of State has established a panel of independent experts, chaired by Sir Roger Singleton, to advise the Secretary of State in relation to the exercise of his decision-making powers.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 18 May 2006

TRANSPORT

Air Emergency

Mr. Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport after the emergency landing at Heathrow on 24 April 2004 by Boeing 747-132, registration N481 EV, whether the aircraft was boarded by any official from a UK agency; and whether the cargo was inspected. [64058]

Gillian Merron: The Boeing 747-132, call sign Evergreen, was diverted to Heathrow after encountering engine trouble on 24 April 2004. Only the police, immigration and customs officials have powers to board aircraft in situations such as this.

I am advised by my colleagues at the Home Office and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs that neither immigration service nor customs officials boarded the Evergreen aircraft or inspected its cargo.

I understand that police at London Heathrow are searching their records to determine whether this aircraft was boarded by uniformed officers, but that this process can take some time. The Home Secretary has undertaken to write to the hon. Gentleman with the relevant information once these investigations have been completed.

Air Freight

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many air freight flights were recorded *(a)* to and *(b)* from (i) Heathrow, (ii) Gatwick and (iii) Stansted airports in each of the last five years; and what freight tonnage this represented in each case. [71350]

Gillian Merron: The number of cargo flights and freight tonnage recorded to and from Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted for last five years are as follows:

Cargo Flights

Number

	Arrival					*Departure*				
	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Heathrow	1,579	1,552	1,499	1,635	1,364	1,612	1,620	1,577	1,702	1,451
Gatwick	1,025	1,167	1,518	1,200	1,031	1,038	1,180	1,580	1,486	1,329
Stansted	5,782	5,040	4,953	5,301	5,570	6,102	5,522	5,356	5,746	5,687

Cargo

Tonnes

	Set down					*Picked up*				
	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Heathrow	50,302	61,446	54,188	58,351	42,474	54,679	55,306	48,471	48,736	35,376
Gatwick	12,901	15,059	19,983	18,011	21,811	23,571	27,027	30,827	34,783	31,968
Stansted	84,869	96,671	110,755	123,648	138,638	78,810	85,232	86,382	100,742	97,060

Source:
Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) airports statistics excludes charter cargo services when aircraft type below 15 tonnes maximum takeoff weight authorised (air taxi type)

Aircraft Safety

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the answer of 2 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1462W, on airports, how many of the near misses that were recorded over Northern Ireland airspace in each of the last five years related to flights into or out of *(a)* Belfast International, *(b)* Belfast City and *(c)* Londonderry airports. [70495]

Gillian Merron: During the five years from 2001 to 2005 inclusive seven Airprox incidents involving commercial air transport aircraft in airspace over Northern Ireland were reported to the UK Airprox Board for assessment. These can be broken down as follows.

	Breakdown by airport (with Airprox report number)	*Number of Airprox incidents*
2001	Londonderry (058/2001)	1
2002	Belfast Intl (058/2002) Londonderry (225/2005)	2
2003	—	0
2004	Londonderry (196/2004)	1
2005	Belfast City (031/2005) Belfast City (150/2005) Belfast City (166/2005)	3

All seven events were reviewed and categorised by the UK Airprox Board as being Category C (where no risk of collision existed). The Airprox reference number for each incident is given in the table. Final reports on each event are available, if required, on the UK Airprox Board's website at www.airproxboard.org.uk .

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the answer of 2 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1462W, on airports, how many near misses were recorded in mainland Great Britain airports relating to flights departing from Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [70496]

Gillian Merron: During the five years from 2001 to 2005 inclusive there were nine Airprox incidents recorded over Great Britain relating to flights departing from airports in Northern Ireland.

These can be broken down by year as follows:

	Airprox Board Reference (and risk category)	*Number of incidents*
2001	065/2001 (D) 083/2001 (B) 108/2001 (C)	3
2002	n/a	0
2003	n/a	0
2004	035/2004 (C) 124/2004 (C) 139/2004 (C)	3
2005	024/2005 (C) 036/2005 (B) 194/2005 (C)	3

All nine events were reviewed by the UK Airprox Board. The Airprox reference number and risk category for each incident is given above. Of the nine incidents, two were categorised as "risk bearing" Airprox in which safety was not assured (a "risk bearing" Airprox is one that falls into category A or B). Final reports on each event are available, if required, on the UK Airprox Board's website at www.airproxboard.org.uk.

British Transport Police

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with the British Transport police authority on its financial management; whether he plans changes thereto; and if he will make a statement. [71555]

Derek Twigg: Ministers meet the chair of the British Transport police (BTP) authority as necessary to discuss issues affecting the BTP.

Since its establishment on 1 July 2004, the authority has provided funds to BTP to enable it to review and update its key central support systems, policies, and processes including risk management, business continuity, procurement, human resources and payroll.

As part of this review, BTP's finance department has been reorganised, restructured, and strengthened with the objective of improving financial management throughout BTP.

Executive Agencies

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action he is taking to improve the financial management arrangements of the executive agencies that report to his Department; and if he will make a statement. [71429]

Gillian Merron *[holding answer 17 May 2006]:* Agency accounting officers are responsible for financial management under the terms of their agreed framework documents. The Department has taken a number of steps to co-ordinate and encourage improvement initiatives, including the establishment of a Group Finance Committee, a new shared services centre providing finance and human resources services for the whole organisation, and Group Internal Audit Assurances.

Galileo Service

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with his counterparts in the European Union on China's involvement in the Galileo service. [71571]

Dr. Ladyman: There have been no discussions at ministerial level specifically about Chinese involvement. Officials at the Department for Transport regularly discuss the involvement of non-European Union countries, including China, in meetings with the Commission and other member states.

Heathrow

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans his Department has to consult on the ending of mixed-mode landings and runway alternation at Heathrow; and if he will make a statement. [72187]

Gillian Merron: I refer to the statement made by the Under-Secretary of State for Transport my hon. Friend the Member for Halton (Derek Twigg) on 17 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 117WS.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much funding Staffordshire county council received from his Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* per mile of road and *(c)* per head of population in each year since 1997-98. [71227]

Gillian Merron: The following table shows the total funding allocated to Staffordshire county council in the local transport capital settlements between 1997-98 and 2005-06 (inclusive) in terms of totals, per mile of road, and per head of population.

Staffordshire county council	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Total funding (£000)	15,564	5,364	6,243	10,954	15,208	15,081	22,097	19,938	30,603
Funds (£000) per mile[1]	4.032	1.380	1.609	2.838	3.940	3.900	5.725	5.165	7.929
Funds (£ per head)[1]	19.16	6.6	7.6	13.4	18.7	19.4	27.2	24.5	37.7

[1] The population and road mileage for the year 2004 have been used in the calculations, the road mileage being 3,860 miles and the population 812,600.

Portland PR

Ian Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what meetings officials in his Department have had with representatives of the public relations company Portland PR; what contracts Portland PR has with his Department and agencies for which he has responsibility; and what the nature of the contract is in each case. [70043]

Gillian Merron: The Department does not maintain a central list of such meetings. Civil servants meet many people as part of the process of policy development and business delivery. All such meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Service Code and Guidance for civil servants on contacts with lobbyists and people outside Government.

The Department does not currently have any contracts with Portland PR.

Post-retirement Working

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what opportunities exist for people to work beyond retirement age in his Department. [69086]

Gillian Merron: Currently departmental staff below the Senior Civil Service may retire up to the age of 65 or at any time from the date of their 60th birthday.

The Department has the discretion, in exceptional circumstances, to invite staff to continue in service beyond the date on which they would normally retire if

this is the best way of meeting the Department's staffing needs;

recruitment and promotion arrangements will not be adversely affected;

they continue to meet the normal requirements of health, efficiency and conduct.

Any approvals will be for a specified period and subject to review. If staff are allowed to continue, they must retire if it is decided to give them notice of retirement. No employee may continue in service beyond the age of 70.

The Cabinet Office is responsible for setting the retirement age of staff in the Senior Civil Service. This is currently 60 unless the Department and the Cabinet Office allow them to stay longer.

Public Transport

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the public expenditure per head of population for public transport was in each of the English regions in each of the last 10 years calculated on the same basis as HM Treasury's public expenditure statistical analysis for all transport expenditure. [69162]

Gillian Merron *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The information requested on public expenditure for public transport is not collected centrally in the form requested. Information on the Department's identifiable expenditure by region per head for years from 2000-01 is published in the Department's Annual Report 2005 (Cm 6527), Table A8; and separate figures for local public transport and railways for 2003-04 in Table A9; but these do not include payments to local authorities or local authorities' own expenditure. Information on total transport identifiable expenditure per head, which includes local authority expenditure, is given in Table 8.11 of PESA 2005 for years from 1999-2000. Figures for earlier years are given in earlier PESA publications and DfT Annual Reports, although these are not strictly comparable due to changes in data coverage and classification changes.

Rail Franchises

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will list the train franchise contracts that have *(a)* protection, *(b)* partial protection and *(c)* no protection against loss of revenue from new open access operators over the course of the franchise; and if he will make a statement; [67269]

(2) what assessment he has made of the potential impact on their lines of the shortfall in premium payments to the Exchequer from train operating companies subject to open access operators; and if he will make a statement. [67482]

Derek Twigg: No train operator is explicitly provided with a guarantee or indemnity against loss of revenue arising from new open access operators.

The SRA did give certain protection to the TransPennine Express franchisee in 2003 in the event that SRA changed its policy of opposing an open access application which was under discussion at that time.

When proposals for new open access services are submitted to the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR), the Department for Transport will routinely make an assessment of the financial impact that those services will have on the railway as a whole. These assessments are used to inform the Government response to any consultation that the ORR undertakes in relation to the proposals.

Railways

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for what reason the Government have altered their growth target for heavy rail; what implications the alteration has for future rail expansion and improvement plans; and if he will make a statement. [71556]

Derek Twigg: The Government set out their strategy for the railway in the Future of Rail White Paper published in July 2004. This new strategy is designed to control costs, improve reliability and deliver sufficient capacity to meet forecast demand.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials discussed with Central Trains the cancellation of train services in the West Midlands on 18 December 2005; and if he will make a statement. [71895]

Derek Twigg: As part of the franchise management, regular discussions take place between Department for Transport officials and Central Trains, which has included the cancellation of train services in the West Midlands on 18 December 2005.

Rescue Helicopters

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on how many occasions search and rescue helicopters based at Sumburgh and Stornoway have been used for air ambulance evacuations in each of the last five years; and what charges have been made to the Scottish ambulance service for the service. [71906]

Dr. Ladyman: The following tables show for each of the last five financial years the number of occasions, the total hours and total amount invoiced when the air ambulance has been used. The amounts shown are where the Maritime and Coastguard Agency has invoiced the Scottish ambulance service.

Sumburgh

Financial year	*Number of flight*	*Total hours*	*Total cost (£)*
2005-06	6	11.15	20,491.88
2004-05	3	7.55	9,890.00
2003-04	4	7.05	12,246.40
2002-03	1	.55	1,565.20
2001-02	3	11.10	19,178.00
Total	17	38.20	63,371.48

Stornoway

Financial year	*Number of flight*	*Total hours*	*Total cost (£)*
2005-06	10	35.20	66,539.20
2004-05	7	25.05	35,139.00
2003-04	3	14.25	24,750.80
2002-03	4	10.00	17,187.96
2001-02	9	23.15	39,975.72
Total	33	108.05	183,592.68

Road Safety

Anne Moffat: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many road traffic accidents in 2005 resulted in the death of children of school age. [72611]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on personal injury road accidents reported to the police in 2005 is not available until first release on 29 June.

In 2004 (the latest year in which figures are available), there were 186 personal injury road accidents in Great Britain reported to the police involving death of one or more children aged five to 16.

TREASURY

Capital Gains Tax

Dr. Cable: To ask The Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate *(a)* the revenue implications and *(b)* the additional number of people who would pay tax if the capital gains tax threshold were reduced to (i) £1,000, (ii) £2,500 and (iii) £5,000; and if he will make a statement. [71659]

Dawn Primarolo: The total estimated yield on an accruals basis from abolishing Capital Gains Tax Annual Exempt Amount (AEA) for individuals and trusts in 2005-06 is published in Table A3.1 in the Budget Report 2006. This excludes any behavioural response to the tax change.

Estimate of the total yield on an accruals basis, and additional number of resultant taxpayers, from reducing the Capital Gains Tax AEA for individuals to (i) £1,000, (ii) £2,500 and (iii) £5,000 in 2006-07 are set out in the following table.

Estimate of the total yield on an accruals basis, and additional number of resultant taxpayers, from reducing the Capital Gains Tax AEA for individuals in 2006-07

	AEA = £1,000	*AEA = £2,500*	*AEA = £5,000*
Additional Revenue (Accruals £ million)	800	500	200
Additional Taxpayers (Thousand)	1,450	600	300

The figures are consistent with the assumptions made in Budget 2006 on future asset prices, and take into account the likely taxpayer behavioural responses to the tax change. The Annual Exempt Amount for Trusts is assumed to be half that of individuals.

EU (UK Contributions)

Mr. Brady: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Financial Secretary to the Treasury's statement in the debate on future EU finances and own reserves on 8 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 135W, if he will list the net UK contribution from all sources to the EU for each year of the current financial perspective and the projected contribution for each year of the next financial perspective. [70995]

Ed Balls: I refer the hon. Member to footnote 3 of the amended table C11 (Total managed expenditure 2004-05 to 2007-08) in the 2006 Financial Statement and Budget Report for net contributions to the EU Budget 2004-05 (outturn), 2005-06 and 2006-07 (estimated projections).

For estimated net contributions to the EU budget over the next financial perspective I refer the hon. Member to the reply to the hon. Member for Surrey Heath (Michael Gove) on 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 399W.

EU Accession Countries (Immigration)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment has been made of the effect on public expenditure in the West Midlands region of immigration from EU accession countries since May 2004; and if he will make a statement. [71275]

Mr. Timms: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Peterborough (Mr. Jackson) on 12 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 619W.

The West Midlands region has received 6.8 per cent. of the total number of applications for income-related benefits made by nationals from the accession countries between May 2004 and December 2005.

Income Tax

Dr. Cable: To ask The Chancellor of the Exchequer what the revenue implications would be of *(a)* a 1p cut and *(b)* a 1p rise in the lower rate on (i) savings income and (ii) (A) the basic rate and (B) the higher rate of income tax for each year from 2006-07 to 2010-11; and if he will make a statement. [71658]

Dawn Primarolo: The latest information on expected yields from changing the lower rate on savings income, the basic rate and higher rates of income tax by 1p is available in Table 1.6 "Direct effects of illustrative tax changes" which is available on HM Revenue and Customs website;

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/tax_expenditures/1_6_apr06.xls

The information is for the years 2006-07 to 2008-09. Similar information for 2009-10 and 2010-11 is not available.

Inheritance Tax

Dr. Cable: To ask The Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the revenue implications of raising the inheritance tax threshold in line with house price inflation for each year to 2010-11; and if he will make a statement. [71656]

Dawn Primarolo: Raising the inheritance tax according to house price inflation assumptions, starting in 2007-08, would have the following effect on forecast revenue:

Effect of raising the inheritance tax according to house price inflation assumptions on forecast revenue

	Impact on forecast revenue (£ million)
2007-08	+5
2008-09	—
2009-10	-25
2010-11	-75

The house price inflation figures were obtained by assuming a constant house price to earnings ratio together with earnings growth consistent with the Treasury assumptions for trend growth.

In Budget 2006 the Chancellor announced that the inheritance tax threshold will continue to increase above expected statutory indexation for all years up to 2009-10, when it will reach £325,000.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the revenue implications for each year to 2010-11 of raising the inheritance tax threshold to £500,000; and if he will make a statement. [71657]

Dawn Primarolo: Raising the inheritance tax threshold to £500,000 with effect from 2007-08 would have the following effect on forecast revenue.

	Reduction in revenue (£ billion)
2007-08	0.7
2008-09	1.6
2009-10	1.7
2010-11	1.8

Tax Credits

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much financial assistance was provided by HM Revenue and Customs to voluntary organisations in the West Midlands region to assist the public on tax credit issues in each year in which such assistance has been provided. [71277]

Dawn Primarolo: Most financial support provided by HMRC has been targeted at national organisations. Although no funds have been specifically provided to voluntary organisations in the West Midlands, national campaigns have included support for the West Midlands.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will resolve the tax credit case of Mrs. Charlotte Rosetti of Brixham following communication with his Department between 15 March 2004 and 30 March 2006; what the reasons are for the continued delay in resolving the case; and if he will make a statement. [71655]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC replied to the hon. Gentleman's most recent letter on 16 May.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Council House Sales

Mr. Love: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the likely total income in capital receipts from the sale of council housing under the right-to-buy scheme in 2005-06. [58667]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 15 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 815-18W to my hon. Friend the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Mitchell).

Coventry (Local Government)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what funds were distributed to Coventry to increase efficiency in local government in each of the last three years. [70955]

Mr. Woolas *[holding answer 17 May 2006]:* Funding to support efficiency in local authorities is distributed to nine Regional Centres of Excellence (RCEs). Each RCE has its own local governance arrangements for supporting authorities across the region.

Funding for individual projects, many of which operate across local authority boundaries, is decided by the RCE Board. Since 2004-05, funding made available to the West Midlands RCE in relation to taking forward the Efficiency Agenda is as follows:

	Grant payable (£ million)		*2005-06*	
Receiving authority	*2004-05*	*2005-06*	*Additional core funding (£)*	*Work stream specific efficiency support (£)*
West Midlands Regional Centre of Excellence	1.18	1.58	50,000	180,000

For 2005-06, the West Midlands Improvement Partnership was awarded a Capacity Building grant of £5.95 million from which Coventry will be able to access support. Capacity building funds are granted to support local authorities in their improvement activities and performance. The West Midlands RCE has joined the West Midlands Improvement Partnership to form the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership. Local authorities in the region can access both RCE and CBF funds through the partnership.

Departmental Responsibilities

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the responsibilities of her Department are. [70581]

Angela E. Smith: The Department for Communities and Local Government has responsibility for local government, housing and planning, social exclusion, neighbourhood renewal, communities, race, faith and equalities.

Fire Service

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will make a statement on the regionalisation of the fire service; and what the timetable is for the process. [70572]

Angela E. Smith: We have no plans to regionalise the Fire and Rescue Service. As set out in the National Framework for the Fire and Rescue Service we believe in a regional approach where fire and rescue authorities work collaboratively in a way that will deliver the best possible service to the public. This approach is based on the National Framework for the Fire and Rescue Service which requires fire and rescue authorities to collaborate in six key areas of work through the regional management boards. Outside London, the regional management boards (RMBs) are responsible for delivering improvements in procurement, training, human resources, specialist services, regional control centres and resilience, through regional collaboration. Individual fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) in each region continue to be accountable for the day-to-day operation of their local fire and rescue service in line with their Integrated Risk Management Plan; and are accountable to their local electorates.

Social Housing

Mr. Laws: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the number of people on the register for social housing in England in each year from 1979-80 to 2005-06; and if he will make a statement. [59346]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Information on the number of people on housing waiting lists in England is not collected centrally. The number of households on councils' housing waiting lists in England has been collected centrally only from 1986 onwards. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 17 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 991-92W to the hon. Member for Birmingham, Selly Oak (Lynne Jones).

There are wide variations in how often local authorities update their waiting lists, including how quickly they remove people from the list who no longer want social housing.

Local authority waiting lists are only a broad indicator of housing need and not everyone on the list will necessarily be in urgent housing need.

Sports Trusts

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will take steps to ensure that sports trusts operating services and facilities on behalf of local authorities are subject to the same rules in respect of public access to information as local authority leisure services departments. [67668]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

We have no plans to extend the provisions relating to public access to local authority information to information held by non-local authority bodies.

Where services are operated on behalf of local authorities, information relating to the body operating those services may be open to inspection and inquiry by those authorities' overview and scrutiny committees, to whose meetings and documents public access is provided for under the Local Government Act 1972. In addition, many sports trusts have charitable status and will be subject to legislation relevant to charities, which includes provision for examination of accounts.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Atomic Energy Authority

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what financial value is used by the Atomic Energy Authority for a human life lost or saved in cost-benefit analysis of a proposed subject; and if he will make a statement. [71122]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* UKAEA bases any cost benefit analysis on guidelines issued by the Health and Safety Executive (and its Nuclear Installations Inspectorate). These use a similar baseline figure to that recommended in the Treasury Green Book for the 'Value of a Prevented Fatality or Prevented Injury', of around £1.2 million. However, UKAEA also applies the ALARP (As Low As Reasonably Practicable) principle in setting dose levels for its employees. ALARP introduces a further factor of safety, and subject to the circumstances, this financial limit may be increased by a factor of between two to 10 if the proposed solution is judged by safety authorities to be reasonably practicable.

Carbon Dioxide

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the amount of carbon dioxide created from *(a)* the mining of uranium, *(b)* ore milling, *(c)* uranium hexafluoride conversion, *(d)* fuel enrichment, *(e)* the making of fuel rods and *(f)* the treatment, transportation and deposition of nuclear waste. [70254]

Malcolm Wicks: In the context of the Energy Review, the DTI is considering a range of assessments covering the life cycle carbon emissions of generating electricity from nuclear power plants, including the recent analysis by the Sustainable Development Commission—"The role of nuclear power in a low carbon economy". We are aware of various external studies in this area, of which we are taking account.

Global Monitoring for Environment and Security

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what support his Department is giving to the European Commission and the EU Space Agency Respond Programme within the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security Initiative; and if he will make a statement. [71041]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has the policy lead in this area.

The DTI has taken a close interest in the RESPOND project within the European Space Agency (ESA) Earth Watch programme, Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) Service Element (GSE) and contributed 12mEuro in 2002 towards this element of the GMES programme. We will closely monitor the progress of RESPOND as the project develops.

Miners' Pensions

Mr. Touhig: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much funding was transferred from the Guarantee's Fund into the miners' pension schemes and British Coal Special Superannuation Scheme in *(a)* 2003-04, *(b)* 2004-05 and *(c)* 2005-06. [71409]

Malcolm Wicks: Following completion of the September 2002 actuarial valuation of the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme (MPS) £355 million was transferred from the Scheme's Investment Reserve within the scheme's funds to make good a deficit in the Guaranteed Fund, from which members' guaranteed pensions are paid. Similarly, following completion of the March 2003 actuarial valuation of the British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme (BCSSS) £220 million was transferred from the Investment Reserve to the Guaranteed Fund within that scheme. There have been no other such transfers since.

National Concessionary Fuel Scheme

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) if he will consider linking cash in lieu arrangements under the National Concessionary Fuel Arrangements directly to the price of electricity and gas; [70941]

(2) whether he plans to review the arrangements for paying cash in lieu to former miners under the National Concessionary Fuel Arrangements to take account of recent increases in fuel costs. [70940]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answers 15 May 2006]:* There is a long standing agreement within the National Concessionary Fuel Scheme whereby former miners (and their widows) who receive cash in lieu of concessionary fuel will have their benefit increased every October in line with any increase in the Heating and Lighting element of the retail prices index for the 12 month period ending in the July of that year.

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether he plans to meet officials of the National Union of Mineworkers to discuss his proposed changes to the concessionary fuel entitlement received by recipients under the present scheme. [69422]

Malcolm Wicks: I have recently written to the General Secretary of the Union agreeing to meet to discuss concessionary fuel issues.

Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 8 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 54W, on the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation Fund, if he will summarise the legal argument which led him to agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in October 2004, that funds in the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation Fund were hereditary revenues of the Crown. [70309]

Malcolm Wicks: Legal advice from the Treasury is that the funds representing the element of the NFFO surplus referred to in my answer of 8 May are hereditary revenues and so are required by law to be paid into the Consolidated Fund. As indicated in my answer of 8 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 54W, the legal advice in question is confidential and subject to legal professional privilege. It would therefore not be appropriate to provide details of the legal advice.

Pipe Organs

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) when his Department first became aware of the possible implications that the proposed EU Directives on Restriction of Hazardous Substances and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment might have for organ building in the United Kingdom; [70975]

(2) when his Department first received representations on the concerns of organ builders about the implementation of the proposed EU Directives on Restriction of Hazardous Substances and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment; [70976]

(3) what discussions with representatives of organ builders in the United Kingdom his Department initiated on the implications of the proposed EU Directives on Restriction of Hazardous Substances and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment for organ building in the United Kingdom; and when the first discussions took place; [70977]

(4) what discussions he has had with his *(a)* Danish and *(b)* German counterparts on the implications of the proposed EU Directives on Restriction of Hazardous Substances and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment for organ builders; [70978]

(5) on what date his Department first raised with the European Commission concerns of United Kingdom organ builders regarding the proposed EU Directives on Restriction of Hazardous Substances and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment. [70979]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has been working with the pipe organ industry for some time and will continue to do so in order to secure a favourable outcome on this issue.

The UK Government do not consider that pipe organs fall within the scope of this Directive, a view widely accepted across Europe. The DTI is working closely with the European Commission and other EU member states to obtain agreement at a European level. Our aim is to reach a successful conclusion before the Directive comes into force on the 1 July.

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will place in the Library copies of the correspondence between his Department and *(a)* the European Commission and *(b)* representatives of organ builders on the effects on organ building in the United Kingdom of the proposed EU Directives on Restriction of Hazardous Substances and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment. [70980]

Malcolm Wicks: Yes. As requested, I have made arrangement to place copies of the relevant correspondence since the Institute of British Organ Building's campaign on this issue was initiated.

Joint Energy Security of Supply

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) when he expects the sixth report of the energy security of supply working Group to be published; and if he will make a statement; [68085]

(2) whether he expects the energy security of supply working group to continue to report on a twice yearly basis; [68086]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 3 May 2006]*: The sixth report of the Joint Energy Security of Supply (JESS) working group was published on Tuesday 16 May.

As of last year the Secretary of State's report to Parliament on security of gas and electricity supply as provided for under section 172 of the Energy Act 2003 replaced one of the two bi-annual JESS reports. The Department will be laying before the House the Secretary of State's second Annual Report to Parliament later in the year.

The JESS working group will be looking this year at how best to take forward its reporting responsibilities in the light of feedback from users of its reports and the introduction of the Secretary of State's Annual Report.

PRIME MINISTER

Minister for Europe

Mr. Vara: To ask the Prime Minister in what circumstances the Minister for Europe will attend Cabinet; and if he will make a statement. [71854]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the press briefing given by my official spokesman on 8 May, a copy of which is available on the No. 10 website.

Overseas Visits (Media Airfares)

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Prime Minister how much has been received from *(a)* the ITV group, *(b)* Sky, *(c)* the BBC and *(d)* non-UK based television companies in payment for airfares for journalists accompanying him on overseas trips in each of the last five years. [71746]

The Prime Minister: The information is not held in the format requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

CABINET OFFICE

Knowledge Network

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much was spent on the Knowledge Network in each year since 1997. [72026]

Hilary Armstrong: The costs of the Knowledge Network for each financial year since its inception in 1999 are shown in the table.

	Gross spend (£ million)
1999-2000	2.0
2000-01	3.6
2001-02	6.4
2002-03	3.2
2003-04	3.2
2004-05	4.8
2005-06	3.7

Up until 2003-04 the Cabinet Office funded the development and operational costs; since that time the Cabinet Office has recovered the majority of the costs from those government departments who are key users of the service.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Free School Meals

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children attending *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in (i) Southend-on-Sea, (ii) Essex, (iii) each local authority in Hertfordshire and (iv) England received free school meals in each year since 1990; and what estimate he has made of the number of children who will receive free school meals for each of the next five years. [69623]

Jim Knight: The available information is shown in the table.

Information on school meals is only available on a consistent basis from 1993 onwards and has also been affected by local government reorganisation since then.

The Department does not produce projected numbers of pupils who will be in receipt of free school meals in the future.

Maintained primary and secondary schools [1]: school meal arrangements 1993-2006 (provisional) Position in January each year

Southend-on-Sea local authority

Maintained primary

	Number on roll [2]	*Number of pupils taking free school meals [3]*	*Percentage of pupils taking free school meals*	*Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*	*Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*
1998	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1999	14,441	2,278	15.8	3,053	21.1
2000	14,503	2,286	15.8	3,023	20.8
2001	14,689	2,089	14.2	2,815	19.2
2002	14,775	1,980	13.4	2,723	18.4
2003	14,730	1,974	13.4	2,608	17.7
2004	14,495	2,049	14.1	2,654	18.3
2005	14,394	1,884	13.1	2,591	18.0
2006 (provisional)	14,152	1,896	13.4	2,450	17.3

Maintained secondary

	Number on roll [2]	*Number of pupils taking free school meals [3]*	*Percentage of pupils taking free school meals*	*Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*	*Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*
1998	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1999	10,743	1,192	11.1	1,668	15.5
2000	11,032	1,099	10.0	1,559	14.1
2001	11,367	1,004	8.8	1,489	13.1
2002	11,711	1,057	9.0	1,401	12.0
2003	12,024	1,066	8.9	1,346	11.2
2004	12,205	967	7.9	1,433	11.7
2005	12,411	1,152	9.3	1,506	12.1
2006 (provisional)	12,601	1,124	8.9	1,480	11.7

Essex local authority

Maintained primary

	Number on roll [2]	Number of pupils taking free school meals [3]	Percentage of pupils taking free school meals	Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
1993	122,010	17,714	14.5	20,977	17.2
1994	123,997	19,435	15.7	23,202	18.7
1995	128,567	19,299	15.0	23,219	18.1
1996	132,554	19,762	14.9	23,562	17.8
1997	136,385	18,654	13.7	23,090	16.9
1998	139,094	17,282	12.4	21,543	15.5
1999	112,834	11,883	10.5	15,433	13.7
2000	112,913	11,355	10.1	14,503	12.8
2001	112,434	10,308	9.2	13,156	11.7
2002	112,156	9,813	8.7	12,774	11.4
2003	111,149	9,782	8.8	12,391	11.1
2004	110,131	9,785	8.9	12,335	11.2
2005	108,391	9,576	8.8	11,788	10.9
2006 (provisional)	107,125	9,430	8.8	10,801	10.1

Maintained secondary

	Number on roll [2]	Number of pupils taking free school meals [3]	Percentage of pupils taking free school meals	Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
1993	98,730	7,444	7.5	10,569	10.7
1994	95,463	8,830	9.2	11,775	12.3
1995	96,307	9,350	9.7	12,497	13.0
1996	96,535	9,579	9.9	12,783	13.2
1997	97,620	9,236	9.5	12,537	12.8
1998	98,590	8,999	9.1	12,275	12.5
1999	82,185	6,622	8.1	9,051	11.0
2000	84,218	6,552	7.8	8,825	10.5
2001	86,251	6,107	7.1	8,601	10.0
2002	87,802	6,052	6.9	8,198	9.3
2003	89,496	6,001	6.7	7,992	8.9
2004	90,686	6,283	6.9	8,163	9.0
2005	90,909	6,041	6.6	7,772	8.5
2006 (provisional)	91,140	5,841	6.4	7,595	8.3

Hertfordshire local authority

Maintained primary

	Number on roll [2]	Number of pupils taking free school meals [3]	Percentage of pupils taking free school meals	Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
1993	82,844	9,652	11.7	10,795	13.0
1994	84,825	10,659	12.6	11,979	14.1
1995	87,464	10,447	11.9	12,139	13.9
1996	89,738	10,580	11.8	12,595	14.0
1997	92,397	9,452	10.2	11,259	12.2
1998	94,606	8,649	9.1	10,299	10.9
1999	95,259	7,939	8.3	9,749	10.2
2000	96,095	7,628	7.9	9,410	9.8
2001	96,956	6,995	7.2	8,870	9.1
2002	97,101	6,746	6.9	8,493	8.7
2003	95,907	6,766	7.1	8,387	8.7
2004	94,309	6,868	7.3	8,801	9.3
2005	93,154	6,277	6.7	8,107	8.7
2006 (provisional)	92,173	6,126	6.6	7,455	8.1

Maintained secondary

	Number on roll [2]	Number of pupils taking free school meals [3]	Percentage of pupils taking free school meals	Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
1993	66,944	4,663	7.0	5,724	8.6
1994	68,235	5,307	7.8	6,561	9.6
1995	69,099	5,434	7.9	6,788	9.8
1996	70,032	5,460	7.8	6,845	9.8
1997	70,682	5,072	7.2	6,570	9.3
1998	71,718	4,557	6.4	6,140	8.6
1999	72,916	4,248	5.8	5,802	8.0
2000	74,603	4,322	5.8	5,725	7.7
2001	75,824	4,074	5.4	5,605	7.4
2002	76,831	3,818	5.0	5,167	6.7
2003	78,350	4,047	5.2	5,122	6.5
2004	79,296	4,278	5.4	5,327	6.7
2005	79,638	4,332	5.4	5,344	6.7
2006 (provisional)	80,324	4,473	5.6	5,244	6.5

England

Maintained primary

	Number on roll [2]	Number of pupils taking free school meals [3]	Percentage of pupils taking free school meals	Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
1993	4,165,310	768,780	18.5	916,070	22.0
1994	4,241,670	810,650	19.1	949,790	22.4
1995	4,312,070	810,750	18.8	956,500	22.2
1996	4,389,310	823,530	18.8	974,280	22.2
1997	4,428,620	771,780	17.4	938,540	21.2
1998	4,460,130	727,840	16.3	886,070	19.9
1999	4,460,170	686,840	15.4	848,170	19.0
2000	4,435,340	668,180	15.1	816,990	18.4
2001	4,406,190	628,510	14.3	779,310	17.7
2002	4,363,270	613,560	14.1	750,590	17.2
2003	4,309,780	601,900	14.0	727,630	16.9
2004	4,254,210	605,840	14.2	737,220	17.3
2005	4,205,670	565,830	13.5	713,680	17.0
2006 (provisional)	4,151,970	553,560	13.3	667,180	16.1

Maintained secondary

	Number on roll [2]	Number of pupils taking free school meals [3]	Percentage of pupils taking free school meals	Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
1993	2,960,830	338,190	11.4	472,350	16.0
1994	2,929,350	370,160	12.6	517,110	17.7
1995	2,988,950	387,550	13.0	539,440	18.0
1996	3,006,940	399,620	13.3	550,900	18.3
1997	3,036,990	381,240	12.6	552,900	18.2
1998	3,069,030	367,800	12.0	537,070	17.5
1999	3,118,280	367,800	11.8	527,340	16.9
2000	3,178,000	368,300	11.6	523,630	16.5
2001	3,226,970	353,470	11.0	509,680	15.8
2002	3,260,930	354,260	10.9	486,350	14.9
2003	3,308,490	349,780	10.6	478,920	14.5
2004	3,326,800	351,380	10.6	477,290	14.3

		Maintained secondary			
	Number on roll [2]	Number of pupils taking free school meals [3]	Percentage of pupils taking free school meals	Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
2005	3,317,590	335,140	10.1	465,520	14.0
2006 (provisional)	3,310,030	328,640	9.9	448,610	13.6

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Prior to 2003 includes dually registered pupils and excludes boarding pupils; from 2003 onwards includes dually registered pupils and boarding pupils.
[3] Based upon school level numbers of pupils who had a free school meal on the census day in January.
n/a = not available—Southend figures included within Essex local authority prior to 1999. National pupil numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10
Source:
Annual Schools Census

WORK AND PENSIONS

Departmental Staff

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many whole-time equivalent staff there were in each *(a)* (i) customer-facing and (ii) benefit-processing district and *(b)* call centre (A) before customer management service (CMS) was implemented and (B) after full or partial CMS implementation. [69577]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking how many whole time equivalent staff there were in each (a) (i) customer facing and (ii) benefit processing district and (b) call centre (A) before Customer Management Service (CMS) and (B) after full or partial CMS implementation. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Our staffing information is not held in a format that allows any specific distinction between customer facing and benefit processing functions, as the majority of our benefit delivery staff have regular contact with customers.

I attach a table which provides a breakdown of the number of Full Time Equivalent staff for the period ending 30 September 2003, immediately prior to the commencement of implementation of CMS in October 2003, and in March 2006. It differentiates between Jobcentres (including Jobcentre Plus offices), Social Security Offices and Contact Centres. The data includes some Districts for which Jobcentre Plus implementation is not yet complete.

A number of factors have contributed to the changes in staffing volumes over the period, including progress towards the Government's efficiency challenge. The implementation of Jobcentre Plus introduces significant process changes, such as the introduction of work-focussed interventions for all new claims, which attracts additional resource in Jobcentres, but also some transfer of new claims work to Contact Centres. Comparisons of staffing numbers pre and post CMS implementation cannot therefore be directly attributable only to the introduction of the new information technology.

I hope this is helpful.

District	*Total FTEs at:*	*Jobcentre*	*Social security office*	*Contact centre*
East Midlands				
Derbyshire	March 2006	698.26	—	406.29
	September 2003	918.94	—	0
Leicestershire	March 2006	530.96	0	—
	September 2003	655.45	1	—
Lincolnshire and Rutland	March 2006	121.4	289.29	188.78
	September 2003	266	212.96	0
Northamptonshire	March 2006	379.24	0	—
	September 2003	399.72	36.58	—
Nottinghamshire	March 2006	350.88	541.68	—
	September 2003	477.9	371.24	—
East of England				
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	March 2006	600.73	251.97	—
	September 2003	660.78	280.85	—
Cambridgeshire	March 2006	185.9	194.76	—
	September 2003	184.05	273.07	—
Essex	March 2006	1013.33	27.21	13.04
	September 2003	1191.22	73.21	0
Norfolk	March 2006	603.77	39.49	—
	September 2003	389.57	248.87	—
Suffolk	March 2006	485.13	—	215

District	Total FTEs at:	Jobcentre	Social security office	Contact centre
	September 2003	575.07	—	38.7
London				
Brent, Harrow and Hillingdon	March 2006	452.49	0	62.97
	September 2003	672.54	6.4	0
Central London	March 2006	1323.02	19.54	—
	September 2003	1481.64	197.8	—
City and East London	March 2006	628.81	14.54	—
	September 2003	910.07	368.85	—
Lambeth, Southwark and Wandsworth	March 2006	618.37	99.95	—
	September 2003	1190.32	60.82	—
North East London	March 2006	477.52	—	—
	September 2003	890.37	—	—
North London	March 2006	397.69	233.96	—
	September 2003	371.12	504.76	—
South East London	March 2006	378.07	166.32	—
	September 2003	392.19	318.43	—
South London	March 2006	377.04	221.98	—
	September 2003	435.45	386.67	—
West London	March 2006	508.67	0	—
	September 2003	538.15	133.75	—
North East				
City of Sunderland	March 2006	186.75	258.06	—
	September 2003	161.41	342.98	—
Durham	March 2006	231.6	166.61	—
	September 2003	265.82	277.71	—
Gateshead and South Tyneside	March 2006	417.49	—	—
	September 2003	579.34	—	—
Northumbria	March 2006	472.09	283.06	210.01
	September 2003	618.9	305.87	12.06
Tees Valley	March 2006	724.2	109.86	169.78
	September 2003	897	135.76	0
North West				
Cheshire and Warrington	March 2006	448.35	76.02	—
	September 2003	431.45	172.01	—
Cumbria	March 2006	422.72	101.28	—
	September 2003	290.44	249.06	—
East Lancashire	March 2006	295.09	212.27	145.04
	September 2003	476.42	182.04	0
Greater Manchester Central	March 2006	1106.53	150.44	—
	September 2003	1131.44	295.79	—
Greater Manchester East	March 2006	354.92	461.68	—
	September 2003	328.02	638.02	—
Greater Manchester West	March 2006	323.98	375.96	—
	September 2003	274.99	562.78	—
Greater Mersey	March 2006	929.44	—	—
	September 2003	1121.16	—	—
Lancashire West	March 2006	615.55	166.23	195.38
	September 2003	637.83	265.97	0
Liverpool and Wirral	March 2006	1132.57	1	417.81
	September 2003	1267.58	82.57	0

District	Total FTEs at	Jobcentre	Social security office	Contact centre
Scotland				
Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway and Inverclyde	March 2006	505.54	311.79	—
	September 2003	517.63	435.84	—
Edinburgh and Lothian and Borders	March 2006	538.2	154.99	—
	September 2003	618.66	237.31	—
Forth Valley and Fife	March 2006	301.64	231.76	—
	September 2003	309.94	412.96	—
Glasgow	March 2006	887.01	209.35	0
	September 2003	1006.18	315.31	0
Grampian and Tayside	March 2006	646.52	22.81	245.98
	September 2003	773.78	55.5	1
Highland, Islands and Clyde Coast	March 2006	620.15	196.29	—
	September 2003	783.07	247.76	—
Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire	March 2006	291.78	466.75	—
	September 2003	438.01	433.6	—
Highlands, Islands and Clyde Coast	March 2006	—	—	105.73
	September 2003	—	—	0
South East				
Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire	March 2006	513.51	360.63	—
	September 2003	740.82	442.09	—
Hampshire	March 2006	988.41	70.67	—
	September 2003	1088.65	116.15	—
Kent	March 2006	478.18	739.99	121.87
	September 2003	543.17	920.17	0
Surrey and Sussex	March 2006	1077.11	40.77	—
	September 2003	1231.2	125.06	—
Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire	March 2006	—	—	24.14
	September 2003	—	—	0
South West				
Devon and Cornwall	March 2006	1192.62	0	182.39
	September 2003	1169.37	215.84	0
Dorset and Somerset	March 2006	604.04	20.08	295.14
	September 2003	609.98	170.72	2
Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Swindon	March 2006	224.31	330.85	—
	September 2003	274.31	363.06	—
West of England	March 2006	215.04	464.43	—
	September 2003	280.2	448.78	—
Wales				
Bridgend, Rhondda, Cynon and Taf	March 2006	321.61	0	288.21
	September 2003	478.13	20.93	30.81
Cardiff and Vale	March 2006	305.2	72.57	—
	September 2003	295.81	144.69	—
Eastern Valleys	March 2006	131.35	304.53	—
	September 2003	143.5	327.46	—
North West Wales and Powys	March 2006	209.18	7.02	134.2
	September 2003	313.98	3.82	0
South East Wales	March 2006	328.5	—	6.68
	September 2003	338.59	—	22.08
Swansea Bay	March 2006	189.4	130.29	—
	September 2003	180.09	287.01	—
West Wales	March 2006	192.77	154.03	195.05
	September 2003	140.38	252.14	98.81
Wrexham and North Wales Coast	March 2006	155.74	340.02	—

District	Total FTEs at:	Jobcentre	Social security office	Contact centre
	September 2003	148.58	279.02	—
West Midlands				
Birmingham and Solihull	March 2006	976.95	385.85	—
	September 2003	960.68	627.09	—
Black Country	March 2006	751.87	582.35	—
	September 2003	589.64	810.38	—
Coventry and Warwickshire	March 2006	302.85	125.66	165.2
	September 2003	454.02	239.22	0
Staffordshire	March 2006	361.95	465.69	—
	September 2003	401.71	462.56	—
The Marches	March 2006	475.52	206.55	179.91
	September 2003	586.7	287.95	0
Yorkshire and The Humber				
Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham	March 2006	321.68	356.05	—
	September 2003	362.65	548.69	—
Bradford	March 2006	145.55	339.39	—
	September 2003	273.16	296.94	—
Calderdale and Kirklees	March 2006	504.31	—	—
	September 2003	638.73	—	—
East Yorkshire and The Humber	March 2006	439.63	402.51	—
	September 2003	544.57	505.16	—
Leeds	March 2006	231.11	351.58	—
	September 2003	392.61	428.43	—
North Yorkshire	March 2006	295.58	1	—
	September 2003	349.55	76.24	—
Sheffield	March 2006	327.38	253.12	—
	September 2003	286.04	362.25	—
Wakefield	March 2006	191.11	122.43	—
	September 2003	236.21	164.23	—
Yorkshire and the Humber				
Calderdale and Kirklees	March 2006	—	—	240.89
	September 2003	—	—	118.96
East Yorkshire and The Humber	March 2006	—	—	203.35
	September 2003	—	—	0
Sheffield	March 2006	—	—	130.25
	September 2003	—	—	0

Overnight Stays

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for Ministers of State in his Department on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [68997]

Mrs. McGuire: The information requested could be supplied only at disproportionate cost. Under the terms of the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, when travelling on official business Ministers are expected to make efficient and cost effective travel arrangements.

Pension Credit

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioner households were *(a)* estimated to be eligible for and *(b)* recipients of pension credit in (i) Aberdeen city and (ii) Aberdeenshire council areas in each financial year since 2001. [71926]

James Purnell: Estimates of eligibility are not available below the level of Great Britain. Information that is available is in the following table.

Pension credit recipients in the local authorities of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, by quarter since November 2003

Quarter	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire
November 2003	7,200	6,680
February 2004	7,790	7,460
May 2004	8,490	8,250
August 2004	8,770	8,700
November 2004	8,830	8,800
February 2005	8,840	8,860
May 2005	8,870	9,010

Pension credit recipients in the local authorities of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, by quarter since November 2003

Quarter	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire
August 2005	8,870	9,060
November 2005	8,860	9,100

Notes:
1. Caseloads are rounded to the nearest 10.
2. Local Authorities are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant postcode directory.
3. Pension Credit replaced Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) on 6 October 2003.
4. Recipients are those people who claim Pension Credit either on behalf of themselves only or on behalf of a household. This number is equal to the number of households in receipt of Pension Credit.
Source:
Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioner households have been *(a)* estimated to be eligible for and *(b)* recipients of pension credit in Gordon constituency for each financial year since 2001. [71927]

James Purnell: Estimates of eligibility are not available below the level of Great Britain. Information that is available is in the following table.

Pension credit recipients in the parliamentary constituency of Gordon, by quarter since November 2003

Quarter	Recipients
November 2003	2,120
February 2004	2,390
May 2004	2,650
August 2004	2,830
November 2004	2,870
February 2005	2,890
May 2005	2,820
August 2005	2,820
November 2005	2,820

Notes:
1. Caseloads are rounded to the nearest 10.
2. Local Authorities are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant postcode directory.
3. Pension Credit replaced Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) on 6 October 2003.
4. Recipients are those people who claim Pension Credit either on behalf of themselves only or on behalf of a household. This number is equal to the number of households in receipt of Pension Credit.
Source:
Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study

Power Companies (Security)

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what guidance his Department provides to power companies regarding appropriate security measures around *(a)* high-voltage pylons and *(b)* sub-stations. [71647]

Malcolm Wicks: I have been asked to reply.

The Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002 contain requirements to protect the public from danger associated with electrical plant, including high-voltage pylons and substations. Guidance on these regulations is available on DTI's website (www.dti.gov.uk/files/file26709.pdf).

Returning to Work

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the Answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 437W, on returning to work, when he expects to make an assessment of the total number of annual job entries that would result from a nationally rolled out service. [67890]

Mrs. McGuire: We are still working on plans for the national roll-out of Pathways to Work and will make an announcement in due course. We therefore cannot make an accurate assessment of future annual job entries until plans have been finalised.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

BBC Broadcasts

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what she estimates the total cost of digital switchover will be to the *(a)* Government and *(b)* BBC; [71356]

(2) how much money the *(a)* Government and *(b)* BBC plan to spend on digital switchover assistance schemes to aid the elderly and the vulnerable. [71358]

Tessa Jowell: Other than the costs of updating television equipment within the Government sector, the only costs will be those incurred for research, communications and other programme support costs for the Digital Switchover Programme.

The costs of digital switchover to the BBC arise from:

the replacement of the existing analogue and digital terrestrial network with a new terrestrial network; Digital UK's communications campaign; the BBC's share of Digital UK's other operating costs; the assistance scheme for people aged 75 or over or with a significant disability.

The BBC's digital switchover costs are being assessed as part of work to determine the licence fee settlement for the new Charter period. This work will draw upon a variety of sources, including the BBC's own figures and the financial analysis carried out by PKF, and set out in their independent report published on 26 April, and outputs from the Bolton Digital television trial, which considered the needs of those who would be entitled to help from the assistance scheme. We will set out details of the BBC's switchover costs, including the costs of the assistance scheme later this year in association with the BBC

BBC Jam

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received on BBC jam's compliance with its approval conditions; and if she will make a statement. [71573]

Mr. Woodward: We are aware of comments regarding BBC jam in the recent report of the Content Advisory Board (CAB) and of concerns raised by industry representatives. It is a matter for the BBC to ensure that the digital curriculum service fully complies with the conditions of its approval.

Channel 4

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects Ofcom to commence its financial review of Channel 4; and if she will make a statement. [71879]

Mr. Woodward: The timing of reviews by the Office of Communications (Ofcom) is a matter for Ofcom itself, within the framework of its statutory duties and powers. My officials have therefore asked the Chief Executive of Ofcom to respond directly to the hon. Member and to send me a copy of his response. Copies of the Chief Executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Fashion Industry

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much *(a)* lottery funding and *(b)* Exchequer funding for which her Department is responsible was spent in connection with sponsorship of the designer fashion industry in 2005-06; and if she will make a statement. [71620]

Mr. Woodward: The fashion industry is very important to the UK economy not only because of the contribution it makes to the economy and the employment it generates, but also because of the prestige our world-renowned designers generate for the UK.

My Department is committed to helping to improve the productivity of the UK fashion industry, and as part of the Creative Economy Programme, which aims to improve the growth and productivity of the UK's creative industries, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State chaired a summit with fashion leaders to ascertain how Government can help the sector.

No lottery funding was spent in 2005-06 in connection with sponsoring the designer fashion industry. Sponsorship of the designer fashion industry is outside the scope of the Lottery Good Causes:

Arts
Heritage
Sport
Charitable Expenditure
Health
Education and Environment
the Olympics.

The Scottish Arts Council has used lottery money to assist people working in the fashion industry but does not use its funds for sponsorship. The Scottish Arts Council made three relevant Professional Development awards in 2005-06 totalling £2,705.

In addition, the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) made one grant of £35,000 to a designer fashion project in 2005. NESTA does not receive an income stream from lottery proceeds, although its core revenue comes from investment income on a £250 million endowment originally received from the National Lottery.

Staff costs associated with my Department's day-to-day sponsorship of the designer fashion industry since taking on responsibility for the sector in 2005 were found from within existing resources and no additional staff have been employed to sponsor the sector.

Football

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has held with *(a)* the Football League, *(b)* publicans and *(c)* police authorities on the impact on Football League attendances of the screening of Premiership football on a Saturday afternoon via foreign satellite systems. [71611]

Mr. Caborn: I have not held any discussions with the Football League, publicans or police authorities regarding the impact that the screening of Premiership football on a Saturday afternoon via foreign satellite systems has on Football League attendances.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with the Football Association Premier League on season ticket prices. [71613]

Mr. Caborn: I have not held any discussions with the FA Premier League on season ticket prices.

The Government have no role in the commercial and sporting operation of professional football. The issue of season tickets prices is a matter between individual clubs and the relevant football authorities.

Hospitality (Environmental Impact)

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what assessment her Department has made of the impact on the environment of green accommodation providers within the hospitality sector; and if she will make a statement; [71625]

(2) what assessment her Department has made of the environmental impact of the hospitality sector; and if she will make a statement. [71626]

Mr. Woodward: The Department has made no such assessments, either in relation to the hospitality sector as a whole or to green accommodation providers, and there are currently no plans for it to do so.

However, I recognise that all tourism businesses have a major role to play in helping protect and enhance the environment, in line with the Government's wider goals of sustainable development. I therefore welcome the participation of hospitality businesses in schemes such as Hospitable Climates (a programme that has saved over 130,000 tonnes of carbon through reducing CO_2 emissions since 2000) and the David Bellamy Conservation Award (held by over 500 holiday parks).

English Tourism Council research during 2003-04 showed that 84 per cent. of customers surveyed would choose an attraction or accommodation which was a member of a "green" accreditation scheme over one that was not—and that 68 per cent. would pay more for doing so. Currently over 10 schemes exist at national and local level, including the David Bellamy Award and the Green Tourism Business Scheme (over 500 businesses across England and Scotland). We are working with tourism stakeholders in England to develop a national framework for such schemes.

Olympic Games

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps the Government are taking to ensure a lasting legacy of increased sporting participation following the 2012 Olympic Games. [71612]

Mr. Caborn: We are committed to driving up grass-roots participation in sport across the whole of the UK. The Olympic Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the social, economic and sporting benefits from 2012 are maximised. The Board have agreed that the Greater London Authority, the British Olympic Association and Government will work together to ensure that there is lasting legacy of increased sporting participation in London, and the wider UK, as a result of the 2012 Games.

We are keen to use the inspiration of the Olympics and Paralympics to boost the numbers of people, particularly young people, engaged in sport. The UK School Games, which we envisage will be held each year in the run up to 2012, will not only be an opportunity for talented young people to engage in a major sporting event, but will also provide inspiration and a lasting legacy of competitive school sport for countless others.

Russian Orchestras

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the cost of visas and work permits for visiting orchestras from Russia; and if she will make a statement. [72173]

Mr. Lammy: Matters relating to the cost of work permits and visas are the responsibility of the Home Office and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Shostakovich Centenary

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what support her Department is giving to Shostakovich Centenary events. [72175]

Mr. Lammy: The Government support the arts through Arts Council England. A number of organisations in receipt of regular funding from the Arts Council are holding concerts and other events to mark the centenary of Shostakovich's birth.

The Public (West Bromwich)

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when the Arts Council was informed of the legal advice given to the West Bromwich arts organisation The Public. [71729]

Mr. Lammy: Arts Council England was informed by the Board of The Public on 3 March 2006, that, acting on legal advice, they were to register their insolvency.

Tourism

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will place in the Library her Department's consultation document on the Tourism 2012 Charter strategy; and if she will make a statement. [71621]

Mr. Woodward: My Department is finalising the Tourism 2012 Strategy consultation document. It will be issued shortly, at which time I shall arrange for copies to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate her Department has made of the value of inbound tourism from China in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [71623]

Mr. Woodward: Spend by inbound travellers from China increased by 240 per cent. between 1997 and 2005. Annual figures from the International Passenger Survey (for mainland China only—excluding Taiwan and Hong Kong) are given in the following table:

	Spend (£ million)
1997	32
1998	51
1999	40
2000	82
2001	83
2002	80
2003	127
2004	131
2005	109

Note:
2005 data are provisional

The UN World Tourism Organisation has predicted that the number of outbound visits from China will grow by 12.3 per cent. a year from 1995 to reach 100 million in 2020, and that China will become the fourth largest source of international travellers, behind Germany, Japan and the United States.

This is why the Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Chinese Government in January 2005, which conferred Approved Destination Status (ADS) on the UK. ADS came into operation in July 2005, meaning that for the first time the UK could be marketed as a holiday destination in China. Prior to ADS it was possible for Chinese nationals to travel to the UK for business or study purposes only.

VisitBritain has launched a major marketing initiative—Britain Welcomes China—to take advantage of ADS. China is now the best resourced of VisitBritain's emerging markets. VisitBritain has estimated that the Chinese market could be worth £200 million a year by 2010 and £500 million a year by 2020.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total value of the tourism industry to the economy was in each year since 1980; and if she will make a statement. [71628]

Mr. Woodward: Estimates of the value of the tourism industry to the economy for the years 1996 to 2003 are given as follows. 2003 is the latest year for which data have been estimated, and figures prior to 1996 are not available on a comparable basis.

	£ billion	*Percentage*
1996	58.7	[1]4.6
1997	65.7	[1]4.9
1998	70.0	[1]4.9
1999	73.3	[1]4.9
2000	74.9	[2]3.8
2001	72.9	[2]3.6
2002	73.7	[2]3.5
2003	74.2	[2]3.4

[1] Of Gross Domestic Product
[2] Of Gross Value Added

These figures include expenditure in respect of inbound tourists while in the UK, domestic trips with an overnight stay, domestic leisure day visits, fares paid to UK carriers, and imputed rents for second home ownership.

From 2000, the industry's contribution to the wider economy is measured in terms of Gross Value Added, rather than Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This is in line with wider statistical norms across the Government. Also in that year, the estimates used are based on Tourism Satellite Accounting, which gives a more accurate statement of the size of the sector.

HEALTH

Abortions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will update the table of statistics printed in the special report and report of the Select Committee on the Infant Life (Preservation) Bill, H.L. Paper 153 of 1986-87 and H.L. Paper 50 of 1987-88, on *(a)* the number of notifications of abortions carried out under the Abortion Act 1967, gestation by completed weeks by statutory grounds and category of premises, residents and non-residents, England and Wales, in the special report on pages 22 to 26 and the report on pages 72 to 73, and *(b)* the number of notifications of abortions carried out under the Abortion Act 1967, gestation by completed weeks by statutory grounds and mother's age, England and Wales as in the special report on pages 28 to 37 and in the report on pages 74 to 77, to cover each year since 1990. [70371]

Caroline Flint: This information can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

The most relevant information available is published within the annual abortion statistics for England and Wales which are available in the Library. The data can also be found on the Department's website:

2002-04 data:

www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Statistics/StatisticalWorkAreas/StatisticalPublicHealth/fs/en

1991-2001 data:

www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp%3Fvlnk%3D68%26Pos%3D2%26ColRank%3D2%26Rank%3D640

Accident and Emergency Departments

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate she has made of the percentage of people who attended Accident and Emergency units who needed emergency treatment in the last five years; [43017]

(2) what estimate she has made of the percentage of people who attended Accident and Emergency units who needed to be seen within four hours in the last five years. [43018]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data on the level of clinical need of patients presenting at accident and emergency are not collected centrally. Four hours is an access standard. Clinicians use well established triage systems to prioritise patients' clinical needs.

Acute Services

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions she has had on the delivery of acute services in Surrey. [69975]

Caroline Flint: There have been no recent discussions on the delivery of acute services in Surrey.

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent *(a)* representations she has received and *(b)* discussions she has had on the delivery of acute services in south-east London. [70807]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: No representations have been received and no discussions have been held on the delivery of acute services in south-east London.

Advertising

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she plans to publish an impact assessment on the health effects of Ofcom's proposed restrictions on the volume and scheduling of the broadcast advertising code. [67951]

Caroline Flint: A health impact analysis was included in the regulatory impact assessment published by Ofcom alongside the consultation looking at options for new restrictions for television advertising of food and drink products to children on 28 March 2006. As the regulator, it is Ofcom's responsibility to produce an impact assessment.

Audiology Services

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that *(a)* existing levels of funding for hearing aid services are maintained and *(b)* waiting times and waiting numbers are reduced following the exclusion of direct audiology referrals from the 18-week waiting time target. [71477]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department expects to announce final allocations of funding for the national health service, including audiology services, in the near future.

From April 2005, the 164 NHS audiology departments have been able routinely to assess for and fit digital hearing aids. It is for primary care trusts to ensure their local population benefits from the modernised services.

For audiology and adult hearing services, a separate action plan is being developed on improving access to services. This reflects the direction set out in the White Paper "Our health, our care, our say" (January 2006) to move services closer to the patient.

Bone Marrow Register

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many blood donors have been added to the British bone marrow register in each of the last three years; [71847]

(2) what the annual expenditure of her Department has been on the British bone marrow register in each of the last three years; [71848]

(3) what action she is taking to raise awareness of bone marrow donation among ethnic groups. [71849]

Caroline Flint: NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) is responsible for managing blood supplies in England and north Wales and for managing the British Bone Marrow Register (BBMR). It does this through its operating division—the National Blood Service (NBS). The NBS recruits blood donors from the general public and potential bone marrow donors from the active blood donor populations.

Over the last three years, the NBS has added over 120,000 people to the BBMR:

	People added to the BBMR
2003-04	42,644
2004-05	42,375
2005-06	37,248

The Department has provided NBS with £3.3 million for each of the past three years to fund the addition of 120,000 potential donors to the BBMR. The NBS's strategy over the coming year is to maintain the BBMR at its current size and focus their recruitment activity towards under-represented ethnic groups.

In 2004, the NBS commissioned the Central Office of Information (COI) to lead on a long-term strategy to attract more people from ethnic communities to give blood and join the BBMR. A campaign called 'OneBlood' is addressing existing barriers by raising awareness of the importance and relevance of blood donation; encouraging individual and community ownership of the issue; tackling religious objections and myths; encouraging blood donation.

The NBS has also developed an advertising campaign 'Are you my Type' which features black and minority ethnic celebrities.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what value for money assessment has been made of her Department's funding of the British bone marrow register; [71850]

(2) what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of different methods of encouraging bone marrow donation. [71851]

Caroline Flint: The Department has not undertaken a formal assessment of the effectiveness of the British Bone Marrow Register (BBMR). However, the National Blood Service (NBS) has successfully recruited over 120,000 potential bone marrow donors to the registry in the last three years.

The number of procedures undertaken through the BBMR in the last three years are 137 bone marrow transplants and 175 peripheral blood transplants for both United Kingdom and international patients.

We are committed to continued improvements to the BBMR so that patients requiring bone marrow are increasingly likely to find a match. The NBS's strategy over the coming year is to maintain the BBMR at its current size and focus their recruitment activity towards under represented ethnic groups.

Breast Screening

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many deliveries at the Eastbourne District General hospital maternity unit have involved significant complications in each of the last 10 years. [68398]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Breastfeeding

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much *(a)* was spent on supporting breastfeeding during the 2005-06 financial year and *(b)* has been allocated to support breastfeeding in the 2006-07 financial year; what measures she has taken to promote breastfeeding; and if she will make a statement. [70259]

Caroline Flint: In 2005-06, the Department spent £743,000 on promoting and supporting breastfeeding and infant nutrition.

In addition, a further £309,000 has been spent on materials for the new Healthy Start initiative, which supports breastfeeding. Funding for 2006-07 is due to be confirmed shortly.

Primary care trusts are responsible at a local level for breastfeeding services and support.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* information and *(b)* support on breastfeeding is routinely made available to parents; and what assessment she has made of whether provision is consistent across the country. [67653]

Caroline Flint: The Department undertakes work at a national level to support breastfeeding including providing a range of breastfeeding publications, guidance and leaflets which are made available through the national health service to health professionals and parents.

The Government have adopted the World Health Organization recommendations to encourage exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, with continued breastfeeding alongside the introduction of complementary feeding.

Breastfeeding services and support for breastfeeding at a local level is the responsibility of NHS primary care trusts. The Government have a commitment in the NHS Plan to increase support for breastfeeding as part of its strategy to reduce health inequalities and has set a target to increase breastfeeding initiation rates by 2per cent. per year.

Child Drug Addicts

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of children taking *(a)* heroin and *(b)* cocaine. [69346]

Caroline Flint: Figures from the schools survey, 'Drug use, Smoking and Drinking among Young People in England in 2005: Headline Figures'[1] show that 1 per cent. of secondary school children aged 11 to 15 had used heroin in the last year and 2 per cent. had used cocaine in the last year.

These headline figures do not contain estimates of numbers and nor do any of the full schools survey reports. There would be difficulties in taking account of the survey design and sampling, which mean we are unable to supply estimates of actual numbers.

The Home Office's yearly British crime survey (BCS) has published figures for 2004-05 estimating the numbers of young people[2], who have taken drugs in their lifetime, in the last year and in the previous month. These figures are shown in table one.

[1] 2006, The Information Centre for health and social care, public health statistics

[2] Young people are defined as those aged 16 to 24 living in England and Wales because the BCS drugs module is only asked to those aged 16 to 59 and the young people's target of the drug strategy focuses on those aged under 25.

Table 1[1]

Drug	*Used ever*	*Used last year*	*Used previous month*
Cocaine	531,000	298,000	127,000
Heroin	34,000	9,000	5,000

[1] Estimates are derived by multiplying the prevalence rate by the estimated population aged 16 to 24 in England and Wales. The figures are calculated using population estimates provided by the Government Actuarial Service.

Children's Health Services

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many health service staff have received specific training and support to promote the psychological well-being of children. [67644]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information regarding the number of health service staff receiving training and support to promote the psychological well-being of children is not held centrally by the Department.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff in primary care have received specific training in the assessment of *(a)* children, *(b)* mental health conditions and *(c)* child mental health conditions. [67646]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information regarding training for the assessment of children, mental health conditions and children's mental health conditions in primary care is not held centrally by the Department.

Doctors

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what consultations have been held with the Community Relations Council on the implications of the new immigration rules for Commonwealth doctors and their prospects for employment and training. [65032]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Community Relations Council was not consulted on the implications of the new immigration rules.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether EU doctors appointed under new work permit regulations will have to take *(a)* the International English Language Testing System examinations and *(b)* an equivalent test of proficiency in English. [64654]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Doctors who are nationals of the European Economic Area are not required to pass a language proficiency exam for the purposes of registering with the General Medical Council.

However, national health service employers are required to ensure that those whom recruit can safely communicate with patients.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessments she has made of the likely effect of the new regulations on work permits for non-EU doctors on the *(a)* numbers and *(b)* quality of doctors recruited from the Commonwealth. [64668]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The success of our investment in workforce and training has led to increasing competition for posts. As a result, there will be correspondingly fewer opportunities for doctors from outside the European Economic Area (EEA), who will, however, still be able to apply to posts which have not been filled by a suitable EEA candidate.

It is the responsibility of the General Medical Council to ensure that all doctors registered in the United Kingdom are fit to practise.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how long doctors of overseas origin who are UK graduates will be allowed to complete their foundation training before they are sent home. [65026]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Doctors from outside the European Economic Area who have graduated in the United Kingdom will have up to three years to complete their foundation training. Once the foundation course has been completed doctors will need to meet the normal requirements of the immigration rules.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to ensure that overseas junior doctors working in the UK are allowed to complete their training without a permit. [66841]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have put in place transitional arrangements to ensure that doctors currently in training posts are able to complete their training.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will give overseas doctors living in the UK who are not employed a grace period of up to two years in which to find a training post. [66843]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has been working with the Home Office to put in place transitional arrangements. Those doctors and dentists, who were offered a relevant training post before the changes were announced will be given the opportunity to complete their training.

There is no need for any additional arrangement. It was already the case before this recent change that doctors and dentists could not be granted an extension of stay as a postgraduate doctor or dentist without having a recognised training post arranged. Those without posts would not have been eligible to extend their stay.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact of the new rules restricting the employment of non-European economic area doctors on such doctors working in England; and if she will make a statement. [67273]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has been working with the Home Office to put in place transitional arrangements. Those doctors and dentists who were offered a relevant training post before the changes were announced will be given the opportunity to complete their training.

Overseas doctors and dentists will still be able to come and train in the United Kingdom. They will now be considered as being in employment for immigration purposes and will need to meet the requirements of an employment category of the immigration rules.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many doctors who are non-European Economic Area citizens who work in the NHS received their medical training in the United Kingdom; how many received their training in another part of the European Economic Area; and if she will make a statement. [67274]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not collected centrally relating to the country of origin of national health service staff.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps NHS trusts will have to take to ensure that no EU or EEA applicants are available for doctors posts, with particular reference to the advertisement of posts; [65024]

(2) what demonstration of a lack of suitable EU or EEA nationals for vacant medical posts NHS trusts will have to make before they can consider international medical graduates from other countries; and whether work permits will be issued to non-EU and non-EEA nationals *(a)* before application, *(b)* on application and *(c)* on appointment. [65039]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Before they employ a person who requires a work permit to work in the United Kingdom, national health service trusts will need to satisfy the resident labour market test. To demonstrate they have done this, they should provide:

The vacancy as it appeared on a website, if advertised on NHS jobs or similar portal, or a

copy of the advertisement as it appeared in a recognised journal;

Confirmation of where the post was advertised;

Proof that the advertisement was placed within six months of the work permit application being made;

Information on how many people applied for the post;

Information on how many people were shortlisted for the post; and

An explanation, for each resident worker who applied, why they have not been employed.

Work Permits (UK) expects vacancies to be placed in the most appropriate medium for reaching suitably qualified resident workers.

Employers should apply for a work permit once the appointment has been made.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the new recruitment process for overseas doctors will be put in place; and when examinations will be held overseas as part of its arrangements. [65025]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The new recruitment process for junior doctors will be in place by October 2006 for posts starting in August 2007.

The professional and linguistic assessment board is the responsibility of the General Medical Council and it is their responsibility to determine when and where the exam will take place.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what representations she has received from the British Medical Association (BMA) on the new regulations on work permits for trainee doctors; and how many of the BMA's proposals she accepted. [64710]

(2) what representations she has received from the BMA on the new regulations on work permits for trainee doctors. [65057]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have received no representations. Departmental officials have met with the British Medical Association's junior doctors committee and the international committee to clarify the arrangements.

Dignity Nurses

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what measurable outcomes a dignity nurse will deliver in each care setting where a nurse is so designated; [67552]

(2) what assessment she has made of how the *(a)* content of and *(b)* curriculum for nurse training fits her plans for dignity nurses; [67553]

(3) what process will be used to appoint dignity nurses; and what estimate she has made of the number of dignity nurses who will be in post by the end of *(a)* 2006-07 and *(b)* 2007-08; [67554]

(4) how the work of designated dignity nurses will be evaluated; [67555]

(5) what the *(a)* role and *(b)* remit will be of designated dignity nurses; and how she expects this to differ from the role of other nurses. [67556]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There is not a specific nursing role called a dignity nurse. All nurses are expected to protect patients' dignity and be trained to deliver high standards of care.

'A New Ambition for Old Age—Next Steps in Implementing the National Service Framework for Older People' was published in April 2006. This builds on the role of existing nurse leaders such as modern matrons, ward sisters and directors of nursing and strengthens their responsibility for ensuring that older people in their area of care are treated with respect for their dignity. Organisations need to identify specific nurses from their existing clinical leaders and these nurse leaders are to be champions for maintaining patient dignity, providing leadership and support to others and embedding dignity considerations in all working practices.

Nurse leaders can use the national benchmarking system to evaluate their effectiveness. 'Essence of Care' includes a measure for assessing the preservation of dignity. Standards of care are also monitored through the Healthcare Commission and Commission for Social Care Inspection and patient feedback surveys.

Drug Rehabilitation

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many publicly funded residential drug rehabilitation places there were in England and Wales in each of the last five years. [68946]

Caroline Flint: The Department does not hold annual records of publicly funded residential rehabilitation places for the last five years.

The National Treatment Agency for substance misuse launched a residential directory on 8 August 2003, and an online bed vacancy directory, BEDVACS, started on 23 April 2004. There is no record of any data prior to 1 February 2005. On 1 February 2005, there were 118 English residential rehabilitation units with a total of 2,498 beds. The most recent data from February 2006 show that the directory lists 119 English residential rehabilitation units with a total of 2,530 beds.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are on *(a)* methadone, *(b)* buprenorphine and *(c)* naltrexone in England in order to treat drug addiction. [71935]

Caroline Flint: The Department does not hold information centrally for the number of people in drug treatment who receive prescribed drugs methadone, buprenorphine and naltrexone.

Figures for 2005-06 taken from the National Treatment Agency's national drug treatment monitoring system (NDTMS) give data on the number of people receiving all opiate substitutes, including methadone, buprenorphine and naltrexone, as part of a drug treatment programme. However, we are unable to split data taken from NDTMS into separate opiate substitutes. The overall figures are shown in table.

2005-06

	Numbers treatment
Specialist prescribing (secondary care)	48,786
General practitioner prescribing	21,577
Total	70,363

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many individuals have *(a)* entered and *(b)* remained for over three months in drug rehabilitation treatment in (i) Birklands and (ii) Meden ward of Mansfield in each of the last five years. [71931]

Andy Burnham: Data are not held centrally. The table shows information relating to the Nottinghamshire drug action team. Data are not available prior to 2003-04.

Drug rehabilitation treatment, Nottinghamshire drug and alcohol action team

	Number of patients entering rehabilitation treatment	*Number of patients remaining in rehabilitation treatment for more than three months*
2003-04	1,678	480
2004-05	1,702	557

Source:
National Treatment Agency, national drug treatment monitoring system

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many methadone patients have been registered with the drugs and alcohol action team in *(a)* Meden and *(b)* Birklands ward in Mansfield in each of the last five years. [71932]

Andy Burnham: Methadone patients are not required to register with a drug and alcohol team. In 2005-06, the national drug treatment monitoring system had notification of 1,249 Nottinghamshire residents receiving 2,234 episodes of substitute prescribing. 892 of these episodes were through specialist prescribing services, and 1,342 were through general practice prescribing.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many needle exchange transactions have there been in *(a)* Meden and *(b)* Birklands ward of Mansfield in each of the last five years. [71934]

Andy Burnham: The information requested is not held centrally.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have been treated with methadone in each of the last five years; and how many of them were former prisoners. [69408]

Caroline Flint: Records taken from the National Treatment Agency's national drug treatment monitoring system give data on the number of people receiving all opiate substitutes, like buprenorphine and naltrexone, and not just methadone, as part of a drug treatment programme. These figures are available for the last three years only:

2003-04

	Number treated
Specialist prescribing (secondary care)	53,676
General practitioner (GP) prescribing	9,151
Total	62,827

2004-05

	Number treated
Specialist prescribing (secondary care)	48,818
GP prescribing	18,972
Total	67,790

2005-06

	Number treated
Specialist prescribing (secondary care)	48,786
GP prescribing	21,577
Total	70,363

The Department does not hold information on how many of these were former prisoners.

Eastbourne District General Hospital

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many overnight stays in the paediatric ward of the Eastbourne District General hospital there have been in each of the last 10 years. [68388]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not collected centrally.

External Consultants

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been allocated to external consultants for the recruitment exercise for chairs of strategic health authorities. [69135]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The recruitment of the chairs for the strategic health authorities was managed by the NHS Appointments Commission. I have asked the Commission's chair to answer my hon. Friend's question directly.

Food/Alcohol Advertising

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she last met Ofcom to discuss the rules on broadcast advertising, sponsorship and promotion of food and drink to young people; if she will publish the minutes of the meeting; and if she will make a statement. [67409]

Caroline Flint: Ofcom met the Food Standards Agency and myself on 22 March 2006 when they set out the options for restrictions on broadcast advertising that were subsequently published in a consultation document on 28 March. Ofcom were also represented at the last meeting of the food and drink advertising and promotion forum on 26 April 2006, which I attended in part.

Fourth World Conference on Women

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what response her Department made to the report of the Fourth World Conference on Women 1995. [65176]

Caroline Flint: The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 helped focus attention on gender equality in policy making and in particular on services to strengthen women's health.

The Department is committed to improving the health and well being of the general population, including the promotion of healthy lifestyles. The Department is currently taking forward a number of initiatives, including gender specific screening programmes. Some initiatives address particular aspects of women's health which take account of vulnerable and hard to reach populations. Examples include work related to the maternity standard of the national service framework for children, young people and maternity services. The standard contains a number of recommendations including ones to address improving maternal health and the needs of pregnant women experiencing domestic violence. Many of our initiatives help to promote empowerment of women by encouraging choice and partnership working with professionals over care, therefore fulfilling the commitment given in Beijing.

In March, the Department wrote to Baroness Prosser at the Women's National Commission in response to its annual violence against women audit. We provided information on a range of subjects from domestic abuse and female genital mutilation to the gender equality public sector duty, which all public bodies will be legally bound to uphold from April 2007.

Great Western Ambulance Service

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* administrative centres and *(b)* call centres the new Great Western Ambulance Service plans to have; and what guarantees have been made to existing staff on redeployment. [65972]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of administrative centres and control rooms for each ambulance trust is a local matter for the trust concerned.

The principles of the human resources (HR) framework, agreed in partnership with trade unions

nationally, apply to the recently merged Great Western Ambulance Service. The HR framework was produced to ensure that changes to configuration arising from "Taking Healthcare to the Patient: Transforming NHS Ambulance Services" are managed consistently and equitably across the country.

Any staff who do not secure jobs in the new structure and who may remain at risk of redundancy will have guaranteed employment until March 2007, and during the intervening period support will be provided to staff in obtaining suitable alternative employment within local national health service communities and partner organisations.

Midwives

Janet Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action she is taking to ensure more midwives are recruited in the north west region. [67826]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Individual national health service organisations are responsible for the recruitment of midwives. However, the Department is currently assessing the implications of the recently published White Paper 'Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services' and the commitment around offering choice within maternity services.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of midwives have a nursing qualification as well as a midwifery qualification. [71547]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally by the Department or the Information Centre for health and social care.

However, the Nursing and Midwifery Council holds figures on the number of midwives in the United Kingdom (UK) with more than one qualification.

According to their data, there are 22,306 midwives in the UK with more than one qualification.

Mobile Telephony

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent research she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the health effects of mobile telephony; and if she will make a statement. [69870]

Caroline Flint: The Stewart report in 2000 comprehensively reviewed the scientific literature and concluded that

"the balance of evidence to date suggests that exposures below international guidelines do not cause health effects to the general population"

(www.iegmp.org.uk). More recently, "Mobile Phones and Health 2004" reiterated the Stewart report's conclusions noting that

"there is a lack of hard information showing that the mobile phone systems in use are damaging to health."

The report [Documents of the National Radiological Protection Board, Volume 15, No. 5] is available on the Health Protection Agency's radiation protection division's (HPA-RPD) website at www.hpa.org.uk/radiation. Both these reports, additionally, recommended further research and a precautionary approach to the use of mobile phone technology pending the availability of more robust scientific research results.

The independently managed mobile telecommunications and health research (MTHR) programme was set up in 2001 in response to the Stewart report recommendations. It is currently supporting a number of studies into the possible health effects of mobile phone technology and these are described on the MTHR's website at www.mthr.org.uk.

All mobile phones and base stations in this country comply with international guidelines that are based on comprehensive reviews of the scientific literature. Measurements undertaken by both the HPA and by Ofcom (www.ofcom.org.uk) have consistently shown that exposures to radio signals from base stations are lower than the international guideline levels.

National Treatment Agency

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost has been of the National Treatment Agency since its inception. [69406]

Caroline Flint: The National Treatment Agency for substance misuse (NTA) has been funded by central Government since its inception in 2001-02. Total funding is shown in the following table.

Funding of the NTA, 2001-02 to 2005-06

	£ million
2001-02	3.4
2002-03	6
2003-04	7.76
2004-05	10.43
2005-06	12.10

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what programmes are being undertaken by the National Treatment Agency; and how many people are employed by the Agency. [69407]

Caroline Flint: The National Treatment Agency for substance misuse (NTA) business plan outlines work programmes planned by the NTA for the year ahead, within seven priority areas:

treatment capacity;

access;

retention;

treatment delivery;

criminal justice and the drug intervention programme; and

young people.

The business plan has not yet been finalised to reflect the possibility of programme changes when funding allocations for the year are finalised.

As at 1 April 2006, there were 130 full-time employees of the NTA.

NHS Business Arrangement Manual

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the *(a)* individuals and *(b)* companies consulted in writing on the forthcoming business arrangement manual for NHS managers. [68262]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The "Business Arrangement Manual for NHS managers" was published on 25 January 2006 as the document "The NHS in England: the operating framework for 2006/7".

As is common for publications of this type, the Department consulted informally with a broad selection of senior national health service managers. The Department also consulted in writing with Monitor in relation to issues concerning NHS foundation trusts. In addition, the Department consulted informally with individuals in other Government departments.

NHS Finances

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health by what date the *(a)* West Gloucestershire primary care trust, *(b)* Cotswold and Vale primary care trust, *(c)* Cheltenham and Tewkesbury primary care trust, *(d)* Gloucestershire Partnership NHS Trust, *(e)* Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and *(f)* Great Western Ambulance Trust are required to (i) achieve month by month financial balance and (ii) clear the accumulated deficit from prior years. [72152]

Caroline Flint: With respect to Gloucestershire Hospitals National Health Service Foundation Trust, this is a matter for the Chair and I have written to the Chair to inform him of the hon. Member's inquiry and copies will be placed in the Library.

With respect to the other organisations the hon. Member refers to, the strategic health authority (SHA) has the responsibility to secure financial balance across the area by the end of the financial year. The SHA is agreeing plans with local organisations to achieve month by month financial balance and clear the accumulated deficit from prior years.

NHS Hospitals

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 11 May 2006, to question 70030, on NHS hospitals, if she will list the NHS facilities in England which have inpatient beds. [72186]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is available on the Department's website at:

www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/data_requests/index.htm

NHS Pension Scheme

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the impact of agenda for change on the NHS Pension Scheme; [67949]

(2) whether the figures she has released on the under-estimate of the cost of the GP and consultants contract include the cost of the contract to the NHS Pension Scheme. [67950]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Government Actuary's department has valued the total liabilities of the NHS Pension Scheme as at 31 March 2005 to be £127.9 billion. They are in the process of preparing a detailed actuarial valuation of the scheme as at 31 March 2004 which will be published later this year, which will include analysis of the factors leading to any change in valuation.

NHS Staff

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Answer of 8 May 2006, to *Official Report*, column 62W, on NHS staff, what the estimated out-turn figures are for 2006. [70667]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not held centrally.

Nurses

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of student nurses who graduate in 2006 who will find jobs within the NHS. [67208]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We estimate up to 19,000 student nurses will complete their training in 2006. It is not possible to state exactly how many nursing students will complete their training in any given year because a number will delay completion, leave the course or take career breaks.

There are still jobs for newly qualified staff in the national health service but there is now a closer match between demand and supply, and consequently more competition. We will continue to need new staff to replace those who retire or take career breaks. Strategic health authorities and trusts are working proactively to find opportunities for graduates within their overall workforce plans.

Obesity

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the annual change in obesity levels in children under 11 years of age in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [67410]

Caroline Flint: The data requested are shown in the table:

Prevalence of obesity among among children aged 2-10 by sex, England 1997-2004

Percentage

				unweighted				*weighted*[1]	
	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2003*	*2004*
Boys	11.1	11.4	16.1	12.2	13.5	15.2	14.9	15.1	15.9
Girls	10.7	11.8	13	11.8	12.7	15.8	12.5	12.4	12.8
Bases									
Boys	2,007	1,336	633	570	1,035	2,364	876	878	5,368
Girls	2,082	1,216	628	523	1,094	2,290	897	858	4,901

[1] From 2003 data were weighted for non response and are not directly comparable with previous years. Unweighted 2003 data are also included to show the effect of weighting.

Source:
Health Survey for England 2004—updating of trend tables to include 2004 data

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on progress towards issuing guidance on *(a)* prevention, *(b)* identification, *(c)* management and *(d)* treatment of obesity. [67422]

Caroline Flint: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's (NICE) guideline on the prevention, identification, assessment and management of overweight and obesity in adults and children is currently out for consultation. The guideline will be published in November 2006. Meanwhile, in order to help primary care trusts to improve the provision of obesity services and advice to patients, the Department has published an obesity care pathway and weight loss guide on 4 May.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions she has had with the British Medical Association on the prevention of childhood obesity; and if she will make a statement. [68843]

Caroline Flint: On 1 February 2006, I met with the British Medical Association to discuss issues related to the prevention of childhood obesity.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines her Department has set for the *(a)* minimum and *(b)* maximum recommended daily calorie requirements for adolescents aged 13 to 18 years. [71010]

Caroline Flint: The Department has not set any minimum or maximum daily calorie requirements for adolescents aged 13 to 18 years. However, the committee on medical aspects of food policy published a report in 1994, "Dietary Reference Values for Food Energy and Nutrients for the United Kingdom", which gives estimated average energy requirements for children and adolescents based on their present lifestyles and activity levels.

The relevant estimated average requirements (EARs) for energy in adolescents is shown in the table:

EAR (kcal/d)

Age	*Males*	*Females*
11-14 years	2,220	1,845
15-18 years	2,755	2,110

Parkinson's Disease

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many specialist neurological nurses there have been for Parkinson's disease in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* region and *(b)* primary care trust area. [64765]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of specialist neurological nurses for Parkinson's disease is not collected centrally.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many people diagnosed with Parkinson's disease there were in *(a)* England and *(b)* Tamworth constituency in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement; [71251]

(2) what percentage of people in *(a)* England and *(b)* Tamworth constituency diagnosed with Parkinson's disease have access to a specialist nurse; and if she will make a statement. [71252]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Data on the number of people diagnosed with Parkinson's disease are not collected. However, the Parkinson's Disease Society estimated that around 10,000 people are diagnosed with the disease each year in the United Kingdom.

The percentage of those living with Parkinson's disease with access to a Parkinson's disease nurse specialist is not collected.

Sexual Health

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of patients who presented themselves at a genito-urinary medicine clinic within the Greater Derbyshire and Derby Central Primary Care Trusts were treated or tested within *(a)* 24 and *(b)* 48 hours in the last period for which figures are available. [67632]

Caroline Flint: Data on patients seen within 24 hours are not routinely collected. The latest available data for patients seen within 48 hours, as at February 2006, are shown in the table.

Primary care trust (PCT)	Percentage of patients seen within 48 hours
Central Derby	25
Greater Derby	24

Source:
Health Protection Agency quarterly survey of genitor-urinary medicine waiting times.

As part of the Government's drive to improve sexual health, all PCTs are working towards the target of 100 per cent. of genito-urinary (GU) attendees being seen within 48 hours by 2008. To help achieve this, sexual health and GU access have been identified as one of the top six national health service priorities in the NHS operating framework for 2006-07, and additional investment of £130 million over three years, was announced through the 'Choosing Health' White Paper.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research she has commissioned to explore the relationship between recreational drug use and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and infections. [71011]

Caroline Flint: The Department has not commissioned any specific research to explore the relationship between recreational drug use and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and infections.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures her Department is taking to educate the public on the potential dangers of recreational drug use with particular reference to the risk of spreading sexually transmitted diseases and infections. [71012]

Caroline Flint: As part of the Government's commitment to educating and advising people regarding the harms associated with recreational drug use, we along with the Home Office have invested substantial funding in programmes such as FRANK, talktofrank.com, which where appropriate will include risks of spreading sexually transmitted diseases and infections.

Speech/Language Therapists

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the statement by the Under-Secretary of State, the hon. Member for Birmingham, Hodge Hill (Mr. Byrne), of 25 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 549, how many of the 100 extra speech and language therapy staff in the North Central London strategic health authority area will be deployed to each borough. [69333]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This information is not collected in the format requested. However, the following table shows the number of qualified speech and language therapy staff in the North Central London strategic health authority (SHA) area by national health service organisation in 1997 and 2005, which are the latest figures available.

NHS hospital and community health services: qualified speech and language therapy staff in North Central London SHA area by organisation as at 30 September each specified year

			headcount
		1997	2005
North Central London SHA	Q05	199	301
Barnet Primary Care Trust (PCT)	5A9	n/a	41
Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust	RRP	n/a	3
Enfield PCT	5C1	n/a	35
Great Ormond Street Hospital Children NHS Trust	RP4	12	26
Haringey Teaching PCT	5C9	n/a	53
Islington PCT	5K8	n/a	107
Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	RAL	13	29
University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	RRV	3	7
Barnet Community Healthcare NHS Trust	RCZ	31	n/a
Camden and Islington Community Health Service NHS Trust	RHB	87	n/a
Enfield Community Care NHS Trust	RHC	29	n/a
Haringey Health Care NHS Trust	RP2	23	n/a
North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	RAP	1	n/a

n/a = not applicable.
Note:
1997 total is estimated based on the 2002 organisational structure.
Source:
The Information Centre for health and social care, non-medical workforce census

Staff and Associate Specialist Group

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many doctors in the staff and associate specialist group are employed in the NHS. [64223]

Ms Rosie Winterton: At September 2005, there were 2,554 doctors who were associate specialists and 5,527 who were staff grades.

Student Midwives

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the total cost to her Department of training student midwives was in each year since 1997-98; [71735]

(2) how many student midwives there were in each academic year since 1997-98; how many student midwives were in receipt of a bursary in each year; and what the total cost to public funds was of bursaries to student midwives in each year; [71736]

(3) if she will list the institutions which offer training to student midwives. [71739]

Caroline Flint: The total cost of training student midwives for each year since 1997 is shown in the table.

Financial year	*Total cost (£ million)*
1997-98	42.6
1998-99	34.6
1999-2000	45.6
2000-01	51.4
2001-02	58.7
2002-03	59.0
2003-04	65.8
2004-05	79.4
2005-06	82.2

Notes:
1. 1997-98, 2004-05 and 2005-06 are forecasts (actual outturn was only collected from 1999 onwards)
2. Data in the above time series are not strictly comparable due to changes in the way data were collected
3. Average bursary costs for nurses and midwives added to tuition costs from 2000-01 onwards

Information on the number of student midwives in each academic year since 1997-98, the numbers in receipt of a bursary in each year and the total cost to public funds of bursaries to student midwives in each year are shown in the following table.

Information on the institutions, which offer training to student midwives, is not held by the Department. The Nursing and Midwifery Council is responsible for approving education institutions to run midwifery training programmes.

NHS funded students on pre-registration midwifery courses in England: Academic years 1997-98 to 2005-06

	DipHE level[1]			
	Bursary holders	*Nil award holders*	*Total students*	*Amount paid*[2] *(£)*
1997	0	0	0	0
1998	0	0	0	0
1999	526	0	526	2,368,772
2000	972	0	972	4,813,250
2001	1,346	0	1,346	7,504,971
2002	1,512	0	1,512	8,390,610
2003	1,668	0	1,668	9,554,906
2004	1,678	0	1,678	10,701,773
2005[3]	1,662	0	1,662	8,166,945

	Degree level[4]			
	Bursary holders	*Nil award holders*	*Total students*	*Amount paid*[2] *(£)*
1997	91	11	102	305,914
1998	324	38	362	1,029,368
1999	616	74	690	2,076,577
2000	918	90	1,008	3,252,160
2001	1,305	100	1,405	5,034,305
2002	1,567	87	1,654	6,418,221
2003	1,776	97	1,873	7,461,214
2004	1,941	116	2,057	9,202,204
2005[3]	2,095	116	2,211	7,778,730

	All			
	Bursary holders	*Nil award holders*	*Total students*	*Amount paid*[2] *(£)*
1997	91	11	102	305,914
1998	324	38	362	1,029,368
1999	1,142	74	1,216	4,445,349
2000	1,890	90	1,980	8,065,410
2001	2,651	100	2,751	12,539,276
2002	3,079	87	3,166	14,808,831
2003	3,444	97	3,541	17,016,120
2004	3,619	116	3,735	19,903,977
2005[3]	3,757	116	3,873	15,945,675

[1] Phased uptake wef 1999. Prior to this HEI's responsible for administration of NHS Bursaries.
[2] Includes the Basic Award and all supplementary allowances. Excludes one-off payments eg re-imbursement of Practice Placement costs.
[3] Academic year to date.
[4] Phased uptake wef 1998. Prior to this LEA's primarily responsible for administration of HE Maintenance Grants under DfES (Mandatory Awards) Regulations.

Work Permits

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she plans to issue final guidance for the NHS on work permits, categories and the detailed operation of the new immigration rules. [65029]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Full guidance on work permits can be found on the Working in the UK's website at: www.workingintheuk.gov.uk.

Details of the new requirements of the immigration rules are available on the Immigration and Nationality Directorate's website at: www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Full guidance on the implications of the changes for the medical community is available on the NHS Employers website at: www.nhsemployers.org.

Departmental officials are discussing points for clarification with the British Medical Association and guidance will be updated where necessary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Asylum Seekers (Legal Aid)

Damian Green: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to her answer to the right hon. Member for Haltemprice and Howden of 6 July, *Official Report*, column 489W, on asylum seekers (legal aid), what the cost was of legal aid for asylum and immigration cases in cash terms in *(a)* 2004-05 and *(b)* 2005-06. [71160]

Vera Baird: The cost of legal aid for immigration and asylum cases, including administration, is as follows:

	£ million
2004-05	177
2005-06	107

Court of Protection

Willie Rennie: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people have died while their cases were being dealt with by the Court of Protection in each year since 1997. [71742]

Ms Harman: The number of people who have died while under the jurisdiction of the Court of Protection pursuant to the proceedings of the Mental Health Act 1983 from 1999 to 2006 are as follows:

	Number
1999	6,347
2000	5,692
2001	5,589
2002	5,055
2003	4,946
2004	4,778
2005	5,234
2006	1,911

The court only holds records for six years following the end of its involvement in the client's case and it is not therefore possible to provide reliable data prior to this period. The court does not hold reliable information on the number of donors who have died while under its jurisdiction pursuant to the proceedings of the Enduring Power of Attorney Act 1985.

Freedom of Information

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many representations she has received about her Department's handling of Freedom of Information requests. [69994]

Vera Baird: Complaints about the Department's handling of Freedom of Information are dealt with under the Department's internal review procedures. Details of internal reviews handled by my Department in 2005 will be published in the annual report on Freedom of Information which will be published shortly.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what criteria the Government used to identify and classify public authorities when drawing up Schedule 1 to the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [70606]

Vera Baird: Schedule One to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 now lists the majority of bodies and offices which are subject to the Act.

In drawing up Schedule 1, central and local government bodies, the health, police and education sectors were largely listed by generic descriptions, the majority of which refer to the statutory basis for those bodies' functions.

Parts Six and Seven of the Schedule list "other public bodies and offices" in England and Wales, and in Northern Ireland respectively.

The bodies and offices in these Parts have been identified as meeting the two criteria set out in section 4 of the Act, namely:

that the body or office was established by virtue of Her Majesty's prerogative, by an enactment or subordinate legislation, or in any other way by a Minister of the Crown, a government department, or the National Assembly for Wales;

that the body or office is wholly or partly constituted by appointment made by the Crown, a Minister, a government department or the National Assembly for Wales.

In drawing up this Schedule, departments were asked to identify the bodies for which they were responsible which met these criteria. Many of these were already to be found in Schedule 2 to the Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1976 (as amended), and hence were already subject to the non-statutory Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

The Secretary of State has a discretionary power to amend Parts 6 and 7 of the Schedule to add new bodies and offices which meet the necessary criteria, and remove references to bodies which have ceased to do so, or which no longer exist. Amending Orders of this kind are made annually.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the timetable is for the Secretary of State's review of the bodies covered by the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [70607]

Vera Baird: Bodies covered by the Act are listed in Schedule 1 to the Act. The list can be amended by Order under section 4 of the Act.

Orders are made annually to ensure that the Schedule is up to date by adding references to new bodies which meet the necessary criteria for inclusion, and removing references to bodies which have ceased to exist, or which no longer meet the criteria.

New bodies created by statute are also frequently added to the Schedule by the same legislation which created the body.

The Secretary of State also has a discretionary power under section 5 of the Act to designate as public authorities those private organisations which appear to him to be performing functions of a public nature.

The Secretary of State has taken the view that it would be most appropriate to learn the lessons of FOI implementation in the public sector before extending application of the Act to private bodies in this way.

Human Rights

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the operation in England and Wales of *(a)* Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 and *(b)* Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966. [72034]

Vera Baird: Neither the Universal Declaration of Human Rights nor the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights has direct legal effect in the United Kingdom. However, the right to life is protected by Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights, and the abolition of the death penalty has been most recently confirmed by the Thirteenth Protocol to the Convention. These are both given further effect in the United Kingdom by the Human Rights Act 1998.

Legal Aid

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the total cost of legal aid for supporting prisoners appealing parole board decisions was in each of the last five years. [69743]

Vera Baird: The total cost of legal aid for supporting prisoners appealing parole board decisions in each of the last five years was as follows:

	£
2001-02[1]	209,753
2002-03	791,084
2003-04	1,176,468
2004-05	2,156,443
2005-06	2,400,821

[1] During the first year of contracting (2001-02) cases were also paid under the previous regime for residual work. Such expenditure is not included in the figures, as it cannot be separately identified.

National Security Appeals Panel

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether any decisions of the National Security Appeals Panel under section 28 of the Data Protection Act 1998 have been the subject of judicial review; and if she will make a statement. [69797]

Vera Baird: One decision on the National Security Appeals Panel under Section 28 of the Data Protection Act 1998 is subject to a Judicial Review. The proceedings are subject to a Court Order which provides that

"no information is to be given to anyone who is not a party to these proceedings which may identify the parties to or the subject matter of the claim without the leave of a judge."

Portland PR

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what meetings officials in her Department have had with representatives of the public relations company Portland PR; what contracts Portland PR has with her Department and agencies for which she has responsibility; and what the nature of the contract is in each case. [70044]

Vera Baird: My Department does not maintain a central list of such meetings. Civil servants meet many people as part of the process of policy development and business delivery. All such meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Service Code and Guidance for civil servants on contacts with lobbyists and people outside Government.

Neither DCA nor its agencies has any contracts with Portland PR.

Repossessions

Mr. Spring: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many court orders have been issued for the repossession of homes in West Suffolk in each of the past five years. [69815]

Ms Harman: Although figures for the West Suffolk constituency are not available, the table shows the number of mortgage possession orders made at Bury St. Edmunds county court in the last five years. This is the only such court in the West Suffolk constituency area.

The civil procedure rules provide that all claims for the repossession of land must be commenced in the district in which the land is situated. However, Bury St. Edmunds county court covers areas other than West Suffolk and therefore not all possession actions entered in that court necessarily relate to the West Suffolk area.

These figures do not indicate how many houses have been repossessed through the courts, since not all the orders will have resulted in the issue and execution of warrants of possession.

Number of mortgage[1] possession orders made at Bury St. Edmunds county court, 2001-05

	Possession orders made
2001	35
2002	18
2003	48
2004	47
2005	99

[1] Local authority and private

[2] The court, following a judicial hearing, may grant an order for possession immediately. This entitles the claimant to apply for a warrant to have the defendant evicted. However, even where a warrant for possession is issued, the parties can still negotiate a compromise to prevent eviction.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many court orders have been issued for the repossession of homes in Tamworth constituency in each of the past five years. [71222]

Ms Harman: The following table shows the number of mortgage possession orders made at Tamworth county court in the last five years.

The civil procedure rules provide that all claims for the repossession of land must be commenced in the district in which the land is situated. However, Tamworth county court covers areas other than Tamworth itself, and therefore not all possession actions entered in that court necessarily relate to the Tamworth constituency.

These figures do not indicate how many houses have been repossessed through the courts, since not all the orders will have resulted in the issue and execution of warrants of possession.

Number of mortgage[1] possession orders made at Tamworth county court, 2001-05

	Possession orders made[2]
2001	46
2002	35
2003	35
2004	76
2005	97

[1] Local authority and private

[2] The court, following a judicial hearing, may grant an order for possession immediately. This entitles the claimant to apply for a warrant to have the defendant evicted. However, even where a warrant for possession is issued, the parties can still negotiate a compromise to prevent eviction.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Departmental Advertising

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much was spent on advertising by his Department in each of the last three years. [70505]

Mr. Thomas: DFID does not hold a separate advertising budget; the majority of advertising relates to recruitment advertising in newspapers and journals; for the last three calendar years 2003-05 this was as follows:

	£
2003	703,012
2004	594,769
2005	307,359

DFID does not directly fund advertising by non-departmental public bodies, Executive agencies or independent statutory bodies. Figures for 2006 have yet to be finalised.

Departmental Budget

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much of the budget for his Department remained unspent in the last financial year. [70502]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development forecasts an under spend for the financial year 2005-06 of £79.879 million from a budget of £4,567.823 million. This is a provisional figure based on the estimated outturn data published in the annual report; the final under spend is likely to be significantly lower.

Global Monitoring for Environment and Security

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the effects on *(a)* the delivery of the UK's humanitarian aid programme and *(b)* UK emergency preparedness of the Respond Programme within the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security Initiative; and if he will make a statement. [71043]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has found that the Respond Programme has made a useful contribution to map information and therefore to humanitarian response, specifically in the Pakistan earthquake and generally in global disaster monitoring.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has the policy lead for the Government on the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security Initiative (GMES). DEFRA takes a close interest in all aspects of GMES, including the Respond Programme, and will continue to engage with it and with the European Commission, the European Space Agency and other UK Government Departments.

Legislation

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what amendments have been made to the International Development Act 2002. [70374]

Hilary Benn: A number of amendments have been made to the International Development Act 2002.

Section 9, Subsection (4) has been amended as follows: in para (b) the words "other than the National Assembly for Wales" in square brackets were inserted by SI 2005/3225, art 6(2), Sch 2, Pt 1, para 6(1).

Schedule 1 has been amended as follows:

Entry "Health Protection Agency" was inserted by the Health Protection Agency Act 2004, s 11(1), Sch 3, para 16

Entry "An NHS foundation trust" was inserted by the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003, s 34, Sch 4, paras 121, 122.

Entry "Public Health Laboratory Service Board" (omitted) was repealed by the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003, ss 190(2), 196, Sch 13, para 11, Sch 14, Pt 7.

Entry "A Strategic Health Authority" was inserted by SI 2002/2469, reg 4, Sch 1, Pt 1, para 31.

Entry "The National Assembly for Wales" was substituted for entry "Wales Tourist Board" as originally enacted, by SI 2005/3225, art 6(2), Sch 2, Pt 1, para 6(2).

Schedule 3 has been amended as follows:

Para 3: sub-para (3) was repealed by the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005, s 174(2), Sch 17, Pt 2;

Para 10 was repealed by the Income Tax (Earnings and Pensions) Act 2003, s 724(1), Sch 8, Pt1;

Para 11: sub-para (3) was repealed by the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005, s 174(2), Sch 17, Pt 2;

Para 12: sub-para (3) was repealed by the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005, s 174(2), Sch 17, Pt 2.

Maternal Health

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what steps are being taken by his Department to improve its performance on maternal health; [68165]

(2) if he will make maternal health a tracker for his Department to monitor its progress in supporting health systems in developing countries. [68167]

Mr. Thomas: DFID's approach to improving maternal health is outlined in our 2004 strategy document "Reducing maternal deaths: evidence and action: First Progress Report". This sets out four priority areas for supporting better maternal health; specifically advocacy, scaling-up and improving services, helping remove barriers to access, and research to develop better technologies and policies.

We have recently reviewed our performance; copies of our Progress Report have been deposited in the Libraries of both Houses. The report notes that DFID spending on reducing maternal mortality (together with reproductive health services) has increased by 41.3 per cent. over the past three years, and we are committed to continuing to increase our support to maternal health.

But we still need to see more governments give greater priority to this issue. Some progress has been made in Asia—for example in Nepal, China, Vietnam and Indonesia. In many parts of Africa, however, weak health services, conflict and HIV have combined to constrain overall progress. Improving this situation will require long term and sustained help.

The Progress Report makes several recommendations, one of which is to use maternal mortality as an indicator through which to track progress in health systems strengthening. Functioning health systems are essential in seeing improvements in maternal health, and we will indeed wish to monitor maternal health outcomes as we scale up our support to basis health services.

Palestinian Ministry of Health

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of funds available to the Palestinian Ministry of Health; and what action he is taking in this regard. [71946]

Hilary Benn: In 2005, the Ministry of Health incurred expenditures of US$155 million. According to the World Health Organisation, these expenditures were covered by international aid (23 per cent.); domestic taxation (25-29 per cent.) and clearance revenues from Israel (42-46 per cent.).

Following the appointment of the Hamas-led Government and its failure to comply with the Quartet's conditions of renouncing violence, recognising Israel and accepting previous international agreements, all three sources of funds have declined. We are aware of reports that the Palestinian Ministry of Health does not have sufficient funds to purchase vital supplies and pay its staff. On 9 May, the Quartet invited the European Union to design a temporary international funding mechanism to help meet Palestinian basic needs. We are working closely with the European Commission to take this forward as quickly as possible, with a focus on direct funding of health sector expenditures.

Portland PR

Dr. Naysmith: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what meetings officials in his Department have had with representatives of the public relations company Portland PR; what contracts Portland PR has with his Department and agencies for which he has responsibility; and what the nature of the contract is in each case. [70134]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) does not maintain a central list of such meetings. Civil servants meet many people as part of the process of policy development and business delivery. All such meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Service Code and Guidance for civil servants on contracts with lobbyists and people outside Government. DFID have no contracts with Portland PR.

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much has been paid in *(a)* salary, *(b)* travelling expenses, *(c)* subsistence allowance and *(d)* removal expenses to special advisers in his private office in each of the last five years. [69018]

Mr. Thomas: Since 2003, the Government have published on an annual basis the names and overall cost of special advisers and the number in each payband. For information relating to the last financial year I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement made by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 158-61WS.

Information on special advisers for this financial year is currently being collected and will be published in the normal way when it is ready.

All official travel by special advisers is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Ministerial Code and the Civil Service Management Code.

Other costs are not held centrally and could be obtained only by incurring a disproportionate cost.

Promotion Boards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many promotion boards have been held in his Department in each of the last five years. [70504]

Mr. Thomas: Since 2003, the Department for International Development (DFID) has held annual grade specific promotion boards for all grades.

This has resulted in six separate promotion boards each year.

Prior to 2003, promotion below the Senior Civil Service (SCS) was on a post by post basis and we do not hold a consolidated record of the number of boards held.

Public Consultations

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many public consultations his Department undertook in the last year; and what the cost was *(a)* in total and *(b)* of each consultation. [70503]

Mr. Thomas: Over the year 2005 the Department for International Development undertook six formal public consultations in order to inform the Department's policy development. Information on the cost of each consultation and the total cost of all consultations could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Racial Abuse

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many complaints of racial abuse have *(a)* been investigated and *(b)* upheld in his Department in each of the last five years. [70506]

Mr. Thomas: DFID did not hold a central record of discipline and grievance cases until 1 October 2004. We have no record of any complaint of racial abuse in the last five years.

St. Helena

Mr. Newmark: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will assess the merits of using amphibian aircraft to service the island of St. Helena in preference to the construction of a new airport. [71480]

Mr. Thomas: The merits of using amphibious aircraft to service the island of St. Helena were assessed as part of the 2004-05 feasibility study. This option was rejected for a number of reasons. There are no civilian seaplanes currently in operation that could provide a reliable service in the sea conditions that exist in St. Helena, where there is no shelter from the South Atlantic swells that regularly prevent cruise ship passengers from disembarking. Even if it were possible to make an acceptable safety case to the regulator for this type of operation, ticket prices would be high and unaffordable to the local population, and long flight times would discourage tourism.

St. Helena requires reliable, affordable access that islanders and tourists alike can depend upon if it is to build its economy and work towards its own goal of financial self-sufficiency. Construction of an airport that supports scheduled flights from a recognised international hub is the best and, in the long term, most cost effective way of achieving this.

Staff Surveys

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many staff surveys have been conducted in his Department in each of the last three years. [70507]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has undertaken two staff surveys of all staff over the last three financial years and is planning a third in 2006.

2004—Stress Audit

2005—Management Survey

2006—Management Survey (pending)

Sudan

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the situation of women in Sudan. [70172]

Hilary Benn *[holding answer 16 May 2006]:* DFID and other development partners assessed the situation of women in Sudan as part of the Joint Assessment Mission (JAM), which reported last year. Women have a vital role to play in the recovery and development of Sudan, following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and more recently the Darfur Peace Agreement. However, women are marginalised and poorly represented across most of society and the overall challenge is to promote gender equality and empowerment to support progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. DFID promotes the interests of women within all its programmes and we are supporting a range of initiatives in governance and rule of law; gender based violence; capacity building; and basic social services where women stand to benefit.

The UK Government has also funded the Khartoum Centre for Human Rights and the Sudanese Organisation Against Torture to implement a national campaign calling for the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). We have also supported a media campaign conducted by the UN Mission on Gender Based Violence, part of which drew attention to the deplorable crimes of rape and sexual violence in Darfur. DFID continues to assess and monitor the situation of women in Sudan, particularly in Darfur, as part of the international response. The Government of Sudan has formulated an action plan to eliminate violence against women and we continue to press for its prompt and effective implementation.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Climate Change

14. **Martin Salter:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will make a statement on recent developments in the international debate on climate change. [71674]

Ian Pearson: In December 2005 Parties to the Kyoto Protocol agreed to begin negotiations on shaping a plan on climate change action for the post-2012 period. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change parties also agreed to launch a dialogue on action to implement the Convention. The first discussions on these decisions are taking place this week in Bonn.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment his Department has made of methane emissions from trees and other plants. [70332]

Ian Pearson: Following publication of a study suggesting that trees and other plants may be a source of methane emissions, my Department assessed available scientific literature and sought expert opinion on this issue. This showed that, even if the findings of the study are confirmed, the possible methane source would offset no more than a few percent. of the carbon taken up by growing forests. Therefore, the climate change benefits provided by forests through storage of carbon far outweigh their possible contribution to global warming through methane emissions.

Coastal Access

16. **Paddy Tipping:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research he has commissioned into increasing public access to coastal areas. [71677]

Barry Gardiner: Research is in hand to assess current usage and demand for costal access, as well as the economic social and environmental costs and benefits of different options for improvements. A public consultation setting out the facts and ways to increase access to the English coast will be issued in October 2006.

Single Farm Payments

17. **Mr. Dunne:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress the Rural Payments Agency has made in validating entitlement letters for single farm payments for 2005. [71678]

David Miliband: By 15 May some 71,000 out of 120,000 applicants had entitlement statements which have been issued in respect of fully validated claims. Claimants who originally received a provisional statement are being sent a confirmatory Statement once their claim has been fully validated.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will make an application to the European Union to further delay the payment of single farm payments until October 2006. [69851]

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether he has asked the European Commission for an extension to the UK deadline for payments under the Single Payments Scheme; and if he will make a statement. [69560]

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions he has had with the EU on the extension of the Single Farm Payment. [68953]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* 85 per cent. of the £1,500 million of expected payments for the 2005 SPS scheme year have been distributed. The residual element of payments will be made as soon as possible to those who have received a partial payment, and those who to date have not received either full or partial payment will be dealt with thereafter. Against that background and in order to safeguard the interests of UK taxpayers, a request was made last month to the European Commission to extend the EU regulatory payment window until 15 October 2006. This would ensure that any farmer whose claim remained outstanding as at 1 July should not be denied payment under the scheme.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much funding the Government holds for distribution to farmers in single farm payments. [70233]

Barry Gardiner: The Government makes payments under the single payments scheme from the funding voted annually by parliament and is then reimbursed from the Common Agricultural Policy administered by the European Commission.

The payments made are based on the National Ceilings established for each member state in accordance with the relevant EC regulation (Council Regulation (EC) No 319/2006 of 20th February 2006).

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average waiting time was for farmers who are entitled to single farm payment scheme payments from the Rural Payments Agency in the last period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [63057]

Barry Gardiner: The regulatory payment window for the 2005 single payment scheme (SPS) runs from 1 December 2005 to 30 June 2006. The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) announced in January 2005 that payments were unlikely to start until February 2006.

RPA met this target, with first payments made from 20 February 2006. By close of business on 4 May 2006 over 58,000 claims, representing 48.5 per cent. of the population, had been fully paid.

RPA has now made over 31,000 partial payments to claimants. 31,000 are not included in the partial payments system; 26,000 because their claim amounted to less than 1,000 Euro; and 5,000 because of a diverse

range of other factors which made their cases particularly complex. Making full payments to this group of 5,000 will now be given the highest priority by the Rural Payments Agency.

The positive action being taken by RPA to make full and partial payments is set out in my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State's written statement on 9 May 2006.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many telephone calls have been made to the Rural Payments Agency's Customer Service Centre on or since 13 April 2006 to report the non-receipt of claim forms for the 2006-07 single payments scheme. [68867]

Barry Gardiner: The Rural Payments Agency's (RPA) Customer Service Centre (CSC) received 76,000 telephone calls between 13 April and 5 May 2006.

The CSC does not keep separate statistics relating to total telephone calls from customers specifically relating to the non-receipt of claim forms.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many single farm payments in *(a)* Tamworth constituency and *(b)* Staffordshire have (i) been cancelled, (ii) yet to be cancelled and (iii) been invalidated. [68353]

Barry Gardiner: 1,171 applications to the single payment scheme 2005 were rejected due to *(a)* an incomplete application or *(b)* being received after the final deadline of 10 June 2005.

The single payment scheme is not administered on a regional basis; therefore the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) does not hold information specific to Tamworth constituency or Staffordshire.

Municipal Incinerators

18. **Mr. Burrowes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many municipal incinerators he expects to be commissioned in the next five years. [71679]

Mr. Bradshaw: The number of new incinerators built will depend on the technologies and scale of facilities chosen by local authorities. We estimate that waste to energy of all types will account for about 25 per cent. of municipal waste by 2020, compared to 9 per cent. now, which is less than forecast in 2000 due to our better than expected performance on recycling.

Gum Litter

19. **Alison Seabeck:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what resources his Department has allocated to local authorities selected to participate in the campaign to reduce gum litter. [71682]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Chewing Gum Action Group has provided £600,000 of funding towards the 15 local authority campaigns, the first of which began last week.

The funding has been divided between each local authority based on the advertising space available in the geographical area of the campaign, and the cost of advertising in that specific area.

Commercial Whaling

20. **Anne Snelgrove:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps he is taking towards preventing Japan and other whaling nations from overturning the moratorium on commercial whaling at the forthcoming International Whaling Convention meeting. [71683]

Mr. Bradshaw: Although Japan and her allies may command a simple majority at the next annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission this is insufficient to overturn the moratorium on commercial whaling. Such matters can be agreed only if 75 per cent. of those present and voting vote in favour of the motion.

Canoeing

21. **Mr. Grogan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans he has to improve access for canoeists to the rivers of England. [71684]

Barry Gardiner: Although our research shows that overall supply meets demand, there is some unmet demand for white water and canoe touring. The Environment Agency is currently working to identify what is needed and where, and to develop best-practice access agreements for canoeists on key stretches of English water.

Transport (Environmental Impact)

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Department for Transport on the environmental impact of transport. [71675]

Ian Pearson: There are regular discussions with the ministerial team in the Department for Transport on a range of issues, including the environmental impact of transport.

Agricultural Support

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much EU funding the Government have received but not distributed to farmers in the last two full financial years. [70234]

Barry Gardiner: The funding of payments to farmers is provided by HM Treasury in the first instance and then a claim is submitted to the European Commission for the expenditure occurred after the event. Therefore the reimbursement from the European Commission is received after payments have been made to the farmers.

So at no point in time are there any funds received from the European Commission that have not been distributed to farmers.

Children's Services

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many nursery and crèche places are provided for people working in his Department; what charges are made for the provision of such services; and what other facilities are provided for the children of employees of his Department. [67362]

Barry Gardiner: Defra is committed to childcare support both for the benefit of its staff but also as an essential element of addressing the Departmental business need. Defra's childcare provision set out in the attached table.

Defra employees are able to use a salary sacrifice scheme to reduce their childcare costs by up to £243 per month.

Consultations

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will list the consultations undertaken by his Department in the last 12 months; how many people were directly consulted in each case; how many responses were received to each consultation; what his estimate is of the cost to business of responding to those consultations; and on what assumptions his estimate is based. [71270]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 16 May 2006]:* In the calendar year 2005 the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs undertook 100 formal consultations. Details of the consultations are available on the Department's website:

www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult.asp

Information on the total cost of all consultations, number of people directly consulted, number of responses received, and cost to the business in responding to consultations, could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many public consultations his Department undertook in the last year; and what the cost was *(a)* in total and *(b)* of each consultation. [70542]

Barry Gardiner: In the calendar year 2005 the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs undertook 100 formal consultations. Details of the consultations are available on the Department's website:

www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult.asp

Information on the total cost of all consultations and cost of individual consultations could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much champagne was bought for official use by his predecessor and Ministers in his Department in *(a)* 2003-04 and *(b)* 2004-05; and at what cost. [72054]

Barry Gardiner: None.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many complaints of racial abuse have been *(a)* investigated and *(b)* upheld in his Department in each of the last five years. [70545]

Barry Gardiner: The figures for this information are based on the last five financial years. The figures relate to core Defra and the following agencies: PSD, CSL, VMD, CEFAS, and SVS.

Under Defra's formal equal opportunities complaints procedures, records indicate that between April 2001 and March 2002 there was one case of bullying and racial discrimination, which was investigated, but not upheld.

Between April 2002 and March 2006 there were no formal cases of racial abuse or racial discrimination.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many staff surveys have been conducted in his Department in each of the last three years. [70547]

Barry Gardiner: There have been two full staff surveys conducted in Defra in the last three years.

Full census surveys, whereby all staff in the core-Department are invited to complete the questionnaire, are conducted at 18-month intervals. The last two were carried out in January 2004 and July 2005. The next full census survey is due in January 2007.

At quarterly intervals between the full surveys, Defra conducts "Pulse" surveys, where a random sample of staff are invited to complete the survey. This is done to enable senior Defra management to keep a closer eye on results of questions and to track trends.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many air miles have been accrued by senior civil servants in his Department on official business in each of the last three years; and how they were used. [70549]

Barry Gardiner: Central rules laid down by the Cabinet Office state that civil servants are not able to use any air miles that accrue to them through official travel on a personal basis. Any air miles must therefore be recycled for further official use or forgone. These rules are laid down on the staff Intranet.

The Department has no records of the number of air miles accrued as staff book their own travel through Defra's accredited agents and air miles are issued on an individual basis.

Equal Pay

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps are undertaken within his Department to ensure that women are obtaining equal pay to men doing work of equal value. [65849]

Barry Gardiner: In line with Cabinet Office guidelines, introduced in 2003, central Government Departments are required to conduct an Equal Pay Review at least once every 3 years.

Defra conducted and completed its first review back in 2003 and submitted this together with an action plan to Cabinet Office in April 2003. The review covered core-Defra and two of its agencies—Pesticides Safety Directorate and Veterinary Medicines Directorate—for which the core-department has pay remit responsibility.

The review found that there were no significant pay gaps within the department, provided that Defra's multi-year pay settlement was fully rolled out for future years up to and including 2005-06. The final year of the settlement was rolled out last year and runs until the end of June 2006.

Defra is now in the process of conducting a second Equal Pay Review. This will cover core-Defra and six of its agencies: Pesticides Safety Directorate, Veterinary Medicines Directorate, State Veterinary Service, Rural Development Service, Marine Fisheries Agency and Government Decontamination Service. It will examine whether the objectives of the multi-year pay settlement and the implications of the of Action Plan from the previous review have been have been met in full.

The position with regard to Defra's agencies is as follows:

Rural Payments Agency

The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) submitted an Equal Pay Review and action plan to Cabinet Office in 2003 in accordance with Cabinet Office guidelines. This Review was completed in March 2004 and found that there were no significant pay gaps as a result of gender difference. The results were subsequently discussed with RPA's Trade Union Side and a summary of proposed actions was agreed, which included reviewing Allowances paid to specialist staff to ensure no differences relating to gender existed in these additions to pay; improving levels of ethic and disability recording; and carrying out a further comprehensive Equal Pay Review in 2006, once RPA had completed its restructuring. These actions are ongoing and the full Review is now scheduled for 2007, when RPA is projected to reach its organisational 'steady state'.

Central Science Laboratory

The Central Science Laboratory completed its Equal Pay Review in April 2003 and the resultant action plan was submitted to the Cabinet Office in May 2003. No significant pay gaps were identified as a result of gender difference and subsequent pay settlements have been subject to equality-proofing. In 2005 CSL concluded a three year pay deal that invests in both the shortening of pay ranges and the delivery of an effective pay progression system to further ensure that gender related pay gaps do not emerge in the future.

Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science

In line with Cabinet office guidance, the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) completed an Equal Pay Review and submitted this together with an action plan to Cabinet Office in April 2003.

The review found that there were no significant pay gaps as a result of gender difference. There were individual problems as a legacy from earlier pay arrangements; these were addressed in the action plan.

The action plan was taken forward as part of CEFAS' multi-year pay deal (April 2005-March 2008). The deal was accepted through union ballots. Year two of the deal was implemented in April 2006.

Veterinary Laboratories Agency

The Veterinary Laboratories Agency completed its Equal Pay review in April 2003 and the resultant action plan was submitted to cabinet office in May 2003. The review found that there were no significant pay gaps as a result of gender difference, but the issues continue to be the subject of consultation with the Trade unions. Subsequent pay awards have been subject to equality checks and a further review will be undertaken in 2006.

Farming

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of farmers who have left the agricultural sector in Suffolk in each of the past five years. [69809]

Barry Gardiner: Figures from the Agricultural and Horticultural Survey indicate labour on agricultural holdings in June each year. These figures therefore show net change only in the number of farmers.

Labour on agricultural holdings in June each year

	Number of full and part time farmers in Suffolk	*Net change*
2001	5,830	—
2002	5,637	-193
2003	5,498	-139
2004	5,699	+201
2005	5,633	-66

Notes:
1. Number of farmers includes partners, directors and spouses (if working on the holding).
2. Includes estimates for minor holdings.
3. Estimates have been made to non-respondents.

Source:
June Agricultural Survey

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total projected cost is of the Farming Connect Cumbria scheme over the scheme's lifetime; how much has been allocated to the scheme by his Department; how much has been provided by other sources, broken down by source; how much has been spent by the scheme; how much has been *(a)* allocated for and *(b)* spent on grants to improve agricultural performance; how many grants have been allocated under the scheme; how much was allocated for each grant; what the projected costs are of administration over the lifetime of the scheme; how much has been spent on administration; and if he will make a statement. [71139]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* I understand that Farming Connect is administered by Cumbria rural enterprise agency on behalf of Rural Regeneration Cumbria (RRC), using funding provided

by the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA). There is no Defra funding involved and no involvement by Defra or its agencies in running the scheme. Defra does not therefore hold the information requested, which the hon. Member should seek directly from Rural Regeneration Cumbria and/or the Northwest Regional Development Agency.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many registered farms there are in each Somerset constituency. [67635]

Barry Gardiner: The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) understands that this question relates to customers submitting claims under the single payment scheme with farms in Somerset.

RPA does not hold details of constituency boundaries within its customer register but has commissioned a report which will show the number of customers in Somerset as a whole. At present all available IT resources are dedicated to getting SPS payments to customers, so this report may take some months to obtain while higher priority work is carried out.

Flood Prevention

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much funding has been allocated to Wessex Flood Defence Committee in each of the last five years. [70165]

Ian Pearson: The Environment Agency is required to arrange for its flood defence functions, except for certain financial ones, to be carried out by Regional Flood Defence Committees.

I understand from the Environment Agency that the total of DEFRA grant and levies on local authorities for the area of the Wessex Regional Flood Defence Committee was £23.2 million in 2002-03, £27.2 million in 2003-04, and £39.1 million in 2004-05. Other funding for specific projects is obtained from, for example, direct beneficiaries and developers.

Gamebirds

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate he has made of the percentage of gamebirds shot on commercial shooting estates for human consumption in 2005-06. [70779]

Barry Gardiner: No such estimate has been made.

There are no compulsory government schemes collecting national statistics on the number of gamebirds shot for human consumption.

Hunting Act

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Hunting Act 2004 in preventing wild animals being *(a)* hunted and *(b)* killed by dogs. [70738]

Barry Gardiner: The Government are satisfied with the operation of the Hunting Act 2004, which, except where carried out in accordance with the tightly-drawn exemptions set out in the Act, bans all hunting of wild mammals with dogs. DEFRA has not instituted specific arrangements to monitor the activities of individual hunts, but they are subject to the law and liable to prosecution if they breach the provisions of the Act.

Institute for Grassland and Environmental Research

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the socio-economic implications of the decision to reduce financial support for the Institute for Grassland and Environmental Research. [68245]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* Financial support is given to the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research (IGER) by its parent Research Council, the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), through an annual core strategic grant. IGER may also secure BBSRC funding via other funding routes. Defra invests at IGER through a range of research contracts to meet specific research requirements. Some are placed with IGER as preferred supplier while others are won by IGER through open competition. In addition, IGER also undertakes research for consortia of which Defra is one of a number of sponsors, for example through LINK programmes.

Defra has made no direct assessment of the socio-economic implications of its decision to refocus research priorities into new areas and the effect this will have on the value of new contracts to the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research (IGER).

IGER remains a very important research partner for Defra in the development and delivery of our policy objectives. This is reflected in the department's continuing significant investment at IGER, where we are already committed to investing around £5 million in research programmes in 2006-07. Further project proposals are under negotiation and we anticipate the Department's final commitment will be nearer £5.5 million, excluding our contributions to relevant LINK project consortia. By comparison, Defra's research investment at IGER in 2005-06 was approximately £5.8 million, excluding LINK projects.

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* his ministerial colleagues have had with (i) the Welsh Assembly Government and (ii) the Secretary of State for Wales on the socio-economic impact of the decision to reduce financial support for the Institute for Grassland and Environmental Research. [68249]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The Noble Lord Bach, had been in contact with the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Environment Planning and Countryside about the department's decision to refocus research priorities into new areas and the effect this will have on the value of new contracts to the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research (IGER).

Defra officials will continue to involve Welsh Assembly Government officials in discussions and decisions across the whole of Defra's research portfolio, not just those affecting IGER. Defra officials have also been in contact with the Wales Office regarding IGER.

Market Towns

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment he has made of the market towns initiative. [71676]

Barry Gardiner: A significant amount of funding was delivered through the Market Towns Initiative. The Countryside Agency carried out a full assessment and concluded that it delivered a wide range of benefits for market towns and their hinterlands.

Responsibility for rural regeneration in market towns is now devolved to Regional Development Agencies, to whom Defra contributes £73 million a year.

Nitrates Directive

Mr. Fraser: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what recent discussions he has had on the implementation of the nitrates directive in the UK; [68211]

(2) what discussions he has had on the effect of the implementation of the nitrates directive on the farming industry *(a)* in East Anglia and *(b)* elsewhere in the UK. [68215]

Ian Pearson: The Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) action programme of measures for England is now under the four yearly review required by the directive and a public consultation will be issued shortly.

As part of the review, Defra has held a series of regional farmers' workshops (including in East Anglia) to discuss and develop proposals for the revised measures and to seek their views on potential impacts.

In addition, there has been ongoing dialogue with farming industry representatives, including the national farmers union, country land and business association and the tenant farmers association. That dialogue is continuing, as well as a dialogue with a wider stakeholder audience.

Mr. Fraser: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what alternatives to the use of damaging fertilizers and pesticides have been considered in order to comply with the nitrates directive. [68214]

Ian Pearson: The main thrust of the directive is to control the application of nitrogen-containing material to land. Compliance is achieved through requiring farmers to apply good practice measures and nutrient management techniques and setting limits on the amount and times when fertilisers may be spread on the land. Fertilisers only cause damage to land when they are applied in excess.

Compliance with the directive encourages the use of organic fertiliser (i.e. manure) as opposed to chemical fertilisers and pesticides.

Reducing Obesity

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for *(a)* Health and *(b)* Education and Skills about reducing obesity in (i) schools and (ii) young people; and if he will make a statement. [68845]

Barry Gardiner: I have regular contact with my right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Health and for Education and Skills on a range of issues including obesity.

In addition, my officials have discussed healthy eating, including obesity, with colleagues in the Department For Education and Skills and the Department of Health in the context of the Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative (PSFPI). One of the objectives for this Initiative is to increase the consumption of healthy and nutritious food.

Officials from both Departments are represented on the Food Procurement Implementation Group established by Defra to oversee the delivery of the PSFPI. They have also provided advice for the publication "Sausage and Mash and Sustainability", which is designed to raise awareness on obesity and other issues.

Further information, including this publication, is available on the Defra website at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/sustain/procurement/awareness.htm

Regional Development Agencies

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much funding the Department allocated to regional development agencies in each year since 2000-01. [70253]

Barry Gardiner: Since April 2002, the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) have been financed through a Single Programme budget (the "Single Pot"). This consists of money from various Departments (DTI, DCLG, DfES, Defra, DCMS and UKTI).

The Defra contributions to the Regional Development Agencies Single Pot are as follows:

Financial Year	*Defra contribution to RDA Single Pot (£ million)*
2002-03	41
2003-04	41
2004-05	46
2005-06	77
2006-07	85

As Defra was created in June 2001, inheriting separate programme budgets and commitments from the former DETR and MAFF, figures for 2000-01 and 2001-02 are not included in the table.

The significant increase in Defra funding to RDAs from 2005 is the result primarily of the transfer of additional funding from the Countryside Agency (£21 million per annum between 2005-06 and 2007-08); and funding for RDA regional co-ordination of the Business Resource Efficiency and Waste Programme (£5 million in 2005-06 and £12 million in 2006-07).

Supermarkets

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the environmental impact of supermarkets and the food industry; and if he will make a statement. [71664]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Food Industry Sustainability Strategy published last month assesses the environmental impacts of the food industry, including the supermarkets, and sets out a series of targets to reduce them. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has today invited supermarket representatives to talks on this and other related issues.

Tallow

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs why the tallow ban was reversed; when the EU study which may redefine tallow as a fuel is expected to report; and what dispensation has been sought from the EU in the meantime. [68651]

Ian Pearson: There has been no tallow ban. Installations may burn tallow provided they comply with regulatory requirements. If, as is usually the case, the tallow is waste within the definition given in the EU Waste Framework Directive, the regulatory requirements include one for a permit issued under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations 2000 incorporating the requirements of the EU Waste Incineration Directive (WID).

In response to representations by HM Government, the European Commission has set up a study to help establish whether the WID controls are proportionate and necessary to the protection of the environment. The study is expected to report by the autumn, and the Government are pressing the Commission for the study to be completed as soon as possible.

I have encouraged the industry, meanwhile, to enter into technical discussions with the environmental regulators (the Environment Agency or, for smaller plants, local authorities), to determine how individual plants might move over time to comply with the WID if the study were to conclude that the WID controls are appropriate.

The study is not about whether waste tallow is a fuel—it manifestly is a fuel. However, the proposed Directive on Waste currently under negotiation in the EU contains a provision under which a technical committee could determine the point at which specified waste materials cease to be waste. The European Commission has already identified waste tallow used as fuel as a candidate for this procedure if it is included in the finalised Directive.

Waste Treatment

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations he has received from the Institute of Civil Engineers on the potential impact on climate change of improving the way in which waste is treated; and if he will make a statement. [70863]

Ian Pearson: The way in which waste is managed makes a significant contribution to UK emissions of greenhouse gases, particularly methane emissions released from landfill. Forms of waste management such as recycling or incineration with energy recovery can result in a net reduction of greenhouse gas emissions contributing to climate change.

In January 2006, the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) published a report entitled "The Case for a Resource Management Strategy". Defra's "Review of England's Waste Strategy-A Consultation Document" agrees that more emphasis needs to be put on using waste as a resource and that reducing greenhouse gas emissions should be a major driver behind the revised waste strategy.

Defra is currently collating responses received from the consultation, which closed on 9 May. Any representations made by ICE will be considered by the Department.

Defra officials recently met with ICE and the Institute of Mechanical Engineers to discuss ways in which they could contribute towards Defra's development of waste policy. These discussions are ongoing.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which UK companies undertake animal testing. [71680]

Joan Ryan: I am unable to provide you with the information requested. The identities of organisations and individuals licensed under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 are not published in any form by the Home Office.

The activities of a small number of animal rights extremists make it necessary to protect establishments and individuals licensed under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, their staff, and others associated with them, from potential harassment and harm. In addition, section 24 of the 1986 Act, which prohibits the disclosure by Home Office Ministers and officials of confidential information relating to the use of animals in scientific procedures other than in the discharge of their functions under the 1986 Act, prevents the disclosure of information about individual establishments licensed under the Act that has been provided in confidence.

Although there is a need to inform the public debate about the use of animals for experimental or other scientific purposes, I do not believe it would be in the public interest to disclose information that might increase the risk of individuals, establishments or their suppliers being subjected to violence and intimidation.

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what proportion of the project licences granted under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 that were in force in Scotland at the end of 2004 were in *(a)* mild, *(b)* moderate, *(c)* substantial and *(d)* unclassified severity bandings; [71360]

(2) what proportion of regulated procedures under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 carried out in Scotland in 2004 were conducted without any form of anaesthesia; [71361]

(3) how many infringements of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 were recorded in Scotland at the end of 2004; and how many prosecutions resulted; [71362]

(4) how many *(a)* genetically modified animals and *(b)* animals with a harmful genetic defect were used in regulated procedures conducted in Scotland under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 in 2004; [71363]

(5) what proportion of the regulated procedures conducted in Scotland under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 in 2004 were carried out for *(a)* fundamental and applied studies other than toxicology and *(b)* toxicity tests or other safety and efficacy evaluation; [71364]

(6) how many project licences were granted under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 in 2004, in respect of work to be carried out in Scotland; and how many such project licences were in force at the end of 2004; [70959]

(7) how many places in Scotland were designated as *(a)* a supplying establishment, *(b)* a breeding establishment and *(c)* a scientific procedure establishment under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 at the end of 2004. [70964]

Joan Ryan: Comprehensive statistics of scientific procedures on living animals in Great Britain of animals carried out under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 are published annually. Copies of the publication for 2004 (Cm 6713) can be found in the House Library.

The data are not collected, stored or presented in a way enabling them to be easily broken down between England, Wales and Scotland as the 1986 Act is administered by the Home Office for the whole of Great Britain (it is administered separately in Northern Ireland). A special exercise has therefore been conducted to isolate the information requested in relation to Scotland.

As at 31 December 2004, there were 34 establishments in Scotland designated as places where licensed scientific procedures using animals may be conducted. Of these, 19 were also designated as breeding establishments and 10 as supplying establishments.

In 2004, 114 project licences were granted in Scotland under the 1986 Act and a total of 510 project licences were in force in Scotland at the end of 2004. Of these, 196 were categorised in the mild severity band, 288 moderate, 11 substantial and 15 unclassified.

The 1986 Act requires that all experiments shall be carried out under local or general anaesthesia unless the Secretary of State judges that the anaesthesia would be more traumatic to the animals than the experiment itself, or that anaesthesia is incompatible with the objective of the experiment.

In 2004, 61 per cent. of the regulated procedures carried out in Scotland during 2004 were conducted without any form of anaesthesia. 15 per cent. of procedures carried out in Scotland in 2004 used genetically modified animals and four per cent used animals with a harmful genetic defect. 69 per cent. of the regulated procedures were carried out for fundamental and applied studies other than toxicology. 20 per cent. were for toxicity tests, or other safety and efficacy evaluation.

Two infringements of the 1986 Act were reported from designated establishments in Scotland during 2004. No prosecutions resulted.

Asylum Seekers

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his Department has proposed to Birmingham city council that asylum seekers accommodated by the council should be provided with free *(a)* televisions and *(b)* television licences; and whether Birmingham city council has made representations to his Department on this issue. [70857]

Mr. McNulty: Accommodation providers contracting with the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) to house supported asylum seekers are required to provide accommodation that meets the minimum standards set out in the NASS Statement of Requirements, a copy of which is in the Libraries of the House. The Statement of Requirements, which is a schedule to the NASS accommodation contract, does not require providers, in meeting those standards, to supply asylum seekers with a television or TV licence.

Birmingham city council has not made any representations to the Home Office on this issue.

Deportation

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will instigate an immediate inquiry into the manner of the recent deportation of the Dar family from Bootle, Merseyside to Pakistan; and what guidance he has issued on *(a)* the provision of medical treatment, *(b)* the conduct of officials, *(c)* the quality of transport, *(d)* access to legal advice and *(e)* access to the relevant hon. Member with respect to deportees from the UK. [70743]

Mr. McNulty: It is not considered that an inquiry into this case is needed as there is no evidence of any deviation from the policies that should be adhered to in cases of this nature.

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government is taking to deport illegal immigrants. [70746]

Mr. McNulty: The Government have a number of measures in place to tackle illegal immigrants and ensure the removal of individuals who have no basis of stay in the UK and these include; The Assisted Voluntary Returns programme: the increased use of reporting, electronic monitoring, tagging and voice recognition; joint intelligence led operations with the police to maintain contact; increased use of chartered flights; working in partnership with countries and governments overseas to secure appropriate travel documentation.

Domestic Violence

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what provision is available in *(a)* West Yorkshire and *(b)* Wakefield constituency to deal with domestic violence. [54281]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I refer the hon. Member to the previous answer provided to the right hon. Member for Normanton (Ed Balls) on 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 980W. This details provision for domestic violence within both West Yorkshire and Wakefield.

Group 4 Securicor

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the Answer of 15 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 2126W, on Group 4 Securicor, what the value of contracts is expected to be in each region. [55671]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The latest available information suggests that in the financial year 2005-06 the total value of the contracts awarded to Group 4 Securicor for electronic monitoring, broken down by region, is expected to be as in the following table:

Region	*£ million*
North East and North West	14.7
East Midlands, Yorkshire and Humberside	11.3
South East and South West	10.0

Home Detention Curfews

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders in Hertfordshire were on home detention curfews (HDCs) in 2004-05; and what proportion of these offenders failed to complete the HDC period successfully. [49332]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information requested, as recorded on the Prison Service IT system, is provided in the following table.

Number of persons released from prisons in Hertfordshire[1] on Home Detention Curfews (HDC) in 2004-05 and percentage of those offenders who failed to complete the HDC period

The Mount[2]	*2004*	*2005*	*Total*
Released on HDC	61	82	143
Recalls	16	21	37
Percentage recalled	26	25.6	25.9

[1] The question has been answered to give the number of prisoners released from Hertfordshire prisons; information on offenders from Hertfordshire who have been released on HDC is not held centrally.
[2] Total for Hertfordshire.

Linda Gilroy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many places were occupied in *(a)* probation hostels and *(b)* voluntary sector hostels in (i) England and (ii) Wales where the offender was known to the Multi-Agency Public Protection panel on the latest date for which figures are available. [52316]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The data in the table relate to Approved Premises, formerly bail and probation hostels, in England and Wales. Data are not collected centrally on other types of hostel accommodation outside the Approved Premises Estate which may accommodate ex-offenders.

	Number as at 30 September 2005
Residents in Approved Premises managed by the Probation Service in England who are subject to supervision by Multi-Agency Public Protection Panels	138
Residents in Approved Premises managed by the voluntary sector in England who are subject to supervision by Multi-Agency Public Protection Panels	13
Residents in Approved Premises managed by the Probation Service[1] in Wales who are subject to supervision by Multi-Agency Public Protection Panels	7

[1] All of the Approved Premises in Wales are run by probation boards.

IND Procedures

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what enforcement action is taken against those who are required to report to the Immigration and Nationality Directorate and who miss two appointments in a row; and if he will make a statement. [70968]

Mr. McNulty: The operational response to any failure to comply with a condition of temporary admission will depend upon all the circumstances of the case. Sometimes this can be achieved by writing to applicants and reminding them of their obligation to observe the conditions attached to their temporary admission, but in more serious cases detention or prosecution may be appropriate.

A programme is currently underway whereby two successive failures to report leads to expiry of the Application Registration Card and in turn to loss of access to asylum support. Access to support can be regained simply by resumption of reporting.

GREAT BRITAIN HOUSE OF COMM
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HAN
2005/2006

Published on microfiche by Chadwyck
Learning
The Quor
Cambridg
England

Distributed in the USA by ProQuest
300 North
PO Box 1
Ann Arbo
MI 48106

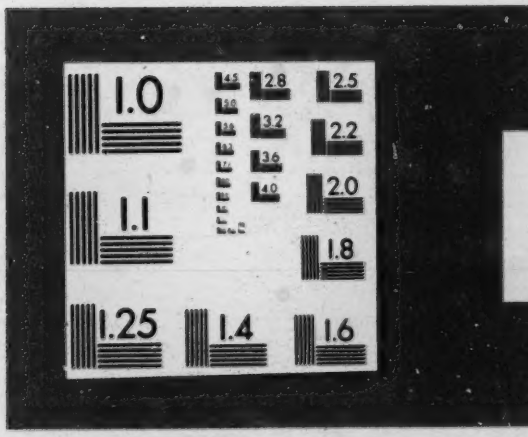
Date of publication: 2006/2007

Reproduction rights: © Parliamentary co
permission of the Controller of Her Majesty

Microfiche edition: © 2006/2007 ProQue
reserved.

Technical data: Film type: positive silver
conforming to AIIM and BSI standards.

Producing laboratory: Capita Micromedi



ONS
ARD)

Healey (a ProQuest Information and
ompany)
m, Barnwell Road
CB5 8SW

nformation and Learning
Zeeb Rd
46

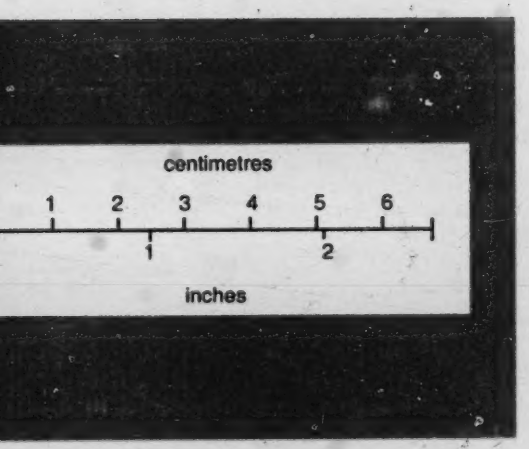
346, USA

yright 2005/2006. Reproduced by
s Stationery Office.

t Information and Learning. All rights

alide, archivally permanent microfiche

Solutions



Leyhill Open Prison

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many escapes there have been from Leyhill open prison in each quarter since Q1 1999; what original offences were committed by each person who escaped; and if he will make a statement. [45593]

Mr. Sutcliffe: There have been 393 prisoner absconds from Leyhill prison since 1999. Data on the convictions of those who absconded are given in the following table. The total number of absconds is not equal to the total number of offences. There is a shortfall of four offences, due to double entry of incidents. The information is held on an annualised basis, and to break it down on a quarterly basis could only be carried out at disproportionate cost. The data have been extracted from the prison service incident reporting system (IRS). IRS has a number of inconsistencies and is currently under review.

As soon as a prisoner is found to have absconded from an open prison the local police are informed immediately. The prisoner's security category is reviewed when the prisoner is recaptured and returned to an appropriate closed prison.

Convictions of prisoners absconding from Leyhill prison between 1999 and 2005

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Assault Occasioning Actual Bodily Harm	—	—	—	2	—	2
Affray	—	—	—	—	1	—
Aggravated Burglary	—	—	—	—	—	—
Arson	—	1	—	—	—	—
Assault A Police Officer	—	—	—	—	—	1
Assault With Intent To Cause Grievous Bodily Harm	—	—	—	—	1	—
Assault With Intent To Rob	1	—	—	—	—	—
Attempted Burglary	—	—	—	—	1	—
Attempted Deception	—	—	—	—	—	1
Attempted Murder	—	—	—	—	1	—
Attempt To Pervert The Course Of Justice	—	—	—	—	1	1
Attempted Robbery	—	—	—	—	2	2
Attempt To Commit Theft	—	—	—	—	1	—
Blackmail	—	—	—	—	—	—
Breach Of Community Service Order	—	—	—	—	2	—
Breach Of Probation Order	—	—	—	—	1	—
Breach Of Supervision Order	—	—	—	1	—	—
Burglary	17	8	3	3	33	39
Burglary Of A Dwelling Place	—	—	—	—	4	3
Conspiracy To Commit A Kidnap	—	—	—	—	—	—
Conspiracy To Riot	—	—	—	—	—	1
Conspiracy To Supply Drugs	—	—	—	—	1	—
Conspiracy To Commit Theft	—	—	—	—	1	—
Convictions During Original Sentence	—	—	—	—	—	—
Criminal Damage	—	1	1	—	—	—
Customs Evasion (Drugs Related)	—	—	—	—	2	—
Driving whilst disqualified	—	1	1	—	3	—
Deception	—	—	—	1	—	—
Death By Reckless Driving	1	—	—	—	—	2
False Instruments	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fraud	1	—	—	1	—	—
Inflict Grievous Bodily Harm	1	—	—	2	—	2
Go Equipped For Stealing	—	—	—	—	—	—
Holding Warrant	—	2	—	—	2	3
Handling Stolen Goods	—	—	1	1	1	1
Kidnap	—	—	1	—	—	—
Import/Export/Drug	—	—	—	—	—	1
Manslaughter	1	—	1	1	—	2
Murder	3	5	2	2	3	6
Other Drug Offences	—	—	—	—	1	—
Possession Drug	—	—	—	—	2	—
Possession Drugs With Intent To Supply	1	—	2	—	4	3
Possession Of Firearm With Intent. Endanger Life	1	2	—	—	2	—
Possession Of An Offensive Weapon	—	—	—	—	—	1
Rape	1	2	—	—	2	1
Reckless Driving	1	—	—	1	—	1
Robbery	3	1	2	5	17	13

Convictions of prisoners absconding from Leyhill prison between 1999 and 2005

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
Assault Occasioning Actual Bodily Harm	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
Affray	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	2
Aggravated Burglary	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Arson	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2
Assault A Police Officer	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Assault With Intent To Cause Grievous Bodily Harm	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Assault With Intent To Rob	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Attempted Burglary	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Attempted Deception	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Attempted Murder	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Attempt To Pervert The Course Of Justice	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Attempted Robbery	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	6
Attempt To Commit Theft	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Blackmail	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Breach Of Community Service Order	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Breach Of Probation Order	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Breach Of Supervision Order	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Burglary	—	—	—	—	—	—	22	—	125
Burglary Of A Dwelling Place	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	1	14
Conspiracy To Commit A Kidnap	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Conspiracy To Riot	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Conspiracy To Supply Drugs	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Conspiracy To Commit Theft	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	3
Convictions During Original Sentence	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Criminal Damage	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Customs Evasion (Drugs Related)	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	4
Driving whilst disqualified	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
Deception	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Death By Reckless Driving	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
False Instruments	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Fraud	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Inflict Grievous Bodily Harm	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	1	9
Go Equipped For Stealing	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Holding Warrant	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	8
Handling Stolen Goods	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	6
Kidnap	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	
Import/Export/Drug	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	3
Manslaughter	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
Murder	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	22
Other Drug Offences	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Possession Drug	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	3
Possession Drugs With Intent To Supply	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	14
Possession Of Firearm With Intent. Endanger Life	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	6
Possession Of An Offensive Weapon	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Rape	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	7
Reckless Driving	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
Robbery	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	1	57
Sec 40 convictions during original sentence	1	1	—	—	1	1	—	—	3
Supplying Drugs	1	—	—	—	2	5	—	—	8
Taking And Driving Away	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	2
Theft	1	1	4	1	3	6	1	—	18
Threatening/Disorderly Behaviour	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	3
Wounding (Inflicting Grievous Bodily Harm)	—	—	—	1	2	1	—	—	4
Wounding With Intent To Inflict Grievous Bodily Harm	1	—	—	—	1	4	—	—	6
Vehicle Relate	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	2
Violent Disorder	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1

	2005	2006	Total
Supplying Drugs	2	—	10
Taking And Driving Away	2	—	4
Theft	1	—	17
Threatening/Disorderly Behaviour	—	—	3
Wounding (Inflicting Grievous Bodily Harm)	1	—	5
Wounding With Intent To Inflict Grievous Bodily Harm	—	—	6
Vehicle Relate	—	—	2
Violent Disorder	—	—	1
Total	—	—	389

Note:
The table excludes four offences where incidents where entered twice.

Medomsley Detention Centre

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will establish an independent and public inquiry into the abuse of inmates at the Medomsley Detention Centre in County Durham between 1970 and 1990. [69466]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 9 May 2006]:* The Government are aware of outstanding civil claims relating to abuse of prisoners at the Medomsley detention centre which closed in 1983. While these civil actions are ongoing it would be inappropriate to comment on any calls for a public inquiry.

National Offender Management Service

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effect of the introduction of the National Offender Management Service on jobs in *(a)* Romford and *(b)* Havering. [48550]

Mr. Sutcliffe: There are currently 57 probation employees in the probation borough of Barking/Dagenham/Havering of which Romford and Havering are a part.

From 1 April 2006, London Probation will be working to the Offender Management Model. This working structure is being launched in line with the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and will apply to Probation nationally.

End-to-end Offender Management focuses on one continuous supervision approach for each offender, whether in a custodial or community setting. The emphasis is on the quality of the relationship between staff and the individual offender, and the importance of experiencing delivery of the sentence as a coherent whole.

Following a consultation process and a series of test Borough 'walkthroughs', the London Arrangements were approved by the London Probation Offender Management Project Board. The arrangements take account of the commitment given to the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit regarding the achievement of timely delivery of reports to Courts.

From November 2005 to March 2006, the end-to-end Offender Management implementation sees a phased approach, with a detailed plan, overseen by the Project Board. Within each borough, a Borough Implementation Team was created to address and manage the implementation in their borough. This covers the areas of Human Resources, IT, Health and Safety, and Premises. A Project Manager, responsible for overseeing their group of boroughs, and overall, coordinates, manages and feeds back the progresses of the Boroughs to the central Project Manager.

Mr. Anthony Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the main responsibilities of regional offender managers will be under the National Offender Management Service arrangements for the financial year 2006-07; and what is the legal authority under which they carry out those responsibilities. [52239]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Regional Offender Managers will be commissioning services from prison and probation areas through Service Level Agreements from 1 April 2006. Their main responsibilities will include building relationships with providers, other commissioners and key stakeholders; agreeing and monitoring SLAs; and delivering on Reducing Re-offending Action Plans. The current legislative framework which sets out the statutory duties of probation boards remains in place, and is unchanged by the creation of Service Level Agreements. However, the SLAs are the key mechanism for introducing commissioning, and signed SLAs will demonstrate the strength of the relationships, and any legal authority derives from the fact that ROMs are Crown servants exercising the powers of the Secretary of State.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether service level agreements between regional offender managers and probation boards under the National Offender Management Service arrangements are legally binding. [53916]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Service level agreements between Regional Offender Managers and probation boards are not legally binding, but are the key mechanism for introducing commissioning.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what arrangements are in place to deal with probation boards or trusts that decline to accept a piece of work. [53917]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Probation Boards have a statutory duty to provide probation services and so are not able to refuse work. Under the proposals set out in the consultation paper "Restructuring Probation to Reduce Re-offending", the areas of work undertaken by a Probation Trust would be addressed in the negotiation and agreement of contracts with the commissioner and, thereafter, through contract management processes.

Offences Against the Person Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of those convicted under Section 20 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 since 1997 have re-offended within a year. [48880]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The most recent re-offending data for adults were published in "Re-offending of adults: results from the 2002 cohort" which is available through the Home Office's website: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/index.htm. The report shows the re-offending rates of those offenders who start community penalties of who are discharged from prison in the first quarter of 2002.

Further analysis of the 2000 data shows that 25 per cent. of offenders sentenced under Section 20 of the Offences against the Person Act 1861 re-offended within 1 year and were subsequently convicted. The corresponding figure for 2002 is 26 per cent.

Re-offending data broken down by legislative act are not readily available for other years.

Passports

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many adults in Bassetlaw constituency do not have a passport. [69803]

Joan Ryan: The identity and passport service collects address information at the time of applying for a passport. The adult passport has a ten year validity period during which time the holder may move residence a number of times. As such, we cannot reliably identify the number of passport holders within any given area.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the statement of 2 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 58WS, on passports, (1) what estimate he has made of the cost of the new interview offices in *(a)* their first year of operation and *(b)* each of the subsequent five years; [71162]

(2) what estimate he has made of the average number of hours per week during which interview offices will be open; [71163]

(3) what the furthest distance is that an individual will have to travel to reach the nearest interview office of the Identity and Passport Service in *(a)* England, *(b)* Wales and *(c)* Scotland; [71164]

(4) what estimate he has made of the cost of *(a)* employing staff in the interview offices for the Identity and Passport Service and *(b)* the recruitment process for staff; [71166]

(5) what estimate he has made of the expected average annual salary to be paid to *(a)* area managers, *(b)* office managers, *(c)* interviewers and *(d)* network heads in the interview offices for the Identity and Passport Service. [71167]

Joan Ryan: The cost of the premises and facilities management contract will be £55 million over three years. This and other costs for the first year of operation have been included in the estimated cost of £350 million for passport operating expenditure, excluding FCO, for 2006-07, published on 21 April in the IPS Corporate and Business Plan. Future estimates will continue to be reviewed annually as part of the regular business planning and budget setting process.

The number of days of opening per week will differ between offices from two to six days, depending on the number of applications expected. The standard hours of opening hours for all but the seven smallest offices will be 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and all offices will be open on Saturdays. The 10 busiest offices will open for 60 hours per week over six days. Given this variation in the number of days of opening, an average figure for hours of opening could be misinterpreted. However, the arithmetical average of opening hours for the 69 offices is 35.79 per office per week.

It is not possible to give the information on furthest distances to travel in the form requested. There will be an office within 20 miles of 75.6 per cent. of the population and within 40 miles of 98.86 per cent. of the population. For people living in areas where the journey to an office would take more than an hour, the remote communities service described in the document placed in the Library on 2 May will be developed. Other than the Scilly Isles, all these areas are in Scotland or Wales.

The costs of recruitment and employment of staff are included in the estimated expenditure on passports published in the IPS Corporate and Business Plan.

The salary ranges offered for these jobs are follows:

Expected average annual salary to be paid for the Identity and Passport Service

	London area	*Elsewhere in UK*
Network Head	£42,969-£57,012	£41,117-£54,556
Area Manager	£29,655-£36,846	£28,471-£35,375
Office Manager	£23,764-£30,063	£22,817-£28,865
Interviewer	£18,079-£24,037	£17,377-£23,076

Averages cannot be calculated until recruitment is complete.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many adults in Tamworth constituency do not have a passport. [71240]

Joan Ryan: The Identity and Passport Service collects address information at the time of applying for a passport. The adult passport has a 10 year validity period during which time the holder may move residence a number of times. As such, we cannot reliably identify the number of passport holders within any given area.

Police (Dorset)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the use of public panels to determine career promotion prospects for police officers in Dorset; whether he has plans to extend the scheme to other forces; and if he will make a statement. [71554]

Mr. Byrne: There is no assessment currently planned by the Home Office in respect of the approach to the internal police promotions system process adopted by Dorset police. Dorset's use of lay panels as part of their own internal system is an initiative local to the

force. However, the force started a review of the scheme in May 2006 and we will be interested to see its findings. In the meantime, we have no plans to extend this approach across other forces.

Prisons

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on the transport of prisoners who are *(a)* pregnant and *(b)* suffering from medical conditions affecting mobility. [51888]

Mr. Sutcliffe: NOMS aims to transport pregnant prisoners and those with restricted mobility, as well as any other prisoners with particular medical needs, in non-cellular vehicles, whenever possible. This follows an assessment of their medical and personal needs by prison operational managers and health care professionals. The contractor should be advised of this requirement in advance of the journey.

Where this has not happened, and the prisoner declares a medical condition or that they are pregnant, the contractor must seek the advice of a health care professional as to whether a non-cellular vehicle should be used for the transfer.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the Answer of 1 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 829-30W, on prisoners, how many sets were purchased in each year between 1997-98 and 2003-04. [57875]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The supplier of television sets is only able to provide data for the last three financial years. The Prison Service does not have separate records showing the number of sets purchased between 1997-98 and 2003-04.

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what payments of compensation have been made to prisoners since 1 February 2005 and what the cause of complaint was in each case. [52545]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table details the compensation payments made to prisoners by the public sector Prison Service in England and Wales between January 2005 and December 2005. Data on the amount of compensation paid by contracted prison operators are not collated centrally. However, any payments would come from the operator.

Table showing compensation payments made to prisoners by the public sector Prison Service in England and Wales between January 2005 and December 2005

			Injury	
Date completed	*Abuse/harassment*	*Assault by prisoner*	*Assault by staff*	*Other*
2004-05 Q4				
Number of cases settled	1	4	1	10
Total settlement amount (£)	500	25,009	20,500	30,126
2005-06 Q1				
Number of cases settled	1	—	1	10
Total settlement amount (£)	500	—	12,000	22,800
2005-06 Q2				
Number of cases settled	—	1	1	6
Total settlement amount (£)	—	10,920	1,250	16,450
2005-06 Q3				
Number of cases settled	—	1	1	8
Total settlement amount (£)	—	2,000	100,000	30,150
Total number of cases settled	2	6	4	34
Total settlement amount (£)	1,000	37,929	133,750	99,526

		Injury		
Date completed	*Slips, trips and falls*	*Sport*	*Medical negligence*	*Other*
2004-05 Q4				
Number of cases settled	8	—	1	2
Total settlement amount (£)	23,150	—	10,000	5,050
2005-06 Q1				
Number of cases settled	3	—	2	3
Total settlement amount (£)	8,725	—	27,200	10,500

Date completed	Injury: Slips, trips and falls	Sport	Medical negligence	Other
2005-06 Q2				
Number of cases settled	5	—	2	5
Total settlement amount (£)	14,375	—	10,000	36,520
2005-06 Q3				
Number of cases settled	5	1	4	2
Total settlement amount (£)	23,155	1,200	173,500	1,608
Total number of cases settled	21	1	9	12
Total settlement amount (£)	69,405	1,200	220,700	53,678

Date completed	Loss or damage to possessions	Unlawful detention	Total
2004-05 Q4			
Number of cases settled	7	7	41
Total settlement amount (£)	8,191	16,560	139,086
2005-06 Q1			
Number of cases settled	9	5	34
Total settlement amount (£)	2,681	13,250	97,656
2005-06 Q2			
Number of cases settled	13	12	45
Total settlement amount (£)	5,270	18,050	112,835
2005-06 Q3			
Number of cases settled	16	15	53
Total settlement amount (£)	2,634	30,670	364,917
Total number of cases settled	45	39	173
Total settlement amount (£)	18,776	78,530	714,495

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* remand prisoners and *(b)* sentenced prisoners suffering from mental problems. [45212]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Information on the number of prisoners with mental problems is not held centrally.

A survey of psychiatric morbidity among prisoners in England and Wales undertaken in 1997 by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimated that around 90 per cent. of prisoners had at least one of the five disorders considered in the survey. Looking at the results of this survey in more detail, some 10 per cent. of men on remand, 7 per cent. of sentenced men and 14 per cent. of all women had suffered a functional psychosis (such as schizophrenia or manic depression) in the past year. Around 59 per cent. of men on remand, 40 per cent. of sentenced men, 76 per cent. of women on remand and 63 per cent. of sentenced women had suffered from a neurotic disorder in the previous week. Rates of personality disorder were 78 per cent. amongst remanded men, 64 per cent. among sentenced men and 50 per cent. among all women.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the upgrading of governor grade positions at HM Prison Buckley Hall; on what basis the decision to upgrade was taken; whether the upgrade is permanent; from which budget the promotion is paid; and who decided *(a)* the basis of the upgrade and *(b)* the source of the finance to pay for the upgrade. [69454]

Mr. Sutcliffe: There have been two instances in which managers have been deployed in the prison who carry a more senior grade and payband than the post requires. This was partly to assist in the change of role for the prison to a male establishment, but also because of the individual circumstances of the managers. The decision to deploy these staff was made by senior Prison Service management. Any additional costs that may have been incurred would have been met from within the establishment and area budget.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many investigations there have been into alleged misconduct of prison governors at HMP Wandsworth in the last five years; what the *(a)* length and *(b)* outcome was of each investigation; and if he will make a statement. [48511]

Mr. Sutcliffe: There have been six investigations in the last five years into allegations of misconduct by governor grades at Wandsworth. Each investigation may include more than one employee and include governor grades. Two investigations required no further action and a further three required disciplinary hearings. The sixth investigation is still under way and the outcome is not yet known. The outcome of one investigation concluded in no further action but advice and guidance to the individuals was issued. Of the six investigations: two were less than six months in duration, three were between six months and a year in duration, and one is still under way.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on the preparation of *(a)* adult prisoners and *(b)* young offenders for release from custody and rejoining their families; and if he will make a statement. [55074]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government are committed to reducing re-offending by both adults and younger offenders. We recognise that, in the case of those released from custodial sentences, this can be achieved only through successful reintegration into the community. This, in turn, requires action from the earliest stages to address offenders' needs; examples of activity taking place in prisons include basic skills training and work to increase offenders' employability.

In recent months we have launched a series of complementary initiatives, to reduce re-offending. Last November we published the National Reducing Re-offending Delivery Plan, setting out our plans over the next 18 months for tackling re-offending, working in partnership at national, regional and local levels.

At the same time we launched three important new alliances, which will develop existing links with the corporate sector and with the faith and voluntary and community sector; we will also build on links with local authorities and other non-CJS partners, through the Civic Society Alliance. The alliances reflect the reality of our intention to develop partnerships at all levels to reduce re-offending.

Last month, we published "A Five Year Strategy for Protecting the Public and Reducing Re-offending". This sets out our wider vision of how the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) will work with its partners in the coming years, to reduce re-offending, to cut crime and to help create a safer, more secure society.

Also last month, the Youth Justice Board published its Youth Resettlement Framework Action Plan community prisons. The framework focuses on seven resettlement pathways: Case Management and Transitions; Accommodation; Education, Training and Employment; Health; Substance Misuse; Families; and Finance, Benefit and Debt. It highlights the main actions required at local, regional and national level, emphasising the need to take account of the reducing re-offending alliances.

The framework will be continually influenced by developing practice and monitored by a strategic steering group of key partners at national level. This group will provide an overview for the NOMS Programme Board and the Youth Justice Board, promoting and disseminating practice as it develops. The framework will be revisited in 12 months time when a formal review of its impact will be conducted by the Youth Justice Board. The regional reducing re-offending partnership boards will be instrumental in implementing effective resettlement for young people and links have already been established.

One of the pathways in the Reducing Re-offending Delivery Plan focuses on offenders' children and families. It will help offenders maintain family relationships and provide support while they are serving sentence and in sustaining changes in behaviour thereafter. The pathway is in the early stages of development and we are working to establish governance arrangements, including establishing a cross-Government sub-board. The sub-board will enable us to ensure our policies across government are aligned and mutually supportive, highlighting good practice while preventing duplication of effort and resources. As an important element of the work, a three year project to establish a regional pathfinder is now getting under way under the management of the regional offender manager for the West Midlands. Its objectives are to strengthen family ties, to support children and families and reduce re-offending through a collaborative approach.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many inmates in adult prisons and young offender institutions have *(a)* dependent spouses or partners and *(b)* dependent children. [55081]

Mr. Sutcliffe: There are no routinely collected data on the number of prisoners in prison who have dependent spouses/partners or dependent children. However, a representative survey of 1,944 prisoners nearing release conducted by the Home Office in 2003 found that 31 per cent. of prisoners (not including juveniles under 18 years of age) reported living with a spouse or partner immediately before custody (no information is available on whether the partner was dependent or not). The same survey found that 16 per cent. of prisoners reported living with dependent children under the age of 18 before custody.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of *(a)* the number of buildings in the prison estate with leaking roofs, *(b)* the ages of those buildings, *(c)* how many rooms in those buildings are not in use as a result of leaking roofs, *(d)* what proportion of those buildings are the same style as X and Y blocks at HM Prison Spring Hill and *(e)* what proportion were built by the same contractor. [55595]

Mr. Sutcliffe: To assemble all the information requested in this question could be done only at disproportionate cost.

The latest information held on the NOMS maintenance database indicates that the total number of buildings currently in the public prison estate (dating from the 19th century to 2003) with leaks is 1,357 and that it would cost an estimated £23 million for them to be repaired. The style of block at HMP Spring Hill accounts for 2.1 per cent. of the 1,357 recorded. The block suppliers for HMP Spring Hill (Elliot Redispace) account for 1.4 per cent. of the 1,357 recorded.

This 1,357 recording of leaks includes a range of buildings experiencing varying degrees of leaking and the prisons remain operational. A series of schemes to address leaking roof problems have been undertaken in recent years to address the most pressing needs and such schemes are continuing.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many listeners there are at each prison; how many are designated as foreign nationals; and if he will list the nationalities of listeners at each prison. [62766]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information required is not collated centrally in the requested format and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost. 'Listeners' are Samaritan-trained prisoner peer supporters who provide emotional confidential support to prisoners. 2,650 listeners were recruited across the estate between October 2001 and March 2004.

There are currently 118 listener schemes operating in prisons in England and Wales. Where listener schemes exist listeners are made available to all prisoners, and prisons are required to ensure that prisoners have timely access to listeners. The number of contacts recorded (by Samaritans) between listeners and prisoners between July to December 2005 was 28,570.

Provision for listeners was assessed as part of Safer Custody Group's peer support project, which ran from April 2001 to March 2004, and through a three-year project undertaken by the Samaritans, funded jointly by Safer Custody Group and Active Community Unit, to review the work of listeners and Samaritans being carried out in 47 'high-risk' prisons including prisoner access to listeners.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of day release schemes for prisoners operated in other countries. [65593]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Home Office has not undertaken an assessment of day release schemes in other countries.

Release on temporary licence (ROTL) is used by prison governors to improve resettlement opportunities for prisoners and to maintain family ties. In conjunction with a stringent risk assessment process, ROTL plays a key role in the management of prisoners in the resettlement estate. This comprises 30 establishments, mainly open prisons, which provide specific regimes for longer term prisoners, including life sentence prisoners, during the final two years of their sentence. The resettlement estate provides opportunities for prisoners to address offending behaviour, educational and training needs, and to undertake unpaid community work and, finally, paid employment.

The number of prisoners released on ROTL for resettlement purposes varies slightly over time. The most recent snapshot of resettlement estate activity was undertaken in February 2006 and revealed that some 1,550 prisoners were engaged in unpaid community work and paid employment placements.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on his strategy for tackling prisoner alcohol misuse and addiction. [65599]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The national offender management service published in December 2004 a comprehensive 'Alcohol strategy for prisoners'.

The strategy provides a framework for addressing prisoners' alcohol problems and acts as a benchmark for prisons to formulate their response to alcohol misuse at local level.

This strategy can be accessed at the following link:

http://www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk/assets/documents/100008 2AAddressing_Alcohol_Misuse.doc

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will reconstruct the prison regime to support prisoners working a conventional 9 am to 5 pm working day in education, vocational training or work programmes. [65610]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The national offender manager, the regional offender managers and the director of offender management in Wales commission services for offenders in custody and the community, along with other Government Departments including the Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills. They will commission services from the public sector prison service and private sector prisons on the basis of offenders needs. These needs include employment, training and education needs. However, it is for providers—whether the prison service, private prison contractor or subcontractors to those running prisons—to construct a prison regime which fulfils offenders' employment training and education needs within available resources.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will extend the Offenders Assessment System to apply to remand and short-term prisoners. [65613]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Offender Assessment System, OASys, will be extended to include short-term prisoners when Custody Plus is implemented later this year. It would not be appropriate to extend it to include remand prisoners as it cannot properly be applied to those who have not as yet been convicted of an offence.

Probation Service

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he plans to introduce legislation to give the Secretary of State the power to contract out probation services. [48193]

Mr. Sutcliffe: We intend to bring forward legislation to restructure probation services as soon as the parliamentary timetable allows.

Prostitution

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding will be made available to implement the Coordinated Prostitution Strategy. [62749]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* Local activity to support the strategy, including the development of routes out for those involved in prostitution, is funded from a number of existing sources. For example, 87 Local Strategic Partnerships receive neighbourhood renewal fund to kick start the improvement of services to tackle deprivation. There are also 35 neighbourhood management pathfinders with a focus on changing the way in which key mainstream services are delivered so that they meet the needs and priorities of neighbourhoods, and 39 new deal for communities partnerships to address the priority needs of neighbourhoods.

The safer and stronger communities fund is also part of the local area agreement approach and can be used to address crime and antisocial behaviour, and to reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs.

Women trapped in prostitution frequently have a complex range of needs which can include drug treatment and other health needs, and housing. A key objective of the strategy is to ensure that these needs are recognised and that services are accessible to this group. The most urgent need for many is for drug treatment. In addition to NHS funding through primary care trusts and social services funding streams, central Government provides funding for drug treatment through the pooled treatment budget, which increased by 18 per cent. from £253 million in 2004-05 to £299 million in 2005-06. The other urgent need is for appropriate and stable housing. The strategy encourages local authorities to ensure that relevant services, such as those provided via the Supporting People programme, are made accessible to women exiting prostitution.

Other sources of Government funding are available to support this aspect of the strategy. For example, since 2004 the Home Office has placed £5.25 million into the victims fund to support the development of support services for victims of sexual offending. A number of projects involved in the provision of support for those involved in prostitution have received grants from this fund.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prostitutes in England and Wales have received antisocial behaviour orders since their introduction. [63769]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* The requested information is not collated centrally.

Security Industry Authority

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for licences to the Security Industry Authority *(a)* are outstanding and *(b)* have been outstanding for more than (i) three and (ii) six months; and if he will make a statement. [55178]

Mr. Coaker *[holding answer 2 March 2006]:* Due to the number of late applications there is a four week delay checking and scanning applications onto the licensing system. Once on the system, the Security Industry Authority (SIA) aim to process 80 per cent. of applicants within six weeks. In the four months prior to Christmas, (excluding the effect of bank holidays) the SIA completed processing of 23,191 applications, 86 per cent. within the six week target.

At 28 February there were 23,191 applications with the SIA being processed. Of those 628 (2.7 per cent.) had been on their system for more than three months and 139 (0.6 per cent.) for more than six months. These circumstances are for the protection of the public and arise when the SIA or the CRB (provider of the criminality checks) are waiting for information from the applicant. The main issues are either confirmation of training or further CRB enquires where there are doubts about the identity of the applicant, often requiring fingerprint verification by the police. Other smaller numbers are where payments have failed and not been rectified or where overseas criminality checks are outstanding. Of the 628 over three months, 217 (35 per cent.) were awaiting training confirmation and 305 (49 per cent.) were awaiting further identity checks by the CRB.

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much the Security Industry Agency has cost. [58958]

Mr. Coaker: The Security Industry Authority (SIA) is required to be self-financing from the licence fee income but it was always anticipated that the SIA would not break even in its first couple of years, because of the gradual introduction of licensing, which will eventually meet all the SIA's running costs. The deficit in the first year, 2003-04, was £7.1 million as the SIA had no licence income. In 2004-05, the deficit was £13 million, and the estimated deficit for 2005-06 is about £3.5 million.

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 14 March 2006 to question 52038, on the security industry, what assumptions were made in the Security Industry Authority's estimate that current demand for door supervisors is 46,000. [59973]

Mr. Coaker: The assumptions made in the answer pursuant to question 52038 reflected original assumptions made by the Security Industry Authority (SIA) which were subsequently modified. The original SIA planning assumptions were based on the number of door supervisors registered under local authority registration schemes applicable to individuals working in premises licensed for the sale and consumption of alcohol. Such schemes extended to approximately 60 per cent. of local authorities, and numbers for England and Wales were extrapolated from this.

The SIA discussed the assumptions with specialist sector bodies. It based its current assumption on the experience in the pilot region where the numbers applying for licences were significantly lower than expectations. Once the offence date had passed the SIA obtained information through its compliance team and enforcement partners on the numbers of licensed and unlicensed individuals they were finding during visits to premises and their joint compliance operations. At the time this was approximately 80 per cent. licensed and 20 per cent. unlicensed; on this basis the SIA revised its numbers for the pilot region and extrapolated them to the other regions.

These figures have been reviewed a number of times but are believed to be the best data available. The SIA also believes, but as yet has no firm evidence, that a significant percentage of door supervisors have de-selected themselves because they would not meet the licensing criteria, and that a percentage may have been working in the informal economy.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether security industry workers who have applied for a licence to the Security Industry Authority but who have not yet received one will be able to continue in their employment. [62266]

Mr. Coaker: From 20 March 2006, it became a criminal offence for manned guards to carry out security activities without a licence under the terms of the Private Security Industry Act 2001 (PSIA). Enforcement is the responsibility of the Security Industry Authority and the police. The SIA published an enforcement policy on 7 March which stated that, while they want the private security industry to be compliant with the law as quickly as possible, they will take into account a number of factors when deciding what enforcement action to take. These factors include the progress an individual has made towards getting or renewing a licence, the current licensing processing time, the time elapsed since the activity became licensable and any previous encounters with or warnings given by the SIA or other agency.

Any individual carrying out licensable activities without a licence will be committing a criminal offence, unless they have received a license dispensation notice from the SIA under the Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS). This allows accredited firms to legally deploy a proportion of their staff who have completed their training but whose applications are still being processed. As at 11 May, it is estimated that around 30,000 individuals are being deployed lawfully under the ACS Scheme.

Sex Offenders

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how decisions for parole are reached for individuals convicted of sex offences who maintain their innocence and do not participate in the Sex Offender Treatment Programme; and if he will make a statement. [53914]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Parole Board decisions on whether or not to award parole focus primarily on the risk to the public of an offence being committed at a time when the offender would otherwise be in prison. In assessing whether the safety of the public will be placed unacceptably at risk, the board is directed to take into account that the risk of violent or sexual offending is more serious than a risk of other types of offending. This must be balanced against the benefit, both to the public and the offender, of early release back into the community under a degree of supervision which might help rehabilitation and so lessen the risk of re-offending in the future.

The Parole Board considers many factors including the nature and circumstances of the offence of which the offender was convicted, any previous convictions, the offender's attitude and response in prison, what, if any, offence-related work has been completed, reports from the Prison and Probation Service and any representations from the offender himself. On the strength of the available information it makes a judgment on the likely benefit both to the offender and society in allowing the offender to serve part of the sentence in the community.

There is no requirement for an offender to admit guilt prior to making an application for parole, nor is denial of guilt or failure to attend a sex offender programme a bar to release on parole licence.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many convicted sex offenders in England and Wales have had electronic type tags fitted after their release from prison in each year between 2000 and 2005. [64908]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* Information on the number of prisoners released subject to an electronically monitored curfew under the home detention curfew scheme (HDC) for each year whose index offence was recorded as a sexual offence is given in the following table. Information on the number of convicted sex offenders who have had electronic tags fitted after other types of release from prison in each year between 2000 and 2005 is not held centrally. It could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Number of people released on HDC whose offence recorded was a sexual offence, England and Wales

Year of discharge	*Number released*
1999	15
2000	24
2001	16
2002	14
2003	8
2004	4
2005	1
Total	82

Notes:

1. These statistics are based on information recorded on the central Prison Service IT system at 21 April 2006. Further updates and amendments may be made to records on this system in future resulting in revised figures.
2. Investigations suggest that, for HDC releases covering all offence groups, around 5 per cent. of offence types recorded on this system do not relate to the offence for which they were released on HDC but relate to offences committed after release from prison and before their licence expiry date for their sentence.
3. Of the 82 discharges recorded as relating to those serving sexual offences shown in the table, 64 were actually serving a sentence for a sexual offence at the time of their release. The last offender to be released on HDC while serving a sentence for a sexual offence was released in January 2004.
4. The statistics presented in the table will also include those sentenced for abduction which was not of a sexual nature.

Hostels

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of places in hostels run by *(a)* the probation service and *(b)* the voluntary sector in (i) England and (ii) Wales were allocated to sex offenders on the latest date for which figures are available. [52315]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The data in the table relates to Approved Premises, formerly bail and probation hostels, in England and Wales. Data is not collected centrally on other types of hostel accommodation outside the Approved Premises Estate which may accommodate ex-offenders.

All of the Approved Premises in Wales are run by probation boards. The percentage of Approved Premises residents in Wales with a conviction for a sexual offence in March 2003 was 38 per cent. This is taken from the data collected as part of the snapshot survey in 2003.

As at March each year	*Percentage of residents in Approved Premises managed by the Probation Service with a current or previous conviction for sexual offences*	*Percentage of residents in Approved Premises managed by the voluntary sector with a current or previous conviction for sexual offences*
2003[1]	41	23
2004[2]	45	24

[1] Home Office Research Finding 230 "Approved Premises: results of a snapshot survey, 2003".
[2] Unpublished snapshot survey conducted in March 2004.

Under-age Drinking

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many fixed penalty notices were issued for *(a)* consumption of alcohol by and *(b)* selling alcohol to under-age people in (i) Cambridgeshire and (ii) Peterborough in each of the last five years. [52525]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The penalty notice for disorder scheme came into use in all police forces in England and Wales during 2004. There have been no penalty notices for disorder issued in Cambridgeshire for the consumption of alcohol by under 18s and the sale of alcohol to under 18s.

Yarl's Wood

Mr. Walter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children have been detained for 21 days or more in *(a)* immigration detention centres and *(b)* Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre in the last five years. [70279]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 17 May 2006]:* This information is not available in the format requested.

During the third quarter of 2005, there were 455 minors recorded as being removed or released from detention (excluding Oakington) in the UK who were detained solely under Immigration Act powers, of whom 390 were last detained in Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre. 60 of these minors were detained for a period of 21 days or more, and were all recorded as being removed or released from Yarl's Wood.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents of self-harm there were by pregnant women detained at Yarl's Wood between 1 April 2004 and January 31 2006; and what proportion of these incidents involved women in the Fast Track system. [70858]

Mr. McNulty: There have been no incidents of self-harm by women confirmed to be pregnant who were detained at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre between 1 April 2004 and 31 January 2006.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many pregnant women are held at Yarl's Wood Detention Centre; how many were held there between 1 April 2004 and 31 January 2006; and how many of these were held for *(a)* up to one week, *(b)* between one and three weeks, *(c)* between three and eight weeks and *(d)* longer than eight weeks. [70861]

Mr. McNulty: There are currently nine pregnant women detained at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre. Two of these women are part of the Fast Track process.

180 pregnant women were detained at the Centre between 1 April 2004 and 31 January 2006. Length of stay is recorded as follows:

Length of stay	*Number of pregnant women detained*
Up to 1 week	116
1–3 weeks	29
3-8 weeks	30
Longer than 8 weeks	5

Young Offenders

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of people detained in young offender institutions have received rehabilitative treatment while imprisoned in each of the past eight years. [42163]

John Reid: The following table shows the number of offending behaviour programme completions and drug treatment completions in young offender institutions and juvenile establishments for each year in which data are available. It also shows the number of educational and work skills awards, which also contribute the rehabilitation of offenders.

	Completed programmes and awards			
	Offender behaviour programme completions	*Drug programme completions*	*Education*	*Work skills awards*
1996-97	206	n/a	n/a	n/a
1997-98	401	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998-99	532	n/a	n/a	n/a

Completed programmes and awards

	Offender behaviour programme completions	*Drug programme completions*	*Education*	*Work skills awards*
1999-2000	683	n/a	n/a	n/a
2000-01	720	n/a	[1]1,613	10,761
2001-02	811	n/a	[1]1,731	16,512
2002-03	859	n/a	8,132	26,921
2003-04	1,015	496	9,559	33,772
2004-05	944	509	12,346	29,409

[1] Data for these years relate to basic skills awards at level 2 only.

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many child prisoners have been delivered to each young offenders institution after 8 pm in each of the last 12 months. [67345]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Juvenile males are aged from 15 years to 17 years and females from 16 years to 17 years. The most recent data available covering April 2005 to March 2006, for the number of juvenile prisoners returned to young offender institutions after 8 pm are set out in the following table:

Juvenile prisoners arriving at young offender institutions after 8 pm by month for the year April 2005 to March 2006

Establishment	*April*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*August*	*September*
HMYOI Ashfield	5	21	28	16	48	43
HM YOI Brinsford[1]	1	—	—	—	—	6
HMYOI Bullwood Hall[1]	—	—	—	—	—	1
HM YOI Castington	—	—	—	—	1	—
HM YOI Cookham Wood	—	—	—	—	—	1
HM YOI Downview[1]	4	1	5	1	—	—
HMYOI Eastwood Park[1]	—	3	—	—	—	1
HMYOI Feltham	14	16	31	35	12	31
HMYOI Hindley	—	—	—	—	—	1
HMYOI Huntercombe	19	22	31	38	12	25
HMYOI Lancaster Farms	—	4	2	1	1	12
HMYOI Newhall[1]	—	—	2	—	—	—
HMYOI Parc	—	—	—	—	3	—
HMYOI Reading	—	—	1	—	—	—
HMYOI Stoke Heath	14	14	18	14	25	14
HMYOI Warren Hill	36	30	54	40	22	43
HMYOI Werrington	6	2	—	1	2	5
HMYOI Wetherby	—	4	1	—	3	9

Establishment	*October*	*November*	*December*	*January*	*February*	*March*
HMYOI Ashfield	35	40	18	15	43	38
HM YOI Brinsford[1]	6	—	4	1	9	1
HMYOI Bullwood Hall[1]	—	—	—	—	—	—
HM YOI Castington	—	1	—	—	6	—
HM YOI Cookham Wood	5	2	—	1	2	—
HM YOI Downview[1]	—	2	1	1	2	1
HMYOI Eastwood Park[1]	2	1	2	2	4	5
HMYOI Feltham	65	46	11	23	5	17
HMYOI Hindley	—	—	—	—	—	—
HMYOI Huntercombe	25	26	19	21	25	24
HMYOI Lancaster Farms	10	6	1	—	1	—
HMYOI Newhall[1]	—	—	—	—	—	—
HMYOI Parc	—	—	—	—	—	—
HMYOI Reading	—	—	—	—	—	—
HMYOI Stoke Heath	30	15	15	4	9	12
HMYOI Warren Hill	46	55	48	34	25	37
HMYOI Werrington	7	5	—	1	1	1
HMYOI Wetherby	3	8	1	—	1	1

[1] Female establishment

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Bahamas Agreement

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will place in the Library a copy of the Bahamas Agreement. [71643]

Mr. Hoon: A copy of the Bahamas Agreement was placed in the Library of the House in 1956.

Colombia

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will assess the level of violence in Colombia, with particular reference to that directed against trade unionists. [70301]

Mr. Hoon: We remain very concerned about the situation faced by civil society, including trade unionists, in Colombia. While the situation clearly remains unacceptable, we feel that some progress has been made. Figures for 2005 show that the numbers of murders, kidnappings, displacements and massacres are generally decreasing from those of 2004. But more needs to be done. We keep the human rights situation in the country under constant review, frequently raising specific human rights cases with the Colombian authorities. We regularly meet UK and Colombian trade unionists and other civil society groups, in the UK and Colombia, to hear their views and discuss how the Government can best support them.

My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, met a British trade union delegation on 6 March to discuss their recent visit to Colombia and hear their concerns about human rights. He also discussed the issue with the Colombian Foreign Minister in the fringes of the EU/Latin America and the Caribbean summit on 12 May. In February we also funded a working visit to the UK by eight senior Colombian trade unionists to demonstrate our support to civil society in Colombia and to the important role it has to play in helping find solutions to Colombia's many problems.

EU Satellite Centre

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will list the Government's requests for surveillance information from the European Union Satellite Centre in each of the last five years. [70348]

Mr. Hoon: In the last five years the UK has requested the European Union Satellite Centre to provide analysis of earth imagery for five national tasks, all in 2003. Three of these related to arms control tasking in Asia and the Middle East, and two concerned humanitarian and rescue tasking in Africa. These taskings took place before the costs of such national requests became recoverable from the member state. These national taskings should be distinguished from UK proposals for the EU to task the Satellite Centre in support of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy. These proposals comprised five arms control tasks across the Middle East and Asia, one imagery analysis request in the Middle East and geospatial information in preparation for the G8 meeting in Gleneagles.

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the cost of the surveillance information requested from the European Union Satellite Centre in respect of the G8 summit at Gleneagles was. [70349]

Mr. Hoon: The European Union Satellite Centre has estimated the costs of information for the G8 summit at Gleneagles, including data acquisition and analysis time, at €40,000. This was paid from the Satellite Centre's annual budget, to which member states contribute.

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what satellite imaging services from the European Union Satellite Centre are being used by the Government. [70351]

Mr. Hoon: The European Union Satellite Centre produces a variety of products including two-dimensional analysis of satellite imagery and three-dimensional computer models created through the combination of information from maps and earth imagery. All products requested by the European Union from the Satellite Centre in support of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy are copied to the UK and all other member states. These are stored by the UK and contribute to the pool of information available to aid decision making on subjects including humanitarian and disaster response, arms control, border monitoring and environmental issues.

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much is allocated to *(a)* the running costs of and *(b)* buying information from the European Union Satellite Centre. [70353]

Mr. Hoon: The UK's contribution to the European Union Satellite Centre is approximately 17 per cent. of the annual running costs. This year the UK contribution will be €1.8 million. This annual funding covers the costs of tasks delegated to the Satellite Centre by unanimous EU agreement. The UK receives copies of the information provided in response to these tasks at no additional cost. It has not made any national requests since 2004, when charging for additional information requests for national use was introduced.

General Affairs and External Relations Council

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make a statement on the outcome of the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 15 May. [72056]

Mr. Hoon: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I attended the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) on 15 May. The council discussed

preparations for the June European council and a range of foreign policy issues, including the latest developments in the Western Balkans, Nepal, Africa, Iran, the Middle East Peace Process and Iraq. Defence Ministers met separately to discuss the European Defence Agency, Capabilities and EU Force for the Democratic Republic for Congo. My right hon. Friend the Defence Secretary represented the UK. In joint session Foreign and Defence Ministers discussed emergency and crisis response, civil-military co-operation and security sector reform in the Western Balkans.

For a fuller read out of discussions, I refer the hon. Member to the post-GAERC written ministerial statement, which will be issued shortly.

Iran

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what her policy is on possible military action against Iran; and if she will make a statement. [71855]

Dr. Howells: As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary said on 8 May, 'no-one has the intention to take military action' against Iran. The international community is determined that Iran should comply with the requirements of the International Atomic Energy Agency Board of Governors and the Security Council. To that end, we are all pursuing a diplomatic process and we are working hard to make sure it succeeds.

Iraq

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate has been made of the rate of unemployment in *(a)* Al Basrah, *(b)* Al Muthanna, *(c)* Dhi Qar and *(d)* Maysan provinces in Iraq. [70967]

Hilary Benn: I have been asked to reply.

The Iraqi Central Office for Statistics and Information Technology (COSIT) is responsible for producing official statistics on the unemployment rate and has conducted three Labour Force Surveys since 2003. The latest November 2005 survey, reports an unemployment rate of 18 per cent. across Iraq (not including the Kurdish Regional Government or Al Anbar province). Unemployment rates for individual provinces are not published by COSIT or any other organisation.

It is important to note that there has been considerable debate over Iraqi employment statistics, and widely differing unemployment rates have been reported. One report from the Brookings Institution (Iraq Index, April 2006) at http://www.brookings.edu/iraqindex estimates the current unemployment rate to be between 25 and 40 per cent. The use of different definitions of unemployment may account for some of this variation. For example, Iraqi data has traditionally counted only those working 15 hours or more per week as "employed", whereas the International Labour Organisation (ILO) considers anyone working 1 hour or more per week to be employed.

Jamaica

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the authorities in Jamaica on *(a)* tackling homophobia and *(b)* police attitudes to and treatment of gay people. [70003]

Mr. Hoon: Our position is well-known to the Jamaican authorities.

During his visit to Jamaica on 25 April, the Under-Secretary of State for International Development, my hon. Friend the Member for Harrow, West (Mr. Thomas), made the case for repeal of legislation on buggery and spoke out against the use of homophobic lyrics in popular music. There has been no recent discussion on police attitudes to homosexuality.

Minister for Europe

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs at which meetings of the Council of the European Union the United Kingdom will be represented by the Minister for Europe. [71856]

Mr. Hoon: Together with my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary, I will routinely represent the UK at meetings of the General Affairs and External Relations Council of the European Union.

Pakistan

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the strength of the Taliban in Waziristan, Pakistan. [71640]

Dr. Howells: We share President Musharraf's concern about the Talibanisation of Waziristan. The Pakistani Taliban have at various times taken control of parts of Waziristan, including the town of Miramshah, but not for extended periods. The Government of Pakistan currently has over 80,000 troops deployed in the region, who are engaged in almost daily skirmishes with al-Qaeda and Taliban elements. We take the threat posed by the Taliban very seriously and continue to work closely with the Government of Pakistan to try to contain it. This is important not just for stability in Waziristan, but also to help reduce the risk to British forces deployed in Southern Afghanistan. The exact strength of the Pakistani Taliban is difficult to assess.

Palestinian Authority

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the answer of 11 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns. 522-3W, on the Palestinian Authority, if she will make a statement on the discussions regarding the development of a mechanism for the payment of aid to the Palestinian Authority, which took place at the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 15 May. [72150]

Dr. Howells: At the 15 May General Affairs and External Relations Council, the EU accepted the task from the Quartet (EU, US, UN and Russia) to develop a temporary international mechanism to direct and supervise delivery of assistance to the Palestinian people. We believe the mechanism should be set up as a matter of urgency. The European Commission will consult international financial institutions, and key partners and donors, to establish the mechanism as soon as possible. The UK has played a leading role in establishing the mechanism and will continue to offer assistance.

Renditions

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the Answer of 8 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 55W, on rendition, since what date the Government have expected a state to seek permission for each individual rendition flight through UK airspace and UK air bases, including overseas territories. [71485]

Dr. Howells: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 88W, and to my right hon. Friend the then Foreign Secretary's (Mr. Straw) written ministerial statement of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 37-38WS. The expectation that a State will seek permission reflects an aspect of the principle of State sovereignty over territory, which is a longstanding principle of international law. The findings of the review of the Government's files back to 1997, which were summarised in the then Foreign Secretary's written ministerial statement, demonstrate that this has been a consistent requirement; that it has been made clear to the United States authorities; and that they have sought such permission.

Sri Lanka

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of recent increased violence in Sri Lanka; and if she will make a statement. [71863]

Dr. Howells: We are deeply concerned at the recent upturn in violence in Sri Lanka, notably the suicide bombing of the army headquarters in Colombo on 25 April and the attack at sea on a troop-carrying vessel on 11 May. These Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) attacks are a clear violation of the Cease-fire Agreement, break the commitment they made at talks in Geneva in February, and threaten prospects for peace. There is no excuse for terrorism. The LTTE is a proscribed organisation in Britain and is likely also to be listed by the EU as a terrorist organisation.

But the background to the violence in Sri Lanka is complex and we are also very concerned by reports of killings of civilians and the continued atrocities committed by armed groups. It is essential that the Government of Sri Lanka also live up to its responsibilities in preventing such groups from operating.

We continue to believe that dialogue is the only way to achieve a negotiated settlement to the internal conflict in Sri Lanka. Violence cannot solve internal differences nor bring sustainable peace. All sides need to exercise restraint and act in a constructive and patient way. We fully support the Norwegian facilitated peace talks and will continue to work for a settlement that takes full account of the legitimate demands of all communities within a democratic and stable Sri Lanka.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make a statement on the situation in Sri Lanka. [72086]

Dr. Howells: We are concerned at the upturn in violence in Sri Lanka. Recent Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam attacks on army headquarters and a troop carrying vessel are a serious violation of the Ceasefire Agreement and threaten prospects for peace. At the same time, we are concerned by killings of civilians and atrocities committed by armed groups. We look to the Government of Sri Lanka to prevent such groups from operating and to bring those responsible to justice. We fully support the Norwegian facilitated peace process and will work towards a settlement that takes full account of the legitimate concerns of all communities in Sri Lanka.

Trinidad and Tobago

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions she has had with the authorities in Trinidad and Tobago on investigating and prosecuting unlawful police killings. [70106]

Mr. Hoon: The law and order situation in Trinidad and Tobago has been deteriorating for some time and the Government acknowledge that the police response has been inadequate in various respects. Our concerns about both the human rights aspects and also the safety of UK citizens, especially in Tobago, are well known to the authorities. Most recently my noble and learned Friend the Minister of State for Criminal Justice and Offender Management, Baroness Scotland of Asthal, discussed Criminal and Judicial reform with Prime Minister Patrick Manning and senior ministers in Port of Spain on 3 May. These and other problems will continue to feature in our ongoing security dialogue with the leadership and security agencies in Trinidad and Tobago.

Turkey

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made in negotiations with the Turkish Government in developing a system of documentation which would permit people in possession of UK-issued temporary travel documents to travel from Turkey to the UK. [71193]

Mr. Hoon: We are yet to identify a long term solution to the problem of suitable documentation which would permit the travel of the small number of

individuals in Turkey who would otherwise be granted entry to the UK but have no passport on which to travel. We continue to engage with the Turkish authorities on individual cases.

Venezuela

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on UK-Venezuelan affairs. [69911]

Mr. Heon: I refer the hon. Member to the following comments made by my hon. Friend the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, (Dr. Howells) in the House on 8 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 307-311WH:

"The relationship between the United Kingdom and Venezuela is an active one. We work effectively together in several fields, including crime, counter-narcotics and energy. We have an important commercial relationship... It is the third biggest market for the UK in Latin America. ... our policy remains to seek constructive engagement with Venezuela. We have much to gain from working together".

NORTHERN IRELAND

Absenteeism

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the absenteeism rates were for each of the workforces of each of Northern Ireland's district councils in each of the last three years. [70914]

David Cairns: The information on absenteeism rates within district councils is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. However, the Local Government Auditor, under the provisions in Article 26 of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 is in the process of collecting such information for 2005-06. This information will be published and I will let you have a copy in due course.

Agricultural Weather Aid Scheme

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been *(a)* claimed and *(b)* paid out under the agricultural weather aid scheme. [71928]

David Cairns: The information is as follows:

(a) Amount claimed—£4.6 million.

(b) Amount paid out—£4,065,528.53

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many applications have been *(a)* received and *(b)* accepted in relation to the agricultural weather aid scheme. [71929]

David Cairns: The information is as follows:

(a) Number of applications received—26,354

(b) Number accepted—26,059

Classroom Assistants

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what money has been allocated for the evaluation of classroom assistants in Northern Ireland. [71367]

Maria Eagle: My Department has made available £25.7 million in respect of the costs of the job evaluation exercise, including arrears, for the period to the end of the 2005-06 financial year. This money is ring fenced for those costs once a settlement has been reached between the employers and those representing classroom assistants, and cannot be used for any other purpose. Further funding will be made available in respect of ongoing costs after 2005-06.

Dentistry

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many dentists are accepting new NHS patients in each constituency in Northern Ireland. [71313]

Paul Goggins: A dentist may practice in more than one dental surgery within a constituency or in more than one constituency. The following table shows the number of actual dental practitioners who were recently registering patients for NHS treatment within each constituency.

Number of dentists[1] providing health service dentistry by constituency who accepted new health service patients in March and April 2006

Constituency	*Number*
Belfast East	40
Belfast North	52
Belfast South	51
Belfast West	36
East Antrim	29
East Londonderry	33
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	51
Foyle	36
Lagan Valley	35
Mid Ulster	28
Newry and Armagh	52
North Antrim	45
North Down	42
South Antrim	37
South Down	33
Strangford	34
Upper Bann	47
West Tyrone	33

[1] Excludes vocational dental practitioners and assistants.

Notes:

1. Should a dentist work in more than one practice within a constituency then they have only been counted once within that constituency but if they work across constituencies then they have also been counted once in each relevant constituency.
2. Figures will not include any dentists who may still be accepting patients but who were not approached for a registration during the two-month analysis period.

Departmental Credit Cards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what credit cards are provided for senior civil servants by *(a)* each department in Northern Ireland and *(b)* his Department. [70492]

Mr. Hanson: No credit cards are issued to senior civil servants in Northern Ireland departments or the Northern Ireland Office.

Departmental Staff (Vetting)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on how many occasions vetting checks on foreign nationals working in each department in Northern Ireland, including the Northern Ireland Office, have revealed a criminal record in each of the last five years. [70451]

Paul Goggins: Prior to 1 August 2005 national security vetting information kept by the security vetting unit in the Northern Ireland Office in respect of the Northern Ireland Departments and the Northern Ireland Office was not recorded in a manner that would allow this question to be answered. However, a check of information dating from 1 August 2005 has not revealed any foreign national working in a Northern Ireland Department or the Northern Ireland Office and subject to national security vetting to have a criminal record.

District Police Partnerships

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average attendance was at public meetings held under the auspices of District Police Partnerships in Northern Ireland during 2005. [70438]

Paul Goggins: I have been advised by the Northern Ireland Policing Board that the records of the numbers of members of the public attending District Policing Partnership meetings in public are held directly by each District Policing Partnership.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the 10 *(a)* most improved and *(b)* least improved district policing partnership areas in relation to incidents of reported burglaries in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [70911]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is available on the PSNI website at: www.psni.police.uk

Footballers (Intimidation)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the police in Londonderry have reached any conclusions regarding their investigations into allegations that two footballers were intimidated during April into leaving the city. [68118]

Paul Goggins: PSNI is investigating the allegations of intimidation. However, the two men concerned have returned to Belgium and despite the attempts of local police, it has proved difficult to contact them.

Gershon Review

Mr. Francois: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made, in terms of *(a)* headcount reductions and *(b)* cost savings, in achieving the efficiency objectives set for the Department by the Gershon review. [21294]

Mr. Hain: Progress was recently reported in the 2005-06 departmental report which was published on the 11 May 2006.

Maze Prison

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what guidelines are in place in respect of *(a)* the use of, *(b)* access to and *(c)* press coverage of the former HMP Maze buildings and property. [71119]

Mr. Hanson: I have recently reviewed the procedure on access to the Maze/Long Kesh site and have placed a copy of the policy in the Libraries of both Houses.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what permissions were sought by Sinn Fein in respect of its use of HMP Maze land for a commemoration of the death of Bobby Sands; [71120]

(2) what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials have had with Sinn Fein on the use of land at HMP Maze for a commemoration of the death of Bobby Sands. [71121]

Mr. Hanson: Following representation made on behalf of the families of ex-prisoners my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for NI agreed to allow each of the families of the hunger strikers who died a private visit to pay their respects on the anniversary of the death of their family member. Appropriate arrangements were made with officials. In relation to the anniversary of the death of Bobby Sands, family members did not attend. A number of former prisoners accompanied by two Sinn Fein MPs asked at official level for, and were granted, a brief private visit to the former prison hospital. I have issued revised guidance on future such visits.

Ministerial Protection

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost was of close protection from the armed forces for Northern Ireland Ministers in each of the last eight years. [69660]

Paul Goggins: The armed forces do not provide close protection for Ministers. Close protection for Ministers is provided by PSNI.

MOT

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many vehicles which were tested at Northern Ireland MOT test centres failed their initial test in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [71127]

David Cairns: The following table details all vehicles that failed their initial test in the last two years. Figures are not available prior to 2004-05.

Centre	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
Armagh	3,882	5,399
Ballymena	9,285	9,194
Belfast	9,909	15,392
Coleraine	8,134	10,510
Cookstown	9,903	12,899
Craigavon	7,120	8,975
Downpatrick	7,199	6,521
Enniskillen	4,740	6,372
Larne	3,117	4,315
Lisburn	6,013	8,499
Londonderry	8,839	13,153
Mallusk	5,983	9,171
Newry	5,982	10,442
Newtownards	11,862	15,661
Omagh	5,601	7,545
Total	107,569	144,048

Newtonabbey

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for what reasons 42 Circular Road, Jordanstown, Newtonabbey was not included as an area of townscape character. [71330]

David Cairns: An objection to the non-inclusion of 42 Circular Road, Jordanstown within an area of townscape character has been submitted to the draft Belfast metropolitan area plan. As the objection will properly be addressed at the forthcoming public inquiry, it would not be appropriate to comment on the issue at this time.

Operating and Financial Review

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the implementation of the operating and financial review in Northern Ireland. [34983]

Mr. Hanson: The Accounting Standards Board's Reporting Statement "Operational and Financial Review" (OFR) is designed as a formulation and development of best practice; it is intended to have persuasive rather than mandatory force. The statement has been written with quoted companies in mind and recommends that company directors prepare an OFR, but is also applicable to any other entities that purport to prepare an OFR. This applies to Northern Ireland as in Great Britain.

For Northern Ireland Government, accounts for 2005-06 onwards prepared by departments and other entities falling within the scope of the Government Financial Reporting Manual will prepare a Management Commentary, the content of which is based upon the recommendations of the Reporting Statement Operational and Financial Review.

Police

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total amount of police overtime was in Northern Ireland in each district command unit in each of the last three years, broken down by rank; and what the cost was in each year. [70455]

Paul Goggins: The appropriate figures for police overtime from 2003 to 2006 are included in the following tables. Only a top-level summary is available for 2003-04 as the detailed analysis figures are not available. The 2003-04 figures therefore include both DCU and Department overtime.

Police overtime cost 2003-04

	Total (£)
Regular	42,618,000
Full time reserve	9,473,000

Police overtime cost by DCU and rank 2004-05

DCU	*Constable*	*Sergeant*	*Full time reserve constable*	£ *Total*
Antrim	496,350.82	282,605.50	192,608.64	971,564.96
Ards	703,050.69	183,053.32	157,651.96	1,043,755.97
Armagh	624,645.76	219,312.79	301,410.02	1,145,368.57
Banbridge	345,405.46	147,393.81	94,010.67	586,809.94
Ballymena	611,730.84	166,550.09	104,904.10	883,185.03
Ballymoney	270,130.26	89,956.74	48,935.44	409,022.44
Belfast East	923,438.55	325,264.55	548,835.12	1,797,538.22
Belfast North	1,441,980.01	452,072.37	372,119.20	2,266,171.58
Belfast South	1,496,267.95	397,660.73	387,951.70	2,281,880.38
Belfast West	1,101,705.17	303,180.92	782,120.78	2,187,006.87
Carrickfergus	345,047.01	106,265.86	182,611.68	633,924.55
Castlereagh	586,565.44	151,968.10	261,851.05	1,000,384.59
Coleraine	564,660.96	183,496.57	143,544.11	891,701.64
Cookstown	357,740.30	156,296.01	107,254.46	621,290.77

Police overtime cost by DCU and rank 2004-05

DCU	Constable	Sergeant	Full time reserve constable	£ Total
Craigavon	870,299.47	204,992.55	250,844.11	1,326,136.13
Dungannon and South Tyrone	667,701.92	182,916.16	242,227.19	1,092,845.27
Down	743,871.95	227,429.98	299,981.22	1,271,283.15
Fermanagh	790,786.91	237,246.98	281,984.64	1,310,018.53
Foyle	1,085,496.71	293,304.82	376,229.15	1,755,030.68
Lame	352,806.16	74,151.74	89,462.53	516,420.43
Limavady	331,423.16	100,204.66	103,064.22	534,692.04
Lisburn	1,006,567.86	300,122.92	378,276.03	1,684,966.81
Magherafelt	424,824.02	110,208.97	225,908.62	760,941.61
Moyle	111,963.29	40,368.95	58,753.72	211,085.96
Newry and Mourne	1,303,308.02	355,095.41	410,766.60	2,069,170.03
Newtownabbey	668,282.09	178,558.55	85,060.46	931,901.10
North Down	691,595.04	238,790.93	223,746.56	1,154,132.53
Omagh	493,854.25	189,893.09	113,723.40	797,470.74
Strabane	490,005.96	220,323.52	188,714.05	899,043.53
Total	19,901,506.03	6,118,686.59	7,014,551.43	33,034,744.05

Police overtime by DCU and rank 2005-06

DCU	Constable	Sergeant	Full time reserve constable	£ Total
Antrim	567,013.65	259,621.21	169,974.42	996,609.28
Ards	740,627.28	195,023.00	146,981.22	1,082,631.50
Armagh	641,581.52	224,404.79	231,924.38	1,097,910.69
Banbridge	391,603.89	146,658.43	62,721.51	600,983.83
Ballymena	649,024.82	185,054.70	78,638.44	912,717.96
Ballymoney	273,740.89	77,715.82	33,349.99	384,806.70
Belfast East	1,124,993.62	339,810.43	431,231.31	1,896,035.36
Belfast North	1,957,455.88	581,926.96	328,970.82	2,868,353.66
Belfast South	1,637,096.97	382,818.43	261,282.63	2,281,198.03
Belfast West	1,359,888.80	391,729.07	638,180.60	2,389,798.47
Carrickfergus	363,682.19	139,518.96	123,907.92	627,109.07
Castlereagh	636,694.85	190,592.63	237,630.53	1,064,918.01
Coleraine	635,538.13	199,850.69	85,180.19	920,569.01
Cookstown	359,783.62	174,885.65	52,676.20	587,345.47
Craigavon	951,657.64	271,689.52	148,188.72	1,371,535.88
Dungannon and South Tyrone	684,387.53	203,152.99	184,391.08	1,071,931.60
Down	765,819.07	213,941.71	205,251.66	1,185,012.44
Fermanagh	761,616.20	255,979.13	271,448.90	1,289,044.23
Foyle	1,102,507.31	306,798.04	265,048.60	1,674,353.95
Lame	336,182.79	81,394.68	51,461.63	469,039.10
Limavady	346,334.65	96,155.17	76,158.36	518,648.18
Lisburn	1,218,434.25	250,404.34	257,450.68	1,726,289.27
Magherafelt	456,360.90	103,984.16	129,586.82	689,931.88
Moyle	131,869.79	39,049.29	28,877,87	199,796.95
Newry and Mourne	1,322,908.72	288,228.99	369,335.46	1,980,473.17
Newtownabbey	728,473.00	150,293.73	82,297.80	961,064.53
North Down	772,269.64	235,253.37	201,334.30	1,208,857.31
Omagh	507,765.79	219,982.25	76,381.16	804,129.20
Strabane	507,167.71	238,770.78	133,796.91	879,735.40
Total	21,932,481.10	6,444,688.92	5,363,660.11	33,740,830.13

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many officers from *(a)* other UK and *(b)* foreign police services are on secondment to the Police Service Northern Ireland. [70456]

Paul Goggins: There are currently 19 personnel seconded into the PSNI (including secondments into the Historical Enquiry Team) from other UK forces. There are no officers on secondment from foreign police services.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many temporary advances of pay are outstanding in the Police Service Northern Ireland; and what the total cost is of those advances. [70457]

Paul Goggins: The PSNI have confirmed that they currently have no outstanding temporary advances of pay.

Road Fatalities

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many road accidents in Northern Ireland which resulted in fatalities were a direct result of *(a)* speeding and *(b)* driving under the influence of (i) drink and (ii) drugs over the last three years, broken down by parliamentary constituency; and if he will make a statement. [69649]

Paul Goggins: The statistics for road accidents resulting in fatalities are provided in the following tables. This information is not recorded by parliamentary constituency but rather by district command unit. Table B provides overall figures for individuals driving under the influence of drink or drugs as it is not possible to separate these.

(a) Road accidents resulting in fatalities which were a direct result of excessive speed

District command unit	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*Total*
Antrim	2	1	1	4
Ards	1	0	0	1
Armagh	3	1	2	6
Banbridge	2	0	0	2
East Belfast	0	0	0	0
North Belfast	0	1	0	1
South Belfast	0	0	2	2
West Belfast	1	1	1	3
Ballymena	3	1	0	4
Ballymoney	0	1	0	1
Carrickfergus	1	0	0	1
Coleraine	2	0	1	3
Cookstown	0	0	1	1
Craigavon	0	0	0	0
Castlereagh	0	1	0	1
Dungannon and South Tyrone	0	0	0	0
Down	1	2	1	4
Fermanagh	1	0	2	3
Foyle	0	1	2	3
Lame	0	0	1	1
Limavady	0	1	0	1
Lisburn	3	2	0	5
Magherafelt	0	2	2	4
Moyle	1	1	0	2
Newtownabbey	0	0	1	1
North Down	2	0	0	2
Newry and Mourne	2	6	3	11
Omagh	3	1	1	5
Strabane	1	0	0	1
Total	29	23	21	73

(b) Road accidents resulting in fatalities which were a direct result of driving under the influence of alcohol/drugs

District command unit	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*Total*
Antrim	2	0	0	2
Ards	2	1	1	4
Armagh	0	1	0	1
Banbridge	2	1	0	3
East Belfast	0	0	0	0
North Belfast	1	1	0	2
South Belfast	1	0	0	1
West Belfast	2	0	0	2
Ballymena	1	0	1	2
Ballymoney	0	0	2	2
Carrickfergus	0	0	0	0
Coleraine	0	2	1	3
Cookstown	0	0	1	1
Craigavon	1	0	0	1
Castlereagh	0	0	1	1
Dungannon and South Tyrone	2	2	1	5

(b) Road accidents resulting in fatalities which were a direct result of driving under the influence of alcohol/drugs

District command unit	2003	2004	2005	Total
Down	1	0	1	2
Fermanagh	0	4	2	6
Foyle	0	2	1	3
Larne	1	2	0	3
Limavady	2	1	1	4
Lisburn	3	0	2	5
Magherafelt	2	0	2	4
Moyle	0	0	0	0
Newtownabbey	0	1	1	2
North Down	1	0	1	2
Newry and Mourne	5	5	1	11
Omagh	0	1	2	3
Strabane	0	0	0	0
Total	29	24	22	75

Rural Economy

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps Invest Northern Ireland plans to take to promote the rural economy in East Londonderry constituency. [70915]

Maria Eagle: In addition to delivery of Invest NI's full suite of programmes and services, Invest NI will continue to work closely with those stakeholders actively involved in developing rural business in the East Londonderry constituency. These include local councils and LEADER groups, for example, COLLAGE in Coleraine and Roe Valley in Limavady. For the year 2006-07 a series of workshops have been planned to help stimulate entrepreneur ship, innovation and exports in new and existing businesses. The first of these has been arranged for October 2006 on the topic of Advanced Tendering.

School Pupils

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many primary school pupils there were in each of the education and library boards in Northern Ireland in each of the past five years. [71341]

Maria Eagle: The requested information is as follows:

Primary school pupils by education and library board area 2001-02 to 2005-06

	Education and library board area					
	Belfast	Western	North Eastern	South Eastern	Southern	Northern Ireland total
2001-02	29,410	32,880	38,903	37,618	40,228	179,039
2002-03	28,339	32,652	38,873	37,341	39,597	176,802
2003-04	27,290	32,127	38,593	36,955	39,202	174,167
2004-05	26,506	31,689	38,465	36,527	38,811	171,998
2005-06	25,724	31,154	38,292	36,241	38,535	169,946

Note:
1. Figures include children in nursery units, reception, and year 1 to year 7 classes.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many secondary school pupils there were in each of the education and library boards for each of the past five years. [71340]

Maria Eagle: The requested information is as follows:

Post primary school pupils by education and library board area 2001-02 to 2005-06

School type	Belfast	Western	North Eastern	South Eastern	Southern	Northern Ireland total
2001-02						
Non grammar	15,927	17,592	20,042	16,429	22,770	92,760
Grammar	16,156	11,309	13,690	10,314	11,274	62,743
All post primary	32,083	28,901	33,732	26,743	34,044	155,503
2002-03						
Non grammar	15,935	17,386	20,045	16,528	22,751	92,645
Grammar	16,186	11,407	13,777	10,379	11,353	63,102
All post primary	32,121	28,793	33,822	26,907	34,104	155,747

Post primary school pupils by education and library board area 2001-02 to 2005-06

School type	*Belfast*	*Western*	*North Eastern*	*South Eastern*	*Southern*	*Northern Ireland total*
2003-04						
Non grammar	15,801	17,002	19,918	16,572	22,754	92,047
Grammar	16,265	11,586	13,742	10,374	11,380	63,347
All post primary	32,066	28,588	33,660	26,946	34,134	155,394
2004-05						
Non grammar	15,334	16,319	19,717	16,298	22,417	90,085
Grammar	16,269	11,728	13,684	10,375	11,308	63,364
All post primary	31,603	28,047	33,401	26,673	33,725	153,449
2005-06						
Non grammar	14,907	16,568	19,439	16,106	22,401	89,421
Grammar	16,234	11,025	13,553	10,378	11,229	62,419
All post primary	31,141	27,593	32,992	26,484	33,630	151,840

Traffic Wardens

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many traffic wardens were employed in Northern Ireland in January *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 2006. [70430]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is contained in the following table.

Date	*Number of traffic wardens employed*
As at 8 May 2001[1]	146
As at 4 January 2006	97

[1] Earliest date for which information is available

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Departmental Staff

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many full-time equivalent staff will be employed to support his Cabinet work following the announcement of 5 May of changes to his responsibilities. [69858]

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many civil servants will be assigned to work for him in his new role. [69873]

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many staff will be employed in his Private Office in his new role. [69847]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Reading, East (Mr. Wilson) in the House on 17 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 979.

Equality

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has *(a)* had and *(b)* plans to have with the Minister for Women and Equality on implementing the Government's equality agenda in connection with the development of Government policy. [70121]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I have regular discussions with all my ministerial colleagues covering all areas of Government policy.

Ministerial Responsibilities

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what opportunities he expects there to be for hon. Members to hold him to account on the floor of the House. [69910]

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what arrangements are being made for him to answer oral questions on the floor of the House in relation to his new responsibilities. [70142]

The Deputy Prime Minister *[holding answers 11 May 2006]:* I shall continue to be accountable to the House in the usual way, answering both written and oral questions.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what arrangements are in place to ensure that the funds allocated for his official government duties are used solely for that purpose. [70175]

The Deputy Prime Minister: The Ministerial Code makes clear that Ministers must not use Government resources for party political purposes.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list his official duties. [70685]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister on 17 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 985W.

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list his ministerial responsibilities. [69941]

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his areas of responsibility are for the purposes of answering Parliamentary questions following the announcement of 5 May of changes to his responsibilities. [69859]

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what new areas of ministerial responsibility he has taken on since 4 May. [69958]

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what responsibility he has for implementing the Government's equality agenda in his new role. [70116]

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which Cabinet committees he will be chairing. [70117]

Mr. Harper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which Cabinet committees he will chair; and what the remit is of each committee. [70027]

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what responsibilities he will have relating to international development in respect of his role to oversee the efficient development of Government policy; and if he will make a statement. [69938]

Mr. Newmark: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which Cabinet committees he has been asked to chair. [69924]

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what responsibilities he will have relating to the work of the Department for Communities and Local Government in his role in overseeing the efficient development of Government policy; and if he will make a statement. [69943]

Mr. Gray: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list his duties and responsibilities. [70252]

David Mundell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what Ministerial responsibilities he has in respect of Scotland; and if he will make a statement. [70163]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister on 17 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 985W.

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what responsibilities he has relating to matters which fall within the competence of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs within his overall responsibility to oversee the efficient development of government policy; and if he will make a statement. [69981]

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what responsibilities he will have relating to the Wales Office within his overall responsibility to oversee the efficient delivery of government policy. [70032]

Mr. Hague: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what responsibility he has for foreign and commonwealth affairs within his overall responsibility to oversee the efficient development of government policy. [69983]

Mr. Heald: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what responsibilities he will have relating to the work of the Department for Constitutional Affairs in his role in overseeing the efficient development of government policy; and if he will make a statement. [69944]

Mr. Heald: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what duties he has in relation to Cabinet Office matters; and if he will make a statement. [69947]

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what responsibilities he has in respect of Northern Ireland in relation to his role to oversee the efficient development of government policy; and if he will make a statement. [69953]

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list his new responsibilities. [70141]

Mr. Swire: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what responsibilities he has relating to matters which fall within the remit of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport within his overall responsibility to oversee the efficient development of government policy; and if he will make a statement. [69982]

The Deputy Prime Minister *[holding answers 11 May 2006]:* I refer the hon. Members to the answer given by my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister on 17 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 985W.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his responsibilities are for the efficient development of government policy on education and skills matters. [70527]

The Deputy Prime Minister *[holding answer 12 May 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister on 17 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 985W.

Ministerial Office Staff

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many ministerial special advisers he plans to retain in his new role; and at what cost to the public purse. [69890]

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he will retain his private office staff on ceasing responsibility for his former functions. [69986]

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many civil servants report to him; and what grade each is. [70148]

The Deputy Prime Minister *[holding answers 11 May 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Reading, East (Mr. Wilson) in the House on 17 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 979.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 22 May 2006

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Air Miles

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many air miles have been accrued by senior civil servants in his Department on official business in each of the last three years; and how they were used. [70509]

Mr. Thomas: DFID staff may not use for private benefit, air miles earned on official travel. We have arranged with certain partner airlines for staff to donate their air miles to the earth miles initiative under which air miles are exchanged for contributions by the airlines to the cost of carbon offset projects. Staff are also encouraged to use air miles for official travel.

The Department for International Development (DFID) does not hold details of individual staff membership of frequent flyer schemes and therefore has no record of air miles accrued.

Asian Tsunami

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans he has to implement the recommendations of the recent report on his Department's response to the Indian Ocean disaster. [71589]

Mr. Thomas: DFID is drawing on some of the recommendations to help inform and guide DFID's support to and relationship with the UN agencies, Red Cross movement and non-governmental organisations that DFID funded in response to the disaster. DFID aims to strengthen its partners and their response capacities, seeking to build on some of the lessons identified in this review.

For example: the report highlighted how UN agencies handled co-ordination in each sector. DFID has since helped to identify and second staff to act as cluster coordinators for each UN lead agency following the Pakistan earthquake. This has led to much improved sectoral co-ordination.

DFID has also benefited from the recommendations about DFID's relationship with the UK military, placing a Civil Military advisor in Pakistan following the 2005 earthquake.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the *(a)* role, *(b)* performance and *(c)* accountability of partners involved in channelling UK aid to areas of need in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami. [71591]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has published a "Report on DFID's Response to the Indian Ocean Disaster" containing DFID's assessment of the performance of DFID-funded UN agencies, the Red Cross movement and non-governmental organisations and recommendations for actions to be taken by DFID and its partners. It is available at http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/report-dfid-response-tsunami.pdf.

The UK NGOs grouped under the UK Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) has also published information on http://www.dec.org.uk/index.cfm/asset_id,1674/pr,1.

The NGOs' Tsunami Evaluation Committee report is expected to be published soon, providing more recommendations for future responses.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development who the authors were of the recent report on his Department's response to the Indian Ocean disaster; and how much the report cost to produce. [71592]

Mr. Thomas: The report was compiled by staff from DFID's Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department (CHASE) Operations Team and a consultant. It incorporated a synthesis of field monitoring missions to Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, the Maldives and UN agency headquarters by five staff and four consultants. The cost of this complete monitoring programme was £64,281.

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the effect of the recent attacks by Tamil Tigers on the post-tsunami recovery process in Sri Lanka and if he will make a statement. [71637]

Mr. Thomas: The increasing violence and communal tension is a major barrier to recovery in the north and east. In the southern districts, not contested by the LTTE and not directly affected by the fighting, recovery is proceeding swiftly, and is expected to be completed by the end of 2007.

The increase in direct fighting between the Sri Lankan military, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and militias associated with each side has been accompanied by an increase in communal tension. Development agencies and non-governmental organisations have evacuated staff for their security and protection and recovery programmes have been suspended. In addition, regular economic activities and recovery work undertaken in communities without external assistance has also been affected by military activity. Able-bodied men are being mobilised for LTTE service, and people are being displaced by fighting, or the fear of fighting.

The situation continues to deteriorate, as evidenced by the recent suicide bombing in Colombo and the subsequent air strikes and naval shelling in the east. Without a considerable improvement in the security situation it is unlikely that much recovery can be undertaken. The international community, including the United Kingdom, is working hard to encourage the Government and the LTTE to curtail violence and to return to the negotiating table. Once the security environment improves we will renew efforts to help ensure delivery of development assistance to communities.

Family Planning

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Buckingham of 9 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 129W, on family planning, why his Department is opposed to the United States Administration's Mexico City Policy; whom he consulted while developing his policy; and if he will make a statement. [72176]

Mr. Thomas: The UK Government's approach to promoting reproductive health is set out in the DFID position paper, "Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights". Our approach to achieving the fifth Millennium Development Goal of improving maternal health is outlined in the DFID strategy paper, "Reducing Maternal Deaths: Evidence and Action". Both were published in 2004 after extensive consultation with a broad range of stakeholders, including the research community, NGOs, parliamentarians and civil society groups. A web-based consultation was also held as part of this process.

Our understanding of the so-called "Mexico City Policy" is that it requires non-US NGOs to agree that they will not perform or actively promote abortion as a method of family planning in order to receive US funding. This means, for example, that non-US NGOs who accept US funding are not allowed to use their own funds to provide information or counselling for abortion care, or to promote awareness of the benefits of legal reform. As the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) "Death and Denial: Unsafe Abortion and Poverty" report makes clear, the policy forces NGOs to choose between carrying on work to protect the health and rights of women or lose funds. No reproductive or maternal health NGOs affected by the policy work to "promote abortion as a method of family planning", and indeed this would be contrary to the global consensus reached at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). What they try to do is to provide a comprehensive range of information and services that can help save women's lives, and reduce the need for abortion. The US policy means that the work of such organisations is compromised, and that is why my Department is opposed to it.

Iraq

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment has been made of progress in restoring *(a)* electricity, *(b)* water, *(c)* sanitation, *(d)* health care and *(e)* education services in (i) Al Basrah, (ii) Al Muthanna, (iii) Dhi Qar and (iv) Maysan provinces in Iraq. [70966]

Hilary Benn: The Government of Iraq, supported by the UK and other donors, have made significant progress with reconstruction since 2003. But there is still a long way to go. Once a relatively wealthy country with high levels of education and health care, by 2003 Iraq had suffered more than 20 years of conflict, mismanagement and chronic under-investment from a brutal regime. Continued violence, especially sabotage directed at key infrastructure, and low (but growing) levels of management capacity in Iraq's national and local government have slowed progress. The UK and international community are committed to helping the new Iraqi Government tackle these challenges.

One challenge is the lack of data, especially at the regional and provincial level. The following information therefore covers the progress that has been made across Iraq, including regional detail only where this is available.

Electricity generation is more equitably distributed across Iraq than before 2003. Nearly 5,000 megawatts (MW) have been added to the national grid since 2003, but Iraq's average electricity generation has not improved over that period. This is because at the same time as capacity is being added through reconstruction projects, breakdowns of the pre-existing dilapidated systems, shortages of fuel supplies and sabotage are reducing capacity. So Iraqis are not getting the full benefit of those extra megawatts. Demand for electricity also continues to rise dramatically, as the economy grows and more people own and use electrical goods such as fridges and air-conditioning units. The new Iraqi Government will be starting work on a long-term power sector strategy, with DFID's support.

In the south, average electricity generation levels have increased from approximately 750 MW in January 2004 to over 1,000 MW in December 2005. The south now receives its fair share of national power—whereas under Saddam's regime, power was often diverted from the south to Baghdad.

To improve power supply in the south, DFID has:

Repaired transmission lines from Hartha power station to Basra city—securing electricity supplies for 1.5 million residents;

Improved power distribution to 13 areas of Basra.

By the end of 2006, we will have:

Established point power generators to provide 15 MW of back-up supplies in Dhi Qar and Maysan;

Added or secured a further 190 MW of electricity in the south, through our £40 million Iraq Infrastructure and Services Programme.

Water supplies have improved across the south since the end of the conflict, and sewerage systems and water treatment plants are now operating again. Before the conflict, no major sewerage systems were operating. Immediate post-conflict work improved efficiency of water treatment plants and pumping stations. DFID has:

provided technical advice for a major sewage installation in Al Amarah, providing up to half the city's population with access to a piped system and replacing open sewage channels;

improved the water supply to 60,000 people in Al Amtahiyah;

started construction of reservoirs and water towers to benefit a further 200,000 people;

constructed a water training centre which will train water engineers from Maysan, Muthanna, Basra and Dhi Qar provinces.

Health services are gradually being restored throughout Iraq. Hundreds of health care facilities have been rehabilitated and 240 hospitals and 1,200 primary health centres are now functioning. Through extensive disease control programmes, there has been a decline in the prevalence of leishmaniasis, malaria, measles, mumps, and polio. Japan and the US have rehabilitated a number of health care facilities in the

south, as well as supplying essential equipment, ambulances and drugs. The US is constructing a new paediatric hospital in Basra, which will offer improved treatment to children with acute conditions across the south.

5,168 schools have been rehabilitated throughout Iraq, with a further 450 in progress. By the end of 2006, more than 133,000 primary school teachers and 47,500 secondary school teachers and administrators will have received training and technical support. In southern Iraq, the UN has rehabilitated schools and supplied textbooks, and is also rehabilitating vocational training institutes. Japan has provided textbooks to all primary schools in Muthanna. There are 465 schools operating in Maysan, and 348 in Muthanna.

Leased Land

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what *(a)* land and *(b)* property his Department (i) leases and (ii) leased in (A) 1979, (B) 1983, (C) 1987, (D) 1992 and (E) 1997 in (1) the Southend, West constituency, (2) Essex, (3) Hertfordshire and (4) the Metropolitan police area of London. [72104]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has leased the following properties, all within the Metropolitan police area of London. No other properties or land have been leased in the Southend, West constituency, Essex or Hertfordshire areas.

1979:

Eland House, Bressendon Place, London, SW1

29 Bressendon Place, London, SW1

1987:

Eland House, Bressendon Place, London, SW1

1992:

94 Victoria Street, London, SW1

1997:

94 Victoria Street, London, SW1

Current:

1 Palace Street, London, SW1

20 Victoria Street, SW1

Note:

DFID also leased Glen House, Stag Place, between 1999 and 2002.

Maternal Health

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what steps are being taken by his Department *(a)* to develop a comprehensive maternal health strategy and *(b)* to disseminate this strategy to other international donors; [68244]

(2) what recent discussions he has had with his counterparts in *(a)* the EU, *(b)* the G8 and *(c)* the UN about improving maternal health in developing countries; [68158]

(3) what steps are being taken by his Department to increase international action on maternal health issues. [68159]

Mr. Thomas: DFID is the only major bilateral donor to already have a specific strategy focusing on maternal health: "Reducing maternal deaths: evidence and action", which was launched in 2004. We have disseminated this comprehensive maternal health strategy throughout the international system, with other donors, the UN, and most importantly, with the developing partners we support.

The strategy provides the basis for DFID support to improve maternal health at country level, which we do through a combination of programmes to strengthen health services and improve overall reproductive and child health, along with specific maternal health programmes and HIV interventions. Long-term support for maternal health in Nepal, for example, is demonstrating significant increases in women's access to emergency obstetric care in remote areas and in a fragile state. This work highlights the importance of support for community level action to overcome cultural and socio-economic barriers to accessing care, as well as the importance of addressing infrastructure (roads, bridges) and communications issues to ensure an effective referral system. In Malawi, DFID is supporting an Emergency Human Resource Programme to address the acute shortages of health workers, an issue which has been compounded by the AIDS epidemic. Overall investments for maternal health (including reproductive health services) have increased by over 40 per cent. over the past three years, to £242.9 million in 2004-05.

The maternal health strategy also provides the platform for DFID's regular policy discussions with other donors, such as the EU, G8 and the UN, on the actions needed to improve maternal health in developing countries and the importance of doing more on maternal health. We are seeking to highlight the importance of maternal health within the current G8 process, although the prime health theme at present is infectious disease. We are also working to ensure that the new Partnership for Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health can play a useful role in advocating more action on maternal health, and to improve the way UN agencies work together on this issue.

Importantly, good advocacy is based upon good data. Getting reliable information on maternal deaths is difficult in most developing countries where maternal deaths are not recorded and where more than half of all births take place at home, without a skilled attendant but either with relatives or alone. This is why DFID, along with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Gates Foundation, supports IMMPACT, the only global research initiative which is successfully identifying effective ways in which maternal deaths can be measured and the statistics used for high level advocacy. DFID further supports a recent global partnership, Health Metrics Network, which aims to provide country level support to Governments to get better data.

Patents

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what measures are in place to ensure that the holders of traditional knowledge *(a)*

are made aware of patent applications and *(b)* are able to be fully involved in assessing intellectual applications based on traditional knowledge. [72240]

Mr. Thomas: The UK Patent Office publishes details of patent applications in its weekly publication "The Patents and Designs Journal" which is publicly available free of charge on the Patent Office Website at: http://www.patent.gov.uk/patent/dbase/index.htm.

Worldwide published applications may be viewed using "Espacenet" which is a publicly available free of charge service which lists over 45 million patent specifications including GB specifications from 1918 to the present. This is available at: http://ep.espacenet.com.

Indigenous peoples (holders of traditional knowledge) play an important role in the World Intellectual Property Organisation Inter-Governmental Committee on Traditional Knowledge, Folklore and Genetic Resources (IGC) where these matters are discussed. A voluntary fund has recently been set up to help ensure their participation in and attendance at this committee. The IGC has done important work on traditional knowledge databases and also on amending the international classification system for patents to include traditional knowledge and hence make it easier for holders of traditional knowledge to access patent applications based on traditional knowledge.

The assessment of intellectual property applications is done by patent examiners and trademark examiners in the relevant country or jurisdiction. In the UK anyone can file observations on patentability with regard to patent applications, including the holders of traditional knowledge. This will then be taken into account when the patent is examined. In a similar manner, anyone can make observations about the registrability of a trademark. Further, trademarks applications can be opposed or subsequently invalidated if the mark designates a characteristic of those goods or services, or is otherwise non-distinctive. Similar arrangements are in place in most countries and jurisdictions.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the Government's policy is on the proposals in the Trade-Related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Council to introduce a requirement for the declaration of origin of the use of genetic resources and associated knowledge into the TRIPS Agreement. [72241]

Mr. Thomas: The Government support the principle of developing countries' demands to disclose country of origin or source of genetic material within patent applications. This could assist these countries to keep track of patent applications linked to the use of their resources and check whether appropriate benefit sharing agreements are in place. The Government therefore supported the EU proposal submitted to the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) Intergovernmental Committee (IGC) in December 2004 which suggests that disclosure of country of origin or source in patent applications could be introduced on a global basis in national, regional and international patent applicants. We judged that this proposal strikes a good balance between achieving the objective of supporting developing countries' request to include disclosure of origin provisions in international patent law while ensuring that patents are not undermined and patent applicants are not overly burdened.

We must however, ensure that the system is workable in practice and achieves the desired outcome (i.e. benefits are generated and shared appropriately). Therefore, we have so far focused our efforts on discussions in the WIPO IGC, where the technical expertise resides.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what sanctions are in place to penalise intellectual property applicants who have illegally obtained genetic material or knowledge which forms all or part of their application. [72242]

Mr. Thomas: There are no measures under the laws of the UK, but a person violating the access laws of another country would be subject to any sanctions which may be provided for under those laws.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what measures are in place to inform countries named as the source of traditional knowledge or genetic resources in patent applications that such an application has been made. [72243]

Mr. Thomas: There are no official measures in place to do this in the UK. Countries can of course use the "Espacenet" database which is a publicly available free of charge service which lists over 45 million patent specifications at: http://ep.espacenet.com/

This issue is currently subject to discussions in the World Intellectual Property Organisation Inter-Governmental Committee on Traditional Knowledge, Folklore and Genetic Resources. The EU proposed a system of disclosure of origin of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge to this committee in 2005, suggesting that

"It would be adequate to identify in particular the Clearing House Mechanism of the CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity) as the central body to which the patent offices should send the information available from the declarations on disclosure."

Countries of source could then check with this clearing house to see which patent applications have named them as source. This proposal has not yet been adopted by the committee however.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether the Government have instigated a system for informing the World Intellectual Property Organisation about the origins of traditional knowledge or genetic resources named in patent applications. [72244]

Mr. Thomas: The Government have contributed to and fully support an EU proposal for such a system. This issue is currently subject to discussions in the World Intellectual Property Organisation Inter-Governmental Committee on Traditional Knowledge, Folklore and Genetic Resources (IGC). The EU proposed a system of disclosure of origin of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge to this committee in 2005 suggesting that

"It would be adequate to identify in particular the Clearing House Mechanism of the CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity) as the central body to which the patent offices should send the information available from the declarations on disclosure."

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department has taken to assess the impact on developing countries of geographical indications of traditional knowledge and genetic resources under trade-related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. [72245]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has been funding several efforts aiming at improving the understanding of the impact of international intellectual property rights protection on developing countries, starting with providing support to the 2002 UK Commission on Intellectual Property Rights (CIPR). In its work, the CIPR extensively investigated the impact on development of traditional knowledge and genetic resources protection. The CIPR published its findings in Chapters 3 and 4 of the report, which can be freely accessed at: http://wwwiprcommission.org, a website maintained by DFID. The report concludes that a disclosure requirement should be necessary.

DFID has since been supporting analytical work and dialogues on these issues mostly through Geneva-based governmental and non governmental organisations, notably the expert work carried out jointly by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful bids there were by each sub-Saharan country for grants from the Trade Related Capacity Building Fund in each of the last eight years; and how much was allocated to each successful bid. [67819]

Mr. Thomas: DFID provides Trade Related Capacity Building (TRCB) support to sub-Saharan African countries through its bilateral programmes and multilateral institutions. It does not have a stand alone TRCB Fund to which sub-Saharan African countries can bid. Therefore, we are unable to provide information on bids and their success.

Our support for Trade Related Capacity Building for sub-Saharan African countries is allocated according to their TRCB needs as identified in their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers or national development plans and in fulfilment of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) criteria for TRCB.

For the period 1997-2005, DFID's financial records show that countries in sub-Saharan Africa received £16.2 million in support for trade and investment activities, through bilateral programmes and DFID supported multilateral institutions. Trade and investment activities are one aspect only of DFID's complete TRCB programme which includes private sector development, agricultural development, compliance with standards etc. Therefore, DFID's overall support to TRCB in sub-Saharan Africa is larger than the figure given. The difficulty in isolating the TRCB elements within large economic growth or regional programmes prevents us from providing further financial details on TRCB expenditure. Annexe A provides details per sub-Saharan African country of the DFID trade and investment expenditure for the period 1997-2005.

In terms of specific TRCB programmes in sub-Saharan Africa, DFID currently runs an £11 million Regional Trade Facilitation Programme. The programme supports two regional economic communities, the Southern African Development Community and Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa, and their members in negotiations with the WTO and the European Commission and implementing regional integration.

Uganda

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to promote good governance in Uganda. [72933]

Hilary Benn: I recently visited Uganda where I met with President Museveni. In this meeting I emphasised the importance of good governance to our development partnership with Uganda. I noted in particular the importance of further deepening democracy following Uganda's first multi-party elections in 25 years in February, and action on corruption.

DFID's programme in Uganda is promoting good governance. We are leading members of donor groups which have regular discussions with the Government about corruption, public service reform and public financial management and we are helping to establish the institutions required to fight corruption in Uganda. We are financing the Government's public service reform programme which is improving Government effectiveness, and the public financial management and accountability programme which is strengthening public financial management systems in both central and local government. We are also providing support to both Parliament and civil society which is helping to improve Government accountability.

UN Disaster Relief Operations

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department plans to take to strengthen the capacity of the UN system for *(a)* leading and *(b)* co-ordinating multilateral disaster relief operations. [71590]

Mr. Thomas: In December 2004, my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development, proposed a package of six key reforms to improve the effectiveness of emergency response, with a particular focus on the UN as the global lead. The six reforms are:

Establishment of a new global humanitarian fund;

Strengthen the UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator system;

Common donor funding for the Humanitarian Co-ordinator to deploy on the most urgent unmet needs;

Development of global benchmarks to measure humanitarian response performance;

Increased donor focus on "forgotten", or under-funded, emergencies;

Increased donor funding for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

The United Nations is taking forward these reforms with the support and participation of the wider donor community, including DFID, NGOs and the Red Cross movement. In December 2005, a new UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was approved by the UN General Assembly. It was launched on 9 March 2006 with $254 million from 38 donors, including $70 million from DFID. Under the direction of the UN's Emergency Relief Co-ordinator, the CERF is now enabling UN humanitarian agencies to respond rapidly to sudden disasters, such as earthquakes; time-critical responses in slow-onset disasters, such as drought; and essential life-saving actions in ongoing but under-funded crises such as in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Chad.

A number of proposals for strengthening the UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator system are being taken forward, including developing a pool of suitable candidates and associated training. Currently there are 21 trained humanitarian co-ordinators, including some from NGO or Red Cross backgrounds. Alongside this, DFID is leading seven other donors in piloting pooled country-level funding, to be used as directed by the resident humanitarian co-ordinator, in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo during 2006. DFID is also providing support to the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) in developing performance benchmarks for mortality, nutrition, and health. DFID has supported progress over the last 12 months in reforming the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and in March this year we launched our new Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy.

In September 2005, the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee, which deals with humanitarian issues, established a new 'cluster' system to deliver more accountable and predictable humanitarian responses. Named agencies have responsibility for co-ordinating responses in key sectors such as water and sanitation (UNICEF), protection (the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Logistics (the World Food Programme (WFP), and Health (the WHO), and developing networks or clusters of other agencies and NGOs to work together to improve capacity, performance, and effectiveness. DFID is currently considering, along with other donors, how best to support this initiative.

In January 2006, my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development, called for further reform of the international humanitarian system by improving the quality and focus of UN Flash Appeals. This involves developing agreements for the use of military assets; and for better accountability in humanitarian funding, performance, and outcomes for beneficiary communities. We are working along with other donors, the UN, and other humanitarian organisations to develop these initiatives.

Unemployment (West Bank)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of Palestinians on the west bank he estimates were *(a)* unemployed and *(b)* living below the poverty line in each year since 1997. [71948]

Hilary Benn: According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics the unemployment and poverty rates in the occupied Palestinian territories since 1997 were as follows:

	Unemployment rate (ILO definition)	*Percentage Poverty rate (national poverty line)*
1997	20.3	[1]—
1998	14.4	23.3
1999	11.8	[1]—
2000	14.1	[1]—
2001	25.5	33.6
2002	31.3	[1]—
2003	25.6	[1]—
2004	26.8	30.6
2005	23.5	[1]—

[1] No annual figures available.

World Food Programme (North Korea)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the UK's contribution to plans for food aid in North Korea to be carried out by the World Food Programme; and if he will make an assessment of malnutrition in that country. [71902]

Mr. Thomas: In 2005, DFID committed over £1.2 million of humanitarian assistance to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). £1 million was channelled through UNICEF for water, sanitation and health care, and a further £200,000 through the International Federation of the Red Cross for disaster risk deduction.

In late 2005, the DPRK said that it would no longer accept international humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, it has increased the already significant restrictions it places on the humanitarian community, with the consequence that DFID can no longer feel confident that programmes of assistance are appropriate and are reaching those who need it most. All World Food Programme (WFP) operations are funded solely from voluntary contributions and the UK is not contributing to the one in the DPRK.

The UK has no plans to conduct a survey of malnutrition in the DPRK. Obtaining nutritional information is hampered by the constraints placed on the operations of international humanitarian agencies. The last international survey was carried out in 2004.

TRANSPORT

Aircraft Routes

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* current and *(b)* proposed

aircraft corridors are across (i) West Somerset and (ii) Sedgmoor district council areas. [70245]

Gillian Merron: On 16 March 2006 there were widespread changes to the civil aeronautical route structure over the West of England and Wales.

Prior to 16 March 2006 the air route in the vicinity of West Somerset and Sedgmoor was Airway N864 with an axis 190°/010°, a lateral extent of 10 nautical miles and with the centreline approximately over Blue Anchor Bay. The vertical limits of the route extend from FL55 (5,500 feet above mean sea level) to the north of the coastline and FL65 (6,500 feet amsl) over land to an upper limit of FL245 (24,500 feet amsl). The volume of airspace within the airway is defined as controlled airspace. Above FL245 is the Upper Airspace Control Area, which covers the whole of the United Kingdom. Within the Upper Airspace Control Area above West Somerset and Sedgmoor existed the routes UN864, UN862, UM140, UM17 and UW501.

The changes on 16 March did not affect N864, UN864, UM140, UM17 and UW501. However, a new route called N90 was introduced to the east of N864 for use between Friday evenings and Monday mornings. The lateral extent of the new controlled airspace is 12 nautical miles from the eastern boundary of N864 and with a lower limit of FL105 (10,500 feet amsl). In the Upper Control Area UN90 was introduced above N90 and UN862 was moved two nautical miles to the east to be above N862. A new Upper Air Route called UN22 was introduced parallel to and 12 nautical miles west of UN864.

Additionally, there are proposed changes to controlled airspace associated with Bristol and Cardiff airports, which are intended to introduce new controlled airspace over part of West Somerset and Sedgmoor. It should be noted that aircraft operations associated with these airports occur today and the proposed new controlled airspace is designed to provide additional protection to these flights. The proposals have been the subject of public consultation, which included Members of Parliament, local authorities, representatives of areas of natural beauty and other interested parties within the areas affected. These changes are currently subject to regulatory consideration by the CAA.

Mr. Newmark: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the approach or departure routes for aircraft using Stansted airport have changed since January 2002. [70771]

Gillian Merron: The noise preferential departure routes from Stansted have not changed; nor have there been any changes to the arrangements for aircraft approaching Stansted airport from the ABBOT and LOREL holding stacks towards the final approach tracks. Two new Standard Arrival Routes (STARs)—ABBOT 1B and ABBOT 1C—for use by some aircraft routeing from the North sea towards the ABBOT stack, were introduced as part of the Clacton airspace change, which came into effect on 18 March 2004.

Aircraft Safety

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the head of the Pilot Confidential Reporting System is required to declare relevant interests. [70773]

Gillian Merron: The Confidential Human Factors Incident Reporting Programme provides a confidential reporting process for aviation personnel, including pilots. It is an independent charitable trust sponsored by the Civil Aviation Authority.

The trust operates in accordance with the standards and recommended practices of the Charity Commission. All the trustees and employees are required, under Charity Commission rules, to declare relevant interests.

Airlines

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many airlines have been registered in the UK in each year since 2001. [70992]

Gillian Merron: The UK Civil Aviation Authority, which is the regulator for UK airlines, issued operating licences to the following number of air operators during the period in question:

	Number
2001	6
2002	16
2003	15
2004	20
2005	9
2006 (to 11 May)	3

British Transport Police

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) when he last met the Secretary of State for Wales to discuss the review of the British Transport police; what the level of involvement of the Wales Office has been in the review; and if he will make a statement; [72969]

(2) what estimate he has made of the possible costs that may fall on Welsh police forces in the event that the British Transport police is merged with or linked to the Metropolitan police or other home county forces; and if he will make a statement; [72973]

(3) what estimate he has made of the costs to *(a)* Welsh police forces, *(b)* the National Assembly for Wales and *(c)* Welsh local authorities in the event that the review of the British Transport police results in the policing service being operated by the industry itself. [72974]

Derek Twigg: The review of the British Transport police is ongoing and its conclusions will be reported in due course. During the course of the review, the review team have had discussions with the Welsh Assembly on a number of issues.

When my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced the review he confirmed that the Government remain committed to the principle that

the costs of policing the railway should remain largely funded by the industry itself.

Building Research Establishment

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Building Research Establishment receives funding from *(a)* Boeing, *(b)* British Aerospace and *(c)* Airbus. [70774]

Gillian Merron: The Building Research Establishment (BRE) is a private commercial consultancy and research organisation. It receives its income from a variety of clients, which include private companies, Government Departments, national Governments, independent public organisations, and the European Commission. BRE receives no general funding from any commercial organisation.

For reasons of client confidentiality, BRE does not disclose specific client identity.

Bus Services

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what he estimates the total public spending will be *(a)* per head of the population and *(b)* per passenger on bus services (i) including and (ii) excluding spending on concessionary travel in (A) London, (B) each passenger transport executive area and (C) the rest of England in (1) 2006-07 and (2) each of the next five years. [68692]

Gillian Merron: Expenditure on bus services and concessionary travel is largely met by local authorities from their revenue support grant. Information on the budget estimates for spending by local transport authorities outside London in 2006-07 on these items is due to be published in June. Estimates by local authority area of spend on bus support and concessionary fares in future years have not yet been made.

Levels of expenditure on bus support and concessionary travel within London are controlled directly by the Mayor of London. Transport for London's plans include, provision for the extension of free travel on London buses to cover 16 to 17-year-olds who are in full-time education from September 2006.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many bus services have been *(a)* withdrawn and *(b)* added to service in Tamworth constituency in each financial year since 1 April 1998. [71228]

Gillian Merron: The data kept by the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency on registered bus services do not differentiate between Tamworth and the rest of the Wales and West Midlands Traffic Area. For tables showing the number of bus services added and withdrawn in each traffic area since 1 April 1998, I refer the hon. Member to the answer of 16 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 2406W.

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to introduce a statutory requirement for bus companies to publish reliability statistics. [71466]

Gillian Merron: There are no plans at present. The Department is keen that bus operators and local authorities work together to find practical ways of improving the punctuality and reliability of bus services, using the Punctuality Improvement Partnership model developed by the Bus Partnership Forum.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many bus services have been *(a)* withdrawn and *(b)* added to service in (i) England and (ii) Kingston upon Hull in each financial year since 1 April 1998. [69760]

Gillian Merron: The data kept by the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency on registered bus services does not differentiate between Kingston upon Hull and the rest of the North Eastern Traffic Area. For tables showing the number of bus services added and withdrawn in each traffic area since 1 April 1998, I refer the hon. Member to the answer of 16 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 2406W.

Car Ownership

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will estimate the percentage of households owning *(a)* one, *(b)* two, *(c)* three and *(d)* four or more cars in each region of the United Kingdom in (i) 2003, (ii) 2004, (iii) 2005 and (iv) to date in 2006. [72029]

Dr. Ladyman: Data on household car availability in 2003 and 2004 by region in the United Kingdom are given in the following table. Data for 2005 and 2006 are not available.

Figures for Great Britain are based on combined data from the National Travel Survey, the Family Expenditure Survey and the General Household Survey. Data for Northern Ireland are based on the Travel Survey for Northern Ireland.

Household car ownership by Government Office Region and country: 2003 and 2004

Percentage

	No cars	*One car*	*Two cars*	*Three or more cars*	*All households*
2003					
North East	37	44	17	3	100
North West and Merseyside	28	45	23	4	100
Yorkshire and Humber	30	44	22	4	100
East Midlands	22	46	26	6	100
West Midlands	25	42	27	6	100

Household car ownership by Government Office Region and country: 2003 and 2004

	No cars	One car	Two cars	Three or more cars	Percentage All households
Eastern	18	44	31	7	100
London	36	43	18	3	100
South East	17	42	33	8	100
South West	19	47	27	7	100
England	25	44	25	5	100
Wales	25	46	24	4	100
Scotland	31	43	22	3	100
Northern Ireland	26	47	23	5	100
2004					
North East	35	42	21	3	100
North West and Merseyside	26	44	25	5	100
Yorkshire and Humber	27	46	23	4	100
East Midlands	22	46	26	6	100
West Midlands	24	44	27	6	100
Eastern	17	45	30	7	100
London	39	43	15	3	100
South East	18	43	32	7	100
South West	16	47	31	6	100
England	25	44	26	5	100
Wales	25	44	26	5	100
Scotland	31	43	22	3	100
Northern Ireland	27	42	26	4	100

Concessionary Fares

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what estimate he has made of the funding required to fund free off-peak travel for *(a)* older and *(b)* disabled persons on buses in Kingston upon Hull, North; [69761]

(2) how much funding the Government are providing to Kingston upon Hull council to provide free bus travel for *(a)* older and *(b)* disabled persons. [69762]

Gillian Merron: The Government are providing an extra £350 million for 2006-07 through the formula grant system. This will be sufficient in aggregate to fund the additional cost to local authorities. This funding is unhypothecated; therefore the funding for concessionary fares is not separately identified.

Concorde

Miss Widdecombe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions his Department has had with British Airways on the cost of reinstating Concorde. [72449]

Gillian Merron: None. Issues concerning Concorde remain a matter for British Airways and Airbus.

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the *(a)* public and *(b)* private sector organisations to which the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency has (i) sold and (ii) provided drivers' names and addresses in the last two years; and what the reason for the data sharing or data transfer was in each case. [70597]

Dr. Ladyman: Access to the driver database is governed by the Data Protection Act 1998 and in general, details of a record can be released only to the data subject themselves or to a third party with the data subject's consent.

DVLA has an obligation to release information from the vehicle record to those who demonstrate a legitimate right to receive it. Various other Government and law enforcement bodies have powers under different legislation to request information from DVLA for prescribed purposes. DVLA does not record the frequency of requests from each enquirer. Table 1, which has been placed in the House Libraries, lists those who are likely to have received information in the last two years and for what purpose, under various legislative powers. All are provided with the information in accordance with the relevant Act, and no fee is levied.

Table 2 outlines organisations that have received information under Regulation 27(1)(e) of the Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 2002. Table 3 lists the reasons for the request. Both of these tables have also been placed in the House Libraries.

Any private organisation or individual listed will have been charged a fee of £2.50 per inquiry made. No fee is levied on public bodies.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the new arrangements for driving licence fees will come into force. [71996]

Dr. Ladyman: Proposals for restructuring DVLA's fees are currently out for public consultation. The consultation period closes on 21 July 2006. Until we have analysed the responses to the consultation and agreed a way forward we cannot give a firm date for any changes there may be to driving licence fees.

Emergency Services

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how blue light driver training will be *(a)* delivered and *(b)* certified for members of the medical profession who provide volunteer assistance to the emergency services; and if he will make a statement. [71884]

Dr. Ladyman: Subject to parliamentary approval the Road Safety Bill will provide powers for us to quality assure the content and delivery of blue light training. The Driving Standards Agency will consult with stakeholders before any decisions are made as to how such training will be delivered or certified.

However, in the absence of a regulatory regime, DSA developed an agreed set of minimum core competencies for drivers of emergency vehicles. These were published in 2001 as the "Blue Light Users Working Party Expectations Document". DSA had worked together with the ambulance and fire services, police and the Ministry of Defence to develop this document. It was agreed that each service should tailor any training based on these competencies to the needs of their own drivers and vehicles. The expectation document is available on the DSA website:

www.dsa.gov.uk

Finsbury Park Station

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans his Department has to transfer the management of Finsbury Park station to Transport for London. [72977]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport has no plans to transfer the management of Finsbury Park station at present.

Highways Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the operation of section 161 of the Highways Act 1980; what recent representations he has received about the operation of this *(a)* section and *(b)* Act; what amendments have been made to the Act; and what plans he has to amend this Act. [72181]

Dr. Ladyman: Section 161 of the Highways Act 1980 deals with penalties for causing certain kinds of danger or annoyance to users of the highway. If a person without lawful authority or excuse deposits anything whatsoever on a highway in consequence of which a user of the highway is injured or endangered, that person is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine.

In the last 12 months the Department has dealt with two representations from members of the public concerning this section.

The Highways Act 1980 contains more than 300 sections and 25 schedules. A large number of amendments have been made to the Highways Act in the last 26 years and the cost of collating a list would be disproportionate. As there is no central record of representations received by the Department that would enable officials to identify those about the operation of the whole Act, it would also incur disproportionate cost to do so.

However, section 161 subsections (1), (3) and (4) of the Highways Act 1980 were amended by sections 38 and 46 of the Criminal Justice Act 1982. These amendments raised the level of the fines. Section 161 subsection (2) was substituted by the Highways (Amendment) Act 1986 and relates to creating criminal offences in relation to lighting fires or discharging firearms or fireworks in the vicinity of the highway.

We have no plans to amend the Highways Act 1980.

Level Crossings

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many incidents have been recorded at level crossings in each year since 1997; and how many of these resulted in *(a)* death and *(b)* injury. [69601]

Derek Twigg: The information requested is in the following table.

Incidents, death and injuries[1] at level crossings on Britain's level crossings, 1997 to 2004[2]

	(a) Incidents	*(b) Deaths*	*(c) Injuries*
1996-97	33	3	35
1997-98	34	14	31
1998-99	37	11	34
1999-2000	32	13	28
2000-01	27	10	24
2001-02	27	11	11
2002-03	27	13	28
2003-04	28	18	25
2004[3]	26	11	56

[1] These figures do not include suicides.
[2] Figures taken from HMRI's annual reports on railway safety.
[3] This is a nine-month report period as part of the transition to a European requirement that rail accident statistics be published on a calendar year basis.

Ministerial Travel

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for Ministers of State in his Department on foreign visits in each of the last three years; [69079]

(2) on how many occasions Ministers of State in his Department stayed overnight in *(a)* five-star, *(b)* four-star and *(c)* three-star hotels on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [69080]

Dr. Ladyman: The total costs of accommodation outside the United Kingdom for all four Ministers in the Department for Transport undertaking official business, including the costs of any accompanying Private Secretaries, for each of the last three financial years are:

2003-04: £6,907

2004-05: £2,423

2005-06: £9,094.

Information about the category of any hotels at which Ministers have stayed is not held centrally.

Ministerial travel is conducted in accordance with the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers. When travelling on official business Ministers are expected to make efficient and cost-effective travel arrangements.

Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year, this information includes accommodation costs. Copies are available in the Library.

MOT Fee

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether it is his policy that the maximum MOT fee will remain constant during the lifetime of this Parliament. [71821]

Dr. Ladyman: No. We intend to continue current policy which is to review MOT fees annually to take account of changes in cost such as inflation and any changes in the time it takes to conduct an average MOT test.

Motorways

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many *(a)* vehicles and *(b)* heavy goods vehicles used the M6 toll motorway in each of the last 24 months; [72918]

(2) how many *(a)* vehicles and *(b)* heavy goods vehicles travelled on the M6 toll motorway on average each day in the last period for which figures are available. [72919]

Dr. Ladyman: The available information is contained in the following table. The figures have been taken from information provided on the website of Midlands Expressway Ltd., the operators of the toll road.

The company does not provide separate figures for heavy goods vehicles. The table gives average traffic figures for each month, broken down for workdays and weekends/public holidays, covering the period from the opening of the M6 Toll in December 2003 to April 2006.

Month	*Workdays*	*Weekends/public holidays*	*All days*
December 2003	34,848	33,929	34,490
January 2004	32,763	26,249	30,662
February 2004	40,304	30,648	37,308
March 2004	41,880	33,120	39,620
April 2004	47,247	39,575	44,689
May 2004	46,921	36,436	42,862
June 2004	50,414	41,311	47,986
July 2004	58,340	47,896	55,308
August 2004	56,855	52,225	55,362
September 2004	53,604	47,745	52,041
October 2004	52,887	44,686	50,242
November 2004	50,311	38,106	47,057
December 2004	49,146	37,992	45,548
January 2005	43,344	29,620	38,474
February 2005	46,571	33,780	42,917
March 2005	49,626	38,266	45,961
April 2005	50,845	36,667	46,591
May 2005	50,365	36,020	45,274
June 2005	48,544	36,474	45,325
July 2005	50,279	39,179	46,873
August 2005	48,872	41,816	46,824
September 2005	48,523	39,076	46,004
October 2005	50,027	38,246	46,227
November 200	48,852	32,844	44,583
December 2005	47,499	32,633	42,224
January 2006	41,632	26,414	36,723
February 2006	46,660	31,190	42,240
March 2006	47,726	30,033	43,160
April 2006	51,811	36,954	45,868

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the opening dates of each junction of *(a)* the M25 and *(b)* the M1. [72030]

Dr. Ladyman: Opening dates of each junction on the M1 and M25 can be found at www.iht.org/motorway/openings.htm

Pass Plus Certificates

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many Pass Plus certificates have been *(a)* applied for and *(b)* issued by the Driving Standards Agency in each of the last eight weeks. [71563]

Dr. Ladyman: During the eight weeks since 20 March 2006, the Driving Standards Agency issued the following number of Pass Plus certificates:

Week commencing:	*Number*
20 March 2006	2,399
27 March 2006	32
3 April 2006	1,224
10 April 2006	1,405
17 April 2006	1,719
24 April 2006	2,950
1 May 2006	1,973
8 May 2006	2,603

The agency does not retain data on the number of applications received for Pass Plus certificates but receives on average 300 per day.

Rail Services

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to reduce cancellations by train operating companies (TOCs); and if he will consider rescinding franchises from those TOCs with a poor record of punctuality. [71408]

Derek Twigg: The number of trains cancelled on the network has decreased in each year since 2000-01, and the Department continues to discuss with the rail industry how to maintain this improvement.

Franchise agreements contain minimum performance requirements, and in the case of sustained poor performance below these levels, train operating companies can incur penalties eventually leading to termination of an agreement.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will reopen the main line to Heathfield from Exeter City Basin rejoining the main line at Newton Abbott or a similar routing to provide an alternative route bypassing Dawlish Warren; and what assessment he has made of the effect of rising water levels on the incidence of line closure in winter months of the main line to Penzance. [72326]

Derek Twigg: The Government have no plans to re-open any lines as an alternative route bypassing Dawlish Warren.

Network Rail advises me that it continues to take forward a phased programme of major works to improve the safety and all year round operational integrity of the railway in the Dawlish area. Network Rail will work with Devon county council to manage the sea defences in the long term as changes occur to sea levels.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what role the Government are playing in the setting of the train timetable from Paddington to the West Country being discussed with Network Rail; and what part the Government will play in future alterations to the timetable. [72328]

Derek Twigg: The detailed construction of the timetable from Paddington to the West Country is a matter for First Great Western (FGW) working within the framework provided by the Department for Transport's (DfT) specifications. In doing so, FGW is taking into account comments received from its timetable consultation exercise, and is working with Network Rail in line with the standard rail industry timetabling processes. The DfT would play the same role in relation to any future changes which might happen to the timetable.

Road Building Costs

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average cost per mile was of *(a)* building and *(b)* maintaining (i) three lane motorways, (ii) dual carriageways and (iii) single lane roads in each of the last 10 years. [71561]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to my answer to the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Mr. Carmichael) of 4 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1737W, which gave the average costs per mile of building motorways and dual carriageways. Additionally single lane roads cost the Highways Agency £10 million per mile, based on schemes completed in each of the last five years. Insufficient projects have been opened to traffic in each year to provide averages for the last 10 years.

I also refer the hon. Member to my answer to him on 28 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 675W, which set out the costs to the Highways Agency of maintaining the network. Costs broken down by road type are not available.

The costs of building and maintaining various types of non-trunk roads are held by the local highway authorities responsible for them. This information is not collated centrally.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average difference between road building tender costs and road building outturn costs has been in each of the last 10 years. [71566]

Dr. Ladyman: The following table records the average percentage difference, in each of the last 10 years, between works tender cost and works forecast outturn for completed publicly funded trunk road and motorway improvement projects, costing more than £5 million, for which the Highways Agency is responsible.

Average percentage variance between works tender cost and works forecast outturn for completed major projects

	Percentage
1996-97	48
1997-98	38
1998-99	28
1999-2000	43
2000-01	30
2001-02	10
2002-03	18
2003-04	12
2004-05	9
2005-06	6

The Highways Agency does not hold the information to enable a similar comparison to be made for privately funded design, build, finance and operate projects.

Non-trunk roads projects are the responsibility of the relevant highways authority and the information requested is not collated centrally in relation to those schemes.

Road Charging

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to announce which local authorities have been chosen to run the planned road-charging pilot schemes; and if he will make a statement. [71039]

Dr. Ladyman: The Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) has been established, in part, to support packages of measures to address congestion, including road pricing schemes. Funding is available from 2008-09. Decisions on which schemes will receive funding from TIF can be made only once robust and workable proposals, consisting of a full scheme business case, have been submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) by local areas. Guidance on the operation of the TIF was published in January 2006 (a copy is available in the Library of the House).

The funding decisions will be conditional on any necessary powers or consents being obtained. Any non-Greater London Authority road pricing scheme in England cannot start until the local authority concerned has made a scheme order containing the details of their scheme and submitted it to the Secretary of State and it has been confirmed, as set out in Part 3 of the Transport Act 2000. The Secretary of State cannot pre-judge any applications that might be made to him in the future.

Road Fuel

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what steps he has *(a)* taken and *(b)* plans to take (i) to make ethanol cheaper than petrol and (ii) to encourage motorists to convert their car to use ethanol; and if he will make a statement; [71958]

(2) if he will introduce an interest-free loan scheme to allow motorists to convert their car to use ethanol; and if he will make a statement. [71959]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government already support the use of bioethanol as a transport fuel by means of a 20 pence per litre fuel duty incentive. Since this was introduced in January 2005, sales of bioethanol in the UK have increased from zero to a monthly average of some 7 million litres. We have also announced that we will introduce a Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation in 2008, which will require all transport fuel suppliers to ensure that biofuels account for a certain percentage of their total fuel sales. In 2010, the level of the obligation will reach 5 per cent., which should mean that annual sales of bioethanol reach over a billion litres a year.

European Union fuel quality standards currently allow 5 per cent. ethanol to be blended into petrol, and all petrol vehicles are already capable of running on these blends. Above that level, a number of technical modifications are required to vehicles and to refuelling points. We introduced a new grant programme in 2005 to support the installation of alternative refuelling infrastructure, and through this we are supporting the installation of a small number of high-level ethanol pumps. In addition, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in the March 2006 Budget that cars manufactured to run on high-level ethanol blends will qualify for the reduced rate of Vehicle Excise Duty for alternatively fuelled cars. Beyond that, the Government have no current plans for other incentives.

Road Fund Licence

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many applications for road fund licences were received *(a)* in total and *(b)* by means of the internet on each working day in the two months before and including 22 March in (i) 2006, (ii) 2005 and (iii) 2004. [72592]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is as follows.

Vehicle relicensing	*Total*	*Electronic*
January, February and March 2004	10,543,187	453
January, February and March 2005	10,216,572	112,029
January, February and March 2006	10,691,531	626,817

Road Funding (Somerset)

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much central Government funding has been allocated to Somerset county council for road improvement in each of the last five years. [70166]

Gillian Merron: The Department has allocated Somerset county council £92 million of central Government funding in the last five years, through its Local Transport Plan for highways capital maintenance and transport improvement schemes (each costing less than £5 million). It is up to Somerset county council to determine exactly how it spends this money. These figures are broken down in the following table.

Somerset county council has also received £12 million of funding for the North West Taunton Package. The North West Taunton Package consists of a new road bridge crossing the railway line as well as a 600 space park and ride site. It also includes bus priority and traffic calming measures.

Somerset county council has also received Government funding support for its day-to-day roads activities through revenue support grant. Revenue support grant provides support for a range of local services and does not include a specific allocation for roads.

£ million

Nature of capital funding	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*	*2006-07*
Highways Maintenance	12.306	10.763	12.766	15.958	15.958
Integrated Transport Block	4.881	5.001	5.841	4.058	4.294
Total	17.187	15.764	18.607	20.016	20.252

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much central funding has been allocated to road signage in Somerset in each of the last five years. [70167]

Gillian Merron: The Department has allocated Somerset county council £92 million of central Government funding in the last five years, through its Local Transport Plan for highways capital maintenance and transport improvement schemes (each costing less than £5 million). Details are contained in my answer to question No: 70166. It is up to Somerset county council to determine exactly how it spends this money, but this funding support can be used for capital works on signs.

Somerset county council has also received Government funding support for its day-to-day roads activities (including related to signs) through revenue support grant. Revenue support grant provides support for a range of local services and does not include a specific allocation for roads.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much funding Kingston upon Hull council received from his Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* per mile of road and *(c)* per head of population in each year since 1997-98. [69759]

Gillian Merron: The following table shows the total funding allocated to the Kingston upon Hull city council in the local transport capital settlements between 1997-98 and 2005-06 (inclusive) in terms of totals, per mile of road, and per head of population.

Kingston upon Hull council

£000

	Total funding	Funds (£000) per mile[1]	Funds (£ per head)[1]
1997-98	3,711	8	14.9
1998-99	3,012	6.5	12.1
1999-2000	3,778	8.2	15.2
2000-01	4,136	9	16.7
2001-02	8,601	18.7	34.6
2002-03	7,261	15.8	29.2
2003-04	7,478	16.3	30
2004-05	8,732	19	35.1
2005-06	7,865	17.2	31.6

[1] The population and road mileage for the year 2004 has been used in the calculations, the road mileage being 458 miles and the population 248,500.

Road Safety

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many accidents have been attributed to vehicles skidding in each year since 1997. [71829]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of personal injury road accidents in Great Britain reported to the police involving one or more vehicles skidding in the years 1997 to 2004 (the latest year for which figures are available) is given in the following table.

The number of accidents involving a vehicle skidding: Great Britain, 1997-2004

	Number
1997	56,820
1998	55,274
1999	54,065
2000	53,216
2001	54,026
2002	52,213
2003	49,279
2004	48,069

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many head-on collisions have led to *(a)* fatalities and *(b)* serious injury in each year since 1997. [71830]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of personal injury road accidents reported to the police involving two vehicles with frontal impacts, leading to *(a)* fatalities and *(b)* serious injuries, is shown in the following table.

Number of road accidents leading to fatalities and serious injuries involving two vehicles with frontal impacts[1]: Great Britain, 1997-2004

	Fatal accidents[2]	Serious accidents[2]
1997	486	5,229
1998	480	4,914
1999	473	4,921
2000	478	4,582
2001	466	4,470
2002	478	4,220
2003	461	4,111
2004	433	3,765

[1] May include a minority of road accidents where both vehicles had frontal impacts but not necessarily with the other vehicle.
[2] The severity of the most seriously injured casualty in the accident.

Road accidents involving more than two vehicles have been excluded because head-on collisions cannot be accurately identified from the information held in these cases.

Roads (Suffolk)

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the total mileage travelled on roads in Suffolk by *(a)* all vehicles and *(b)* cars in each of the past 10 years. [72531]

Dr. Ladyman: The following table gives the information requested for each year from 1995 to 2004 (the latest year for which estimates are available):

Estimated distance travelled in Suffolk

(million vehicle miles)

	All motor vehicles	Cars
1995	3,182	2,529
1996	3,262	2,587
1997	3,369	2,652
1998	3,403	2,656
1999	3,472	2,712
2000	3,476	2,706
2001	3,531	2,748
2002	3,610	2,806
2003	3,657	2,827
2004	3,709	2,861

Royal Flight

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the Government's policy is on the use of fixed wing aircraft BAe146 by members of the Royal Family for private purposes. [72025]

Gillian Merron *[holding answer 18 May 2006]*: The BAe146 and HS125 aircraft of 32 Squadron may be used by senior members of the Royal Family (HM the Queen, HRH the Duke of Edinburgh and HRH the Prince of Wales) for private journeys with the cost of the journey reimbursed at a commercial rate.

Safety at Sea

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures he has taken since 1997 to improve safety at sea within United Kingdom territorial waters; and if he will make a statement. [72031]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government take maritime safety seriously. Since merchant shipping is very largely an international activity, the UK plays a leading role in the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and in the EU on a range of safety measures aimed at improving the safety of ships. From 1997 those measures have included:

Date	*Action taken*
1997	Introduction of the International and Domestic Safety Management Codes.
1999	Introduction of controls on the working hours of seafarers.
2000	UK initiated action at IMO to increase the compensation limit for a shipping accident by 50 per cent. to £177 million.
2000	UK supported EU maritime measures on improved port state control and monitoring of classification societies.
2000	UK supported the international Quality Shipping Campaign which led to the introduction of the EQUASIS on-line quality shipping database providing safety-related information on the world's merchant fleet.
2001	Number of Emergency Towing Vessels (ETVs) in UK increased to four and on station all year round.
2001	UK helped secure international agreement to accelerate the phase out of single hull oil tankers.
2003	UK helped secure international agreement on a further acceleration in the phasing out of single hull oil tankers.
2003	UK supported EU legislation on improved stability requirements for Ro-Ro ferries, harmonised seafarer training, and introduction of a vessel traffic monitoring and information system.
2005	UK promoted the introduction of the IMO Member State Audit Scheme to assist IMO Member States' implementation and enforcement of IMO requirements.
2005	UK Presidency began work on new directives on vessel traffic monitoring and port state control (work continues under the Austrian Presidency).

Most merchant shipping in United Kingdom territorial waters (in transit or calling at UK ports) is engaged on international trades and will be subject to international safety regulation. Ships which are engaged on domestic voyages only are subject to the international regulations where appropriate or to a domestic equivalent reflecting the nature of voyages and the UK sea areas in which the ships operate. An example of the latter is the domestic version of the International Safety Management Code.

Thameslink 2000

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2278-9W, on Thameslink 2000, whether the inspector has presented his report to him; and whether the TravelWatch report has been completed. [72454]

Dr. Ladyman: We received the inspector's report on the re-opened Thameslink 2000 inquiry on 21 February 2006 and the London TravelWatch report on the related rail closures on 20 April 2006. Both of these reports are currently being considered by the Department.

Transport Expenditure

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total projected public expenditure per head of population for transport is for *(a)* London, *(b)* each of the English passenger transport executive areas and *(c)* each of the English regions for (i) 2006-07 and (ii) each of the following five years. [69163]

Gillian Merron: Information on the Department's identifiable expenditure by region per head, planned for 2006-07 and 2007-08, was published in the Department's Annual Report 2005 (Cm 6527), table A8. No other regional breakdown of total public expenditure for transport in future years has been made.

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the projected central Government expenditure is per head of population for local public transport for *(a)* London, *(b)* each of the English passenger transport executive areas and *(c)* each of the English regions in (i) 2006-07 and (ii) each of the following five years. [69169]

Gillian Merron: Table 9 of the Department's Annual Report 2005 (Cm 6527) includes the Department's identifiable expenditure on local public transport by region for 2003-04. No comprehensive projections of central Government expenditure for local public transport in future years have been made, as the allocation of funding to different functions depends on decisions made by individual authorities.

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the public expenditure per head of population was for local public transport for *(a)* London, *(b)* each of the English passenger transport executive areas and *(c)* each English region in each of the last 10 years; and what the basis is for his calculations; [69171]

(2) what the public spend per head of population for local transport overall was for *(a)* London, *(b)* each of the passenger transport executive areas in England and

(c) each English region for each of the last 10 years; and on what basis this was calculated. [69172]

Gillian Merron *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* The information requested on public expenditure for local transport is not collected centrally in the form requested.

Trunk Roads (Litter)

Mr. Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to improve litter collection on trunk roads in Northumberland under the control of the Highways Agency; and if he will make a statement. [72530]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency is responsible only for the A1(T), A19(T) and A69(T) in Northumberland.

Under the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990: Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse, the responsibility for clearing litter on the A1(T) and A19(T) in Northumberland lies with local authorities. In the case of the A1(T) and A19(T), the Highways Agency works with local authorities in Northumberland and is currently negotiating agreements to undertake litter picking on their behalf. In addition, it is also the Highways Agency's policy to collect litter during routine grass cutting operations and let local authorities know when traffic management is in place so that they can make use of this for clearing litter. Routine grass cutting operations in Northumberland are scheduled to begin in June this year.

The A69 is a Design Build Finance & Operate (DBFO) route and responsibility for the removal of litter rests with the DBFO Company Roadlink (A69) Ltd. under the terms of its contract.

Unfilled Rail Posts

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action he is taking to reduce the number of unfilled rail posts in his Department; how many such posts are vacant; and whether he is considering outsourcing to the private sector. [71426]

Gillian Merron *[holding answer 17 May 2006]:* The Department for Transport's Rail Directorate currently has 11 vacant posts.

Five of these posts are in the process of being advertised internally. One post is being advertised externally following an unsuccessful internal recruitment exercise. Recruitment into the remaining five posts is on hold.

There are currently no plans to outsource the work currently undertaken by the Rail Group to the private sector.

Uninsured Motorists

Mrs. Riordan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's estimate is of the number of uninsured motorists driving on public roads in each of the last five years; and what percentage of all drivers this represented in each year. [72312]

Dr. Ladyman: Our latest estimate is based on a comparison of the vehicle register, maintained by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), and the motor insurance database. It is that there are about 2 million vehicles (about 6 per cent. of the UK vehicle fleet) being driven by uninsured drivers. There are no similar comparisons for earlier years.

Vehicle Excise Duty

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people in Greater London were fined for non-payment of vehicle excise duty in *(a)* 1997-98 and *(b)* 2004-05. [72254]

Dr. Ladyman: Vehicle excise duty (VED) prosecution figures are not held prior to the 1999-2000 financial year.

During the period April 2004 to the end of March 2005, a total of 39,186 cases were convicted in court for vehicle excise duty evasion by DVLA London offices. A further 25,120 people settled out of court.

A VED offence is prosecuted in the area in which it is detected wherever the driver is resident. A breakdown of cases by reference to the driver's residence could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agricultural Support

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funding the Department has allocated to the dairy industry to promote dairy products in each of the last five years. [70248]

Barry Gardiner: Grants have been available during each of the last five years through the Agriculture Development Scheme for the promotion of greater efficiency throughout the food chain, the Processing and Marketing Grant for assistance with processing and marketing of agricultural products, and through the Rural Enterprise Scheme for the marketing of quality agricultural products and for small-scale on-farm processing projects. A number of dairy processors and dairy marketing organisations have benefited from funding from each of these schemes.

I will write to the hon. Member shortly with the details of funding for the dairy industry.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much the Department has allocated to supporting organic farming in the last five years; and how much of this was to assist transition of farms to organic farming. [70249]

Mr. Bradshaw: The amount allocated over the last five years to support organic farming under the Organic Farming Scheme (OFS) and its predecessor, the Organic Aid Scheme (OAS), including support for conversion was £49.8 million.

The OFS closed to new applications at the end of March 2005. It was replaced by Organic Entry Level Stewardship (OELS). Under OELS, the cash spend to date is just over £753,000. Some £9.8 million has also been committed over the next three years to fund the cost of conversion under this new scheme.

Over the last five years DEFRA has also provided funding for the Organic Conversion Information Service (OCIS), a free advice service for farmers interested in converting to organic farming, at a cost of £1.3 million.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much financial support the Soil Association received from the Department in each of the last five years. [70251]

Mr. Bradshaw: For each of the financial years 2001/2002 until 2005/2006 the following grant payments were made to the Soil Association and its associated certification companies, Soil Association Certification Limited and ASCISCO.

(a) Payments made by Defra to Soil Association Certification Limited and ASCISCO as part of the partnership agreement with organic certification bodies in connection with the implementation of the EU Organic inspection regime

	Amount (£)
2001-02	261,827.50
2002-03	278,964.00
2003-04	283,820.25
2004-05	296,662.80
2005-06	284,274.40

(b) Grant payments to the Soil Association under the Rural Enterprise Scheme (RES) and Vocational Training Scheme (VTS) and the England Objective 1 programme

	Amount (£)
2001-02	146,262.88
2002-03	274,689.60
2003-04	365,917.08
2004-05	341,676.62
2005-06	588,648.98

Air Passenger Duty

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment has been made of the environmental impact of the current structure of air passenger duty. [71327]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

No formal assessment of the environmental impact of its current structure has been made, but the Government will continue to explore options for developing economic instruments, including air passenger duty, through which improved environmental performance in the aviation sector can be incentivised.

Angling

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost was of the Environment Agency's survey of Public Attitudes to Angling 2005; and what response has been made to its findings. [71205]

Barry Gardiner: The Environment Agency's Public Attitudes to Angling 2005 survey cost £14,000.

In response to the findings the agency has produced local and regional angling guides and made them widely available. They are working with angling governing bodies to develop more angling coaches, and supporting initiatives including National Fishing Week. The agency will also continue to work with partners to develop further opportunities for angling participation.

Asda

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 24 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 813W, on Asda, if he will list the participants at the meetings that took place between his Department and representatives of Asda, including Asda's parent company Wal-Mart, on *(a)* 22 July 2005, *(b)* 11 November 2005, *(c)* 8 December 2005, *(d)* 8 February 2006 and *(e)* 3 March 2006. [70867]

Barry Gardiner: Data privacy legislation makes it inappropriate to list the participants in those meetings.

Avian Influenza

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment he has made of the compatibility of the use of ventilation shutdown as a method of killing birds for the purpose of disease control with Annexe E and Article 3 of Council Directive 93/119/EEC on the protection of animals at the time of slaughter or killing; and if he will make a statement. [71749]

Mr. Bradshaw: The use of ventilation shutdown as a method of killing birds for the purpose of disease control is compatible with EU Directive 93/119/EC. The directive allows for disease control methods not specifically listed in the text of the directive, provided any pain or suffering to the birds is unavoidable. Appropriate measures must be taken to kill the animals as soon as possible and before they regain consciousness. Nothing can be done to the animals before it is ascertained they are dead.

Any use of ventilation shutdown as a method of killing diseased birds would be compliant with these requirements and be restricted to circumstances where no other method, as outlined in Schedule 9 of the Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing) Regulations 1995 (as amended), could be practicably employed for the killing of large numbers of birds on a specific farm.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what

assessment has been made by his officials of the animal welfare implications of the use of ventilation shutdown as a method of killing birds for the purpose of disease control; and if he will make a statement; [71750]

(2) in what circumstances the use of ventilation shutdown as a method of killing birds for the purpose of disease control would be authorised; and if he will make a statement. [71755]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have received veterinary advice that ventilation shutdown (VSD) is unlikely to deliver welfare standards equal to other recognised culling methods available.

The use of ventilation shutdown would therefore only be authorised as a last resort where no other method, as outlined in Schedule 9 of the Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing) Regulations 1995, could be practicably employed for the killing of large numbers of birds on a specific farm for disease control purposes.

The priority in dealing with a notifiable animal disease is to ensure that public health and safety of poultry workers is protected, particularly where, as with some strains of the avian influenza virus, there is a risk of human infection. Disease outbreaks must be dealt with quickly and effectively to reduce the likelihood of further spread of disease and it remains our intention to kill birds by the most humane method possible.

We must however be prepared for all eventualities including extreme circumstances where catchers are unavailable, logistical capabilities are stretched and where a grave threat to public health exists. The risk of that may be very small but it is right that we provide for it.

To enhance our capability to kill large numbers of birds through humane means, we have developed, and continue to develop, the use of gas or gas mixtures. Such techniques have been endorsed by the Humane Slaughter Association and were used successfully in the recent disease incidence in Norfolk. We expect that such techniques will be useable in the great majority of circumstances where an outbreak occurs.

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will list the occasions since September 2005 on which blood samples from birds initially tested positive for avian influenza virus types; where the birds were located in each case; what action was taken by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the State Veterinary Service in each case; and if he will make a statement. [72287]

David Miliband: Since September 2005 approximately 5,000 blood samples, from 435 domestic poultry premises, have been tested. In October, samples taken from a number of geese on a premises in Somerset tested positive for antibodies to H5N2 and H5N7. Movement restrictions were served on the premises and a veterinary inquiry was initiated. Clinical examination revealed that the geese were healthy. Further sampling and laboratory tests did not isolate avian influenza viruses. The presence of infection with avian influenza viruses was ruled out. It is likely that the positive antibody result was due to previous exposure to low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI) viruses. Disease was not confirmed on the premises.

In April 2006, H5N1 avian influenza was confirmed in a sample from the partially decomposed body of a swan found in Cellardyke, Fife, Scotland. Movement restrictions were put in place and a 2,500 sq km wild bird risk area was established. No further cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 were found, restrictions in the wild bird surveillance zone were lifted on 1 May and the wild bird risk area was ended.

H7N3 low pathogenicity avian influenza was confirmed on three poultry farms near Dereham, Norfolk in late April 2006. A low pathogenic avian influenza restricted zone with a radius of 1km was imposed around the infected premises. Movement restrictions were served on the premises and the three flocks were culled. Surveillance and testing was carried out on all additional premises belonging to the owner of the infected premises.

Bonfires

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance his Department produces for members of the public on dealing with nuisance bonfires; and if he will make a statement. [72464]

Mr. Bradshaw: Most complaints about domestic bonfires are dealt with by local authorities under their statutory nuisance powers under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Guidance for members of the public on what to do if they are suffering from smoke nuisance is available from the DEFRA website: http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/localenv/smoke/index.htrn

Bovine Tuberculosis

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment he has made of the level of sensitivity of the standard intradermal skin test for bovine tuberculosis. [70948]

Mr. Bradshaw: The single intradermal comparative cervical test (SICCT) for bovine tuberculosis is an effective test. It is the accepted standard laid down in both national and international legislation for determining the existence of disease in a cattle herd.

No diagnostic test, including the SICCT, is 100 per cent. accurate. When used as a routine screening test, the SICCT is designed to maximise specificity (identification of uninfected animals) while retaining good sensitivity (identification of infected animals). The specificity for a correctly performed SICCT is above 99 per cent.; its sensitivity is between 77 per cent. and 95 per cent.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the unit cost is for a Bovigam gamma interferon bovine tuberculosis test; and what estimate he has made of the economies of scale which would be achieved through the bulk purchase of the Bovigam test. [70949]

Mr. Bradshaw: The provisional estimated unit cost for a Bovigam IFNg (gamma interferon) bovine tuberculosis test in 2006-07 is £10.85.

It is not possible to estimate what economies of scale might be achieved through the bulk purchase of the Bovigam test until new policies for the increased use of the test are finalised.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what evidence his Department has assessed for a possible correlation between herd size and *(a)* the likelihood of a bovine tuberculosis outbreak and *(b)* the length of time that a herd is likely to be under restriction. [70960]

Mr. Bradshaw: Bovine tuberculosis (TB) has a complex epidemiology which makes it difficult to separate out the effects of individual factors.

DEFRA has carried out, at the request of the Independent Scientific Group on Cattle TB, two studies (the TB99 Epidemiological Questionnaire and the Case Control Study 2005) to investigate TB risk factors, and to identify those that appear to be key. Initial analyses of TB99 and CCS2005 data show that larger herds are more likely to have a TB breakdown.

The length of time a herd is under restriction is variable, and it is not known if larger herds remain under restriction longer than smaller herds.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice he has received from the Independent Scientific Group on the reasons for a positive correlation between larger herd sizes and bovine tuberculosis. [70961]

Mr. Bradshaw: The reason for a positive correlation between larger herd sizes and the occurrence of bovine tuberculosis is that there are more animals at risk of acquiring infection in larger herds.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what advice he has received from the Independent Scientific Group on using gamma interferon to control bovine tuberculosis in cattle; [70962]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the merits of using the gamma interferon bovine tuberculosis test more widely. [70987]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Independent Scientific Group has welcomed DEFRA's intention to increase the use of gamma interferon (IFNg) as an additional testing protocol to control bovine tuberculosis, and has also agreed the priority uses recommended by the Working Group, which was established by DEFRA to prepare and deliver a policy for wider roll out of the test.

The increased use of IFNg, in parallel with the skin test, has the potential to significantly increase the detection of infected cattle in herds where TB has been confirmed. DEFRA is already using the IFNg test on an ad hoc basis in identified problem TB herds. About 9,000 such tests were undertaken in 2005.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the results were of research project SE3013 into the specificity of gamma interferon; and what implications the results have for controlling bovine tuberculosis. [70988]

Mr. Bradshaw: It was research project SB4021 (rather than SE3013) that was established to evaluate the specificity of the gamma interferon (IFNg) test. This project confirmed the findings of previous studies by concluding that the commercially available IFNg test had a specificity of between 95-97 per cent.

Findings from SB4021 supported the view that it would be inappropriate to use IFNg for routine screening purposes because it risks producing too many false positive results. However, there would be value in making greater use of it, as an ancillary test, in a variety of herd breakdown situations. DEFRA is currently using these findings to develop new policies for the increased use of the IFNg test.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research his Department has *(a)* undertaken and *(b)* commissioned into the costs for a holding facing a bovine tuberculosis breakout. [71898]

Mr. Bradshaw: In 2004, DEFRA undertook an assessment of the economic impacts of bovine tuberculosis and alternative control policies (SE3112). The survey found a large variation in the costs associated with a breakdown, ranging from £229 per farm to £103,817 per farm, depending on the number of reactors, their valuation and the length of the breakdown.

Further details, including the final report, are available on the DEFRA website:

http://www2.defra.gov.uk/research/project_data/More.asp?I=SE3112&M=KWS&V=SE3112&SCOPE=0

The Government pay compensation for all cattle compulsorily slaughtered as a result of bovine tuberculosis.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many disputed payments for bovine tuberculosis compensation have been registered since the new system began, broken down by county. [59058]

Mr. Bradshaw: A small number of farmers have disputed the level of compensation payments offered since the introduction of the table valuation system on 1 February 2006. Some of these have subsequently been resolved in discussion with the State Veterinary Service.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether wildlife unit supervisors employed by his Department in connection with the Randomised Badger Culling Trials have been served with redundancy notices; and if he will make a statement. [71142]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 16 May 2006]:* The Wildlife Units at Aston Down and Polwhele have not been closed. Fieldwork in support of the trial was completed at the end of March, and staff are working to complete trial data entry and final quality checking of data.

Decisions about the future of these units will be taken following Ministerial decisions on future policy for the control of bovine tuberculosis in England. No compulsory redundancy notices have been served.

The wildlife officers who carried out the cage trapping in the Badger Culling Trial have been told that their posts are surplus, and efforts are being made to redeploy these staff. Those indicating a preference to leave have received offers of voluntary redundancy on compulsory terms. This decision was based on a cost-benefit analysis showing that state-operated culling could lead to higher costs and slower delivery compared to other options.

The remaining posts, including the field supervisors will be retained until the staffing needs to support the new policy are known.

Carcase Rendering

Charlotte Atkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what procedure companies wishing to apply for a permit for animal carcase rendering are required to follow on the expiry of existing permits issued by local authorities. [67581]

Ian Pearson *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* If for any reason an animal rendering plant is without a valid permit issued under the Pollution Prevention and Control (England and Wales) Regulations 2000 or an authorisation issued under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, that plant—like any other any installation subject to the Regulations—is deemed a new plant and must apply afresh to the relevant regulator for a permit.

The application has to be advertised by the applicant and the regulator has to send copies of the application to statutory consultees. The regulator has to consider representations made as a result of these consultations in determining the application. If the regulator is minded to grant the application, it is required to advertise its draft determination. If any representations are made within 20 days of that advertisement, the regulator has to take them into account in reaching its final decision. The process is fully explained in "Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control—A Practical Guide (Edition 4)", published by my Department and the Welsh Assembly Government.

Climate Change

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what role Local Strategic Partnerships will have in devising climate change strategies; [66410]

(2) how many *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* Local Strategic Partnerships have signed the Nottingham declaration on climate change. [66411]

Ian Pearson: The Government's new Climate Change Programme, published in March 2006, recognises the important role Sustainable Community Strategies, Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Local Area Agreements have to play in tackling climate change. It includes information on the role of the Sustainable Community Strategy framework as a route for local authorities to strengthen the delivery of sustainable development at the local level, including with partners on LSPs. Further information is available at:
http://www.defra.gov.uk/ENVIRONMENT/climatechange/uk/ukccp/pdf/ukccp06-all.pdf

So far, over 100 local authorities have signed the Nottingham declaration, each pledging to actively tackle climate change within their area. We do not have information on how many Local Strategic Partnerships are also signatories. The response to the declaration is being coordinated by the Energy Saving Trust, and more information can be found on their website:
http://www.est.org.uk/housingbuildings/localauthorities/NottinghamDeclaration/

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the Minister of State will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire of 3 March 2006, about riverside meadows near Pixham Ferry, Callow End, on the River Severn. [72299]

Barry Gardiner: I apologise for the delay in replying to the hon. Member's letter. A response will be issued shortly.

Cranleigh Brick and Tile

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations the Environment Agency has *(a)* made and *(b)* received on the Cranleigh Brick and Tile planning application in Waverley; and what assessment the Agency has made of (i) total funding and (ii) works needed to remediate the site. [70880]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Environment Agency was consulted on the Cranleigh Brick and Tile planning application and replied on 27 March 2006 to the planning authority, Waverley borough council. The Agency did not object to the proposal and gave their conditional approval. The Agency submitted a statement on the objectives and remedial options for the site, including a preliminary appraisal of the works required to remediate it. The Environment Agency has not made an assessment of the total finding of the remediation scheme as this was purely a planning consideration.

Dairy Calves

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans he has to meet representatives of the dairy industry to discuss options other than live export for the marketing of UK dairy-bred calves; and if he will make a statement. [69252]

Mr. Bradshaw: I am meeting representatives of the dairy industry in July to discuss these issues. Officials are also in discussion with the English Beef and Lamb Executive (EBLEX) and other English farming organisations.

DEFRA is committed to the welfare of all animals and we are strictly enforcing rules governing the health and welfare of livestock during transport. We also

prefer a trade in meat to the long distance transport of live animals for rearing or slaughter, whether in the UK or across borders, and would like to see a lower limit for maximum journey times.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many people in his Department have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* dismissed for (i) inappropriate use of the internet while at work and (ii) using work telephones to access premium rate numbers in each of the last five years. [67979]

Barry Gardiner: Since DEFRA came into existence on 9 June 2001 three members of staff have faced formal disciplinary procedures for breaches of IT policy, one in each of the following years, 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05. Of these, two officers (2002-03 and 2004-05), were dismissed and the other (2003-04) resigned before formal procedures were completed.

No officers have faced formal disciplinary procedures in respect of inappropriate use of the telecoms system.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* EU foreign nationals and *(b)* non-EU foreign nationals have been employed in his Department in each of the last five years; what vetting procedures are in place for each category of staff; and whether these include liaison with foreign law enforcement agencies. [68022]

Barry Gardiner: The Department does not maintain a central record which allows DEFRA to differentiate between EU and non-EU foreign nationals. Recruitment into DEFRA is carried out in accordance with the civil service nationality rules.

The need for an individual to undergo national security vetting, and the level of vetting that is appropriate will depend on the particular post they are going to fill. Where necessary, this will include a check of time spent overseas.

The vetting procedures for DEFRA follow Cabinet Office guidelines with no distinction made between the categories of staff identified in the question.

Emissions Trading

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what his policy is on the auctioning of carbon emission permits under Phase II of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme; and if he will make a statement. [72289]

David Miliband: The Government are currently consulting on the proposal to auction (between 2 and 10 per cent. of the total amount of allowances, as part of the consultation on the draft plan for the second phase of the Scheme (2008-2012). We have proposed that these allowances should be deducted from the allocation to the Electricity Supply Industry sector. The consultation closes on 23 May 2006. A final decision on the use of auctioning in the Phase II plan will be taken alongside the final decision on the total quantity of allowances for Phase II.

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions he has had with the European Commission regarding the deadline for submitting the UK National Allocation Plan for Phase II of the Emissions Trading Scheme; and if he will make a statement. [72290]

David Miliband: The EU Emissions Trading Scheme Directive states that the Phase II National Allocation Plan (NAP) should be submitted to the Commission by 30 June 2006 and the final allocation decision by 31 December 2006.

I wrote to Commissioner Dimas last week and am meeting him on 22 May 2006 for the first time since taking office. I expect to cover a number of issues. My officials have already had discussions with their counterparts at the Commission regarding the deadline.

This is a challenging deadline and in order to learn lessons from Phase I and to expand the Scheme to cover the activities set out in the revised Commission Guidance, the UK Government recognise that it will not be possible to collect and process the data in time to meet the first of these deadlines. The Government are however aiming to submit its NAP as soon as possible after the June deadline and to submit our final allocation decision by 31 December 2006.

Environment Agency

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will make a statement on Environment Agency special sites. [70881]

Mr. Bradshaw: To help address the legacy of land contamination, the Government brought into force part IIA ("contaminated land") of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. This places local authorities under a statutory duty to inspect their areas to identify contaminated land as defined in the Act, and to secure its remediation, in accordance with the detailed provisions of the regime. They are required to take a strategic and prioritised approach to the duty of inspection. A local authority must designate contaminated land as a "special site" if it meets specific legal definitions. Where a local authority designates a site as a special site, the Environment Agency will become the enforcing authority for the site. In broad terms, the regime addresses unacceptable risk arising from land contamination in situations where other statutory regimes cannot be applied.

As of 1 May 2006, 23 special sites in England had been designated by local authorities.

Environmental Liability Directive

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which UK Biodiversity Action Plan species do not fall within the scope of the Environmental Liability Directive and

would not be protected under UK implementing laws unless its scope were to be extended. [71456]

Barry Gardiner: UK Biodiversity Action Plan species that are not subject to protection under existing EU Directives (Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds; Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) would not be covered by UK legislation implementing the Environmental Liability Directive, unless the Government exercised the discretion provided in that directive.

I shall write to my hon. Friend with the detailed information on those species.

Farming (Bassetlaw)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* owner and *(b)* tenant farmers there were in Bassetlaw in 2005. [71891]

Barry Gardiner: Numbers of farmers and holdings for Bassetlaw constituency at June 2005 are as follows:

	Holdings	*Farmers*
(a) Wholly owned holdings	234	250
(b) Wholly rented holdings	59	82
Total[1]	469	555

[1] Including mixed tenure and seasonally rented holdings.

Note:
Farmers includes full and part-time farmers, partners, directors and spouses (if working on the holding.)

Source:
June Agricultural Survey

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many UK citizens work in the agriculture sector in Bassetlaw. [71892]

Barry Gardiner: Nationality data is not collected by the June Agricultural Survey. Total labour force on agricultural and horticultural holdings in Bassetlaw constituency was 1,198 in June 2005.

Source: June Agricultural Survey.

Fisheries

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 15 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 2041, on fisheries, if he will list the *(a)* countries and *(b)* authorities which record estimates of discards; and what those known figures are for the last available year. [68583]

Mr. Bradshaw: Since 2002 all EU countries have been required to collect data on discarding under Council Regulation 1543/2000 but the information is not yet compiled systematically. Last year, the European Commission's Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) requested data on discards from the North Sea and Skaggerak, Kattegat, Eastern and Western Baltic, West of Scotland, Irish and Celtic Seas. The UK, Germany, Sweden, Latvia, Denmark and the Netherlands provided data. UK data for Northern Ireland vessels were not available.

From the available data, STECF produced estimates of total discards as follows:

Estimates of discards in 2004 (tonnes)

	North Sea/Skaggerak	*West of Scotland*
Cod	7,058	90
Haddock	16,845	4,944
Whiting	45,239	2,617
Plaice	62,089	0
Sole	2,683	0
Nephrops	No estimate	No estimate
Saithe	9,001	0

Data on discarding remain scarce and these estimates should be treated with caution.

STECF has begun work to develop a "Discards Atlas"—a compendium of available information from member states on discards as a resource for fisheries science. Member states will be asked to provide data by the end of this year and after database creation, quality checking, compilation, mapping etc. it is hoped that the atlas will be available in 2007-08.

Gamebirds

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* pheasants, *(b)* partridges and *(c)* ducks are being kept for (i) meat production, (ii) showing, (iii) breeding for shooting, (iv) rearing for shooting, (v) releasing for shooting and (vi) other purposes at premises listed in the Great Britain Poultry Register; and how many such premises there are, broken down by species kept. [70780]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information requested is set out in the following table:

	Duck		*Pheasant*		*Partridge*	
Production type	*Bird*	*Premise*	*Bird*	*Premise*	*Bird*	*Premise*
Reared for meat	4,137,400	557	111,088	26	82,650	11
Breeding for meat	129,333	183	4,162	23	47,142	9
Showing	26,562	466	7,390	86	5,216	18
Breeding for shooting	90,852	132	3,075,707	765	1,287,211	351
Rearing for shooting	813,220	627	21,073,754	2,755	8,047,225	1,500
Releasing for shooting	532,953	1,318	1,4871,092	6,651	4,789,320	2,827
Egg layers	86,281	1,697	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Production type	Duck		Pheasant		Partridge	
	Bird	Premise	Bird	Premise	Bird	Premise
Breeding for egg laying	232,087	475	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Other production type	395,080	2,205	685,449	534	172,063	166
Total	6,443,768	7,660	39,828,642	10,840	14,430,827	4,882

This information was produced using data from the Great Britain Poultry Register taken on 12 May 2006. All data are subject to change.

The GB Poultry Register allows people to register themselves as a commercial hatchery without necessarily indicating which species they hatch, hence the unknown category. It is also possible that premises may have registered themselves as having an incubator capacity but have not registered that they use this for commercial purposes.

The GB Poultry Register captures data under the Avian Influenza (Preventive Measures) (No. 2) Regulations 2005. Registration is mandatory for premises with 50 or more birds kept for commercial purposes. In addition, the register also includes voluntary registrations for non-commercial premises and those where fewer than 50 poultry are kept.

The completeness of the data is dependant on the level of compliance with the legislation as specified above. Owners are required to de-register if they no longer keep poultry.

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many premises listed in the Great Britain Poultry Register in respect of the keeping of *(a)* pheasants and *(b)* partridges receive (i) live birds and (ii) eggs from outside Great Britain. [70782]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information requested is set out in the following table:

Species	Number of premises
Pheasants	191
Partridges	131
Both	118

This information was produced using data from the Great Britain Poultry Register taken on 12 May 2006. All data are subject to change.

The Poultry Register combines the import of birds and eggs from outside GB into one single question.

The GB Poultry Register captures data under the Avian Influenza (Preventive Measures) (No. 2) Regulations 2005. Registration is mandatory for premises with 50 or more birds kept for commercial purposes. In addition, the register also includes voluntary registrations for non-commercial premises and those where fewer than 50 poultry are kept.

The completeness of the data is dependant on the level of compliance with the legislation as specified above. Owners are required to de-register if they no longer keep poultry.

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many premises listed in the Great Britain Poultry Register in respect of the keeping of *(a)* pheasants and *(b)* partridges have a pond, lake or open reservoir within the boundary of the premises or next to the premises. [70783]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information requested is set out in the following table:

Species	Number
Pheasants[1]	6,099
Partridges[2]	2,777
Both	2,660
Total	11,536

[1] No partridges.
[2] No pheasants.

This information was produced using data from the Great Britain Poultry Register taken on 12 May 2006. All data are subject to change.

The GB Poultry Register captures data under the Avian Influenza (Preventive Measures) (No. 2) Regulations 2005. Registration is mandatory for premises with 50 or more birds kept for commercial purposes. In addition, the register also includes voluntary registrations for non-commercial premises and those where fewer than 50 poultry are kept.

The completeness of the data is dependant on the level of compliance with the legislation as specified above. Owners are required to de-register if they no longer keep poultry.

Greenhouse Gases

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the greenhouse gas emissions are in carbon equivalent per kilometre of the most commonly used aircraft in the United Kingdom; what the carbon equivalent emissions per passenger kilometre would be in each case if the aircraft were fully loaded at its normal passenger capacity. [71326]

Ian Pearson: The Government are currently in discussion with our contractors to determine whether UK specific aircraft emissions data can be generated. The Department will communicate this information if it becomes available in due course.

The most recent related figures on aircraft emissions come from the DEFRA Guidelines for Reporting on Greenhouse Gas Emissions, published in July 2005. This is available at:

http://defraweb/environment/business/envrp/gas/envrpgas-annexes.pdf

These show that, averaged out, emissions of CO_2 per passenger kilometre are 0.11 kg on a typical long haul flight. On a short haul flight the figure is 0.15 kg. Assumptions for a long haul flight refer to a 5,000 km journey on a typical 450-seat capacity aircraft, with a

70 per cent. load factor. Assumptions for a short haul flight refer to a 500 km journey on a typical 128-seat capacity aircraft, with a 65 per cent. load factor.

Harmful Gas Emissions

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the percentage change was in *(a)* carbon dioxide and *(b)* other harmful gases arising from energy efficiency measures taken in each of the last 30 years; and what the planned reduction in harmful gas emission through energy efficiency measures is over the next 10 years. [68031]

Ian Pearson: In relation to carbon dioxide, I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 8 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1282W. This refers to an exercise carried out for the household sector, depicting carbon changed for the period 1970 to 2001. Copies of this report are held in the Library.

With reference to other harmful gases, emissions of air pollutants are estimated in the UK National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory. These data are available from the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory website:

http://www.naei.org.uk/

Future targets for energy efficiency are focused on 2010. The 2006 UK Climate Change Programme sets out how energy efficiency will save 10.2 million tonnes of carbon (MtC) per year by that date, with savings split between the business sector (5.1 MtC), the household sector (4.8MtC), and the public sector (0.3MtC).

In addition, the 2004 Energy Efficiency Action Plan includes a residential energy efficiency aim (as required by the Sustainable Energy Act 2003) to save 3.5 MtC from homes in England by 2010 through energy efficiency measures.

Home Working

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many people in his Department have been enabled to work from home in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [67980]

Barry Gardiner: The Department currently has 2,000 registered users for dial-up network access and 1,000 registered users for network access via broadband. Of these, about 300 are registered for both, so the total is about 2,700 staff who are currently enabled to work from home.

We do not have historical data for previous years, nor are specific data held on the precise extent of home working.

Migrant Labour (Farms)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent estimate he has made of the number of farmers whose profitability is dependent on migrant labour. [69778]

Barry Gardiner: The Government do recognise that migrant workers have a role to play in meeting the agricultural sector's need for labour, and temporary and seasonal labour in particular. The current Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme has existed to meet this need. However, the scheme is being phased out in 2010 given the availability of labour from the new member states of the EU.

Research commissioned by the Home Office into the use by employers of migrant labour[1] indicates that migrant workers have become an important source of labour, particularly in agriculture and the hospitality sector. Some of the employers interviewed as part of this research said that their businesses would suffer or could not survive without migrant labour.

The summary report of this research can be viewed on the Home Office's website at the following address: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/rdsolr0306.pdf

[1] Employers Use of Migrant Labour, Institute for Employment Studies—March 2006.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings his Department has had in the last three years in which he or his predecessors discussed with the National Farmers' Union *(a)* extending and *(b)* speeding up the process for migrant work permits. [69781]

Barry Gardiner: DEFRA Ministers have not specifically discussed extending and speeding up the process for work permits for migrant workers at any of their meetings with the NFU in the past three years.

However, Ministers have attended meetings with the NFU and other stakeholder organisations in recent years at which the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS) was discussed. SAWS is a long-standing quota-based scheme which operates outside the normal work permit rules. The scheme allows students from non-EU countries to take up agricultural work in the UK without the need to obtain a work permit for periods of up to six months.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate he has made of the contribution of migrant workers to the rural economy in 2005. [69805]

Barry Gardiner: My Department does not hold this information.

Research commissioned by the Home Office into the use of migrant labour[1] by employers indicates that migrant workers have become an important source of labour, particularly in agriculture and the hospitality sector. This is supported by research commissioned by DEFRA in 2005 to inform the implementation of the Gangmasters (Licensing Act) 2004[2]. This research suggests that in the food manufacturing industry, which represents an important part of the rural economy, some 90 per cent. of agency workers are migrants.

In addition a recent study published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation[3] shows that employers are successfully recruiting migrant workers to take up jobs which traditionally have been hard to fill in the agriculture, construction and hospitality industries.

Employers said that they value migrant workers for their reliability and strong work ethic. There is much anecdotal evidence from SAWS (seasonal agricultural workers) operators that migrant workers have a positive effect on the local economy in their use of local services such as shops, banks, etc.

[1] Employers Use of Migrant Labour, Institute for Employment Studies—March 2006.

[2] Secondary Processing in Food Manufacture and Use of Gang Labour, Precision Prospecting—2005.

[3] Fair enough? Central and East European migrants in low-wage employment in the UK, Joseph Rowntree Foundation—May 2005.

Milk Quotas

Mr. Curry: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether milk quotas may be traded between member states of the European Union. [70315]

Mr. Bradshaw: Milk quotas cannot be sold or leased between member states. Council Regulation 1788/2003 specifies total quota levels for each member state. Our view is that any attempt to transfer quota to another member state would be contrary to that legislation. In recent discussions the EU Commission confirmed it shared our view.

Ministerial Flights

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will list the flights taken by Ministers in his Department since 2001; and what measures to offset the carbon emissions were taken for each flight. [68938]

Ian Pearson: All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Library. Since 1999, the Government have published on an annual basis a list of all overseas visits by Cabinet Ministers costing in excess of £500. Copies of the lists are available in the Library. Information for 2005-06 is currently being compiled and will be published when it is ready.

All central Government ministerial and official air travel is being offset from 1 April 2006. Departmental aviation emissions are calculated on an annual basis and subsequently offset through payments to a central fund. The fund purchases Certified Emissions Reductions credits from energy efficiency and renewable energy projects with high sustainable development benefits, located in developing countries. In addition, offsetting the flights of DEFRA Ministers have been backdated to 1 April 2005.

Other detailed information on flights could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for Ministers of State in his Department on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [69090]

Barry Gardiner: All ministerial travel, including overnight accommodation, complies with the terms of the 'Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers'. When travelling on official business Ministers make efficient and cost-effective travel arrangements. DEFRA's financial records for ministerial travel do not separate out overnight accommodation and this information could be generated only at disproportionate cost.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on how many occasions Ministers of State in his Department stayed overnight in *(a)* five star, *(b)* four star and *(c)* three star hotels on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [69091]

Barry Gardiner: All ministerial travel, including overnight accommodation, complies with the terms of the 'Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers'. When travelling on official business Ministers make efficient and cost-effective travel arrangements. DEFRA's financial records for ministerial travel do not include details of the rating of hotels at which Ministers stayed on foreign visits and this information could be generated only at disproportionate cost.

Nappies

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what progress has been made towards the Waste and Resources Action Programme Real Nappy Campaign's target of diverting 35,000 tonnes of waste from landfill by April 2006; [72308]

(2) what plans he has to establish further targets for the Waste and Resources Action Programme Real Nappy Campaign. [72309]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) reports annually on its overall progress in meeting targets, including work under the Real Nappy Programme. WRAP's latest annual achievements report will be published towards the end of July.

At the start of the programme, 91 per cent. of expectant parents said they intended to use disposable nappies. Work done for the Environment Agency suggested the figure could be as high as 94 per cent. WRAP will survey parents again at the end of the programme to establish the level of change in intended behaviour. An estimate of the level of diversion will also be made and published at that time, taking account of the survey and other quantitative evidence.

There are no further plans to establish targets. The Real Nappy Campaign was funded for three years from April 2003 to March 2006, although some funding has been provided for 2006-07 to meet existing commitments.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funding his Department allocated to Real Nappy Week 2006; and what assessment he has made of the impact of the event. [70930]

Mr. Bradshaw: Real Nappy Week is supported by the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) as part of their Real Nappy Initiative and receives funding from DEFRA and the Scottish Executive. The budget for all aspects of the week's events was £250,000.

This year marked the 10th Anniversary of Real Nappy Week. More than 500 events were planned throughout the UK and a record number of supporters signed up to back the event. This included over 90 per cent. of all UK local authorities and 155 MPs, MSPs, MEPs and Welsh AMs.

WRAP will provide a full report on Real Nappy Week once all the information has been collated. This is expected in June.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether his Department's review of England's Waste Strategy will address the promotion of reusable nappies. [70931]

Mr. Bradshaw: The review of England's Waste Strategy will discuss a range of waste minimisation and prevention measures. It is too early to state whether re-usable nappies will specifically be addressed.

North Sea Ministerial Meeting

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which Ministers were present for each day of the North Sea Ministerial Meeting on the Environmental Impacts of Shipping and Fisheries in Gothenburg, Sweden on 4 and 5 May; what discussions his Department has had with the Scottish Executive on the meeting; and if he will make a statement. [71925]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 18 May 2006]:* The list of attendees at the North Sea Ministerial Meeting on the Environmental Impacts of Shipping and Fisheries held in Gothenburg, Sweden on 4 and 5 May can be found at http://www.seas-at-risk.org/pdfs/SAR_GothenburgPressRelease_03.pdf

Nuclear Power

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will list the meetings *(a)* he and *(b)* Ministers in his Department have had with (i) representatives of and (ii) advisers to the nuclear power industry in each of the last two years; who he met on each occasion; and what the purpose was of each meeting. [72288]

David Miliband: The Secretary of State has had no such meetings. Departmental records also show no such meetings.

Oak Trees

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps his Department is taking to promote the planting of oak trees. [71581]

Barry Gardiner: In the Action Plan for our Statement of Policy for England's Ancient and Native Woodland we promote woodland creation which extends, buffers and links ancient woodland through both the Forestry Commission's English Woodland Grant Scheme and DEFRA's Environmental Stewardship grants. In order to respect the biodiversity values of ancient woodland much of this type of woodland creation will involve the use of native species including a significant proportion of oak.

Most new woodland planting and restocking that is carried out by private landowners is grant aided by the Forestry Commission. The incentives available favour the planting of native broadleaves and a large proportion of these will be oak.

In England the Forestry Commission has embarked on a programme to restore 15,000 hectares of ancient semi-natural woodland on the public forest estate by 2020 and this will include planting and regenerating native tree species, including oak. In addition most new planting by the Commission will be with native broadleaves and, where site conditions are suitable, oak will be well represented in these new woodlands.

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of mature oak trees in England and Wales in each of the last five years. [71617]

Barry Gardiner: A national woodland survey is carried out by the Forestry Commission at intervals of between 15 and 20 years. The most recent report for England was published in 2001 and for Wales in 2002.

The survey reports include estimates of: *(a)* the area of oak woodland; *(b)* individual oak trees; and *(c)* numbers of oak trees growing in small groups or narrow linear features.

An estimate of the planting year is included in the reports where woodland is, or could become, capable of producing wood of a size and quality suitable for sawlogs (High Forest Category 1).

This information for England and Wales is reproduced in the following tables:

All oak woodland and trees (i.e. groups a-c above)

England	
Oak woodland over 2.0 hectares in size	147,847 hectares
Oak woodland between 0.1 hectare and 2.0 hectares	10,818 hectares
Oak trees outside woodland	6,872,800 trees
Wales	
Oak woodland over 2.0 hectares in size	38,092 hectares
Oak woodland between 0.1 hectare and 2.0 hectares	4,826 hectares
Oak trees outside woodland	1,569,100 trees

Planting year class for oak (i.e. High Forest Category 1)

Hectares

Planting year	*England*	*Wales*
1991-98	5,208	394
1981-90	2,832	336
1971-80	2,482	27

Planting year class for oak (i.e. High Forest Category 1)

Planting year	*England*	*Hectares* *Wales*
1961-70	3,221	266
1951-61	7,702	430
1941-50	8,839	1,411
1931-40	7,450	2,631
1921-30	12,922	1,298
1911-20	16,561	1,564
1901-10	8,047	170
1861-1900	36,975	2675
Pre1861	12,997	197
Total	125,236	11,399

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of his private office staff is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled. [69098]

Barry Gardiner: For all ministerial private offices in DEFRA the proportions are:

(a) 23 per cent.

(b) 77 per cent. and

(c) 0 per cent.

Recruitment

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on recruitment, search and selection agencies in each of the last five years. [68341]

Barry Gardiner: This information is not held centrally within the Department, and therefore could be made available only at disproportionate cost.

Recycling

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate he has made of the average cost per tonne of recycling waste material in *(a)* Swindon and *(b)* England in each of the last three years. [71652]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA does not gather information on individual recycling schemes or the costs of recycling waste material. These will vary depending on a number of factors, including the collection method used by a local authority, the materials collected and the market for recycled materials.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will list the schemes used by local authorities which have achieved the highest recycling rates for household waste. [69940]

Mr. Bradshaw: Government sets statutory recycling and composting targets for all waste collection authorities in England. Each individual authority is free to choose its own method of collection (i.e. the type of recycling scheme). However, DEFRA does not collect this information from local authorities.

The top 10 performing local authorities for household recycling and composting in 2004-05 used a range of DEFRA-funded and supported schemes, including the National Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund (NWMRF), the Local Authority Support Unit's Direct Consultancy Support Programme (LASU DCS), the Household Incentives Scheme, New Technologies Supporter Programme and the Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant (WPEG). In addition, the Waste and Resources Action Programme's (WRAP) ROTATE service is resourced by DEFRA to provide impartial support to authorities on kerbside collection of recyclables.

The following table provides a breakdown of schemes used:

Region	*Local authority*	*DEFRA-funded schemes used*
Eastern	St. Edmundsbury	NWMRF, WRAP, LASU DCS, Household Incentives, WPEG
Eastern	Forest Heath	NWMRF, WRAP, LASU DCS, Household Incentives, WPEG
Eastern	South Cambridgeshire	NWMRF, WRAP, LASU DCS, New Technologies Supporter Programme, WPEG, Household Incentives
West Midlands	Lichfield	NWMRF, WRAP, LASU DCS, WPEG
East Midlands	Harborough	NWMRF, LASU DCS, WPEG, Household Incentives, New Technologies Supporter Programme
East Midlands	Rushcliffe	NWMRF, Household Incentives, WPEG
East Midlands	Daventry	NWMRF, WRAP, LASU DCS, WPEG
South East	Cherwell	NWMRF, WRAP, LASU DCS, New Technologies Supporter Programme, WPEG
North West	Vale Royal	LASU DCS, NWMRF, WRAP, Household Incentives, WPEG
East Midlands	North Kesteven	LASU DCS, WPEG

Reprocessed Fuel Oil

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if his Department will take steps to enable the classification of reprocessed fuel oil as a product rather than waste. [72307]

Mr. Bradshaw: Whether or not a substance is "waste" within the meaning of Article 1(a) of the Waste Framework Directive (WFD) (2006/12/EC) is a matter that must be determined on the facts of the case and the interpretation of the law is a matter for the courts. It is not a function of the Government to classify or to declassify any particular substance as waste or non-waste.

The Environment Agency is designated as a "competent authority" for the purpose of implementing the WFD in England and Wales and is

required to give effect to the directive's definition of waste, as interpreted by the European Court of Justice and our national courts.

Guidance available on the Department's website at http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/airquality/lapc/aqnotes/pdf/aqi04-06.pdf confirms that, on the facts of the case and taking account of case law by the courts, the Environment Agency's view is that recovered fuel oil (RFO) has not been fully recovered within the meaning of the WFD and does not cease to be waste until used as a means to generate energy.

Nevertheless, organisations are free to present to the Environment Agency any significant, new information about RFO which would satisfy the Agency that it falls within the very limited circumstances in which waste may cease to be waste before being used as fuel.

Single Farm Payments

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farmers in Milton Keynes *(a)* have been and *(b)* remain to be paid their single farm payment. [68138]

Barry Gardiner: The Rural Payments Agency does not have the data available on a regional basis, as the scheme is not administered in this way.

Stewardship

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many complaints regarding the entry level stewardship scheme have been received, broken down by *(a)* subject of complaint and *(b)* region. [68578]

Barry Gardiner: The number of complaints received by the Rural Development Service regarding the Entry Level Stewardship Scheme, according to records up to 1 April 2006, is as follows:

Region	*Rural land register or mapping delays*	*ELS application delays*	*Policy*	*Payment delays*
East	35	17	1	21
East Midlands	35	0	1	3
North East	1	1	0	1
North West	0	0	0	0
South East	5	0	6	0
South West	1	1	0	0
West Midlands	2	0	1	5
Yorks and the Humber	2	1	0	3
HQ/SDID	8	2	8	2
Total	89	22	17	35

It is important to note that there is an overlap between the first two categories of complaint, with the first often leading to the second. Where mapping delays have been specified, the complaint has been allocated to that column. Otherwise application delays have been allocated to column 2. No individual complaint has been recorded more than once.

The relatively high figures under the rural land register heading for Eastern and East Midlands regions reflect a higher degree of mapping issues associated with larger farms in the East of England.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many and what proportion of farmers have been paid *(a)* on time and *(b)* late under the entry level stewardship scheme in each month for which records are available. [68579]

Barry Gardiner: At 11 May 2006 progress with payments under entry level stewardship was as follows:

		Payments made		*Not selected for payment*	
	Payments due	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
February	6,200	5,824	93.9	376	6.1
March	1,546	1,414	91.5	132	8.5
April	1,351	1,205	89.2	146	10.8

Those not selected for payment are for a variety of reasons including cases where agreements require amendment prior to payment or where warnings need to be resolved.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farmers have signed up for the entry level stewardship scheme. [68580]

Barry Gardiner: As of 15 May 2006 some 19,784 farmers and land managers had entered into entry level stewardship agreements. Of these, 694 are taking part in the organic strand of the scheme.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much and what proportion of the budget allocated for farm payments has been disbursed under the entry level stewardship scheme. [68581]

Barry Gardiner: At 11 May 2006 the value of payments made under entry level stewardship was some £15.5 million. This represents 28 per cent. of the budget available for entry level stewardship for the year 2006-07. In 2006-07, over £55 million has been allocated to ELS, including the organic ELS, to cover the cost of signed agreements that will be accounted for in this financial year.

Sugar Beet

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will re-assess agreements reached by his predecessor on the price of sugar beet to enable sugar beet farmers to develop a sustainable sector. [71399]

Mr. Bradshaw: Under the European Union's common agricultural policy, minimum prices paid to beet growers are determined by qualified majority decision of the Council of Ministers. Agreement on prices in the 2006 to 2010 period was a key element in the sugar reform package negotiated under the UK presidency in November 2005 and formally adopted in

February this year. An unreformed sugar sector would have been completely unsustainable, and the measures due to come into effect from 1 July will provide a viable basis for efficient industries in the future.

Tallow

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment he has made of the economic impact of constraints on the use of tallow for fuel. [67905]

Ian Pearson: There may be several constraints on the use of tallow as fuel, such as its availability and the availability of suitable plant or equipment in which to burn it.

As the law currently stands, the burning of waste tallow is also subject to the Waste Incineration Directive (2000/76/EC) which imposes strict operating and monitoring conditions on any plant incinerating or co-incinerating waste. My Department consulted in 2002 on draft legislation to transpose those requirements. The consultation paper contains a regulatory impact assessment of the implementation of those requirements and is available on the DEFRA website:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/consult/wasteincin/index.htm

Upland Areas

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much funding was made available by English Nature through management agreements to *(a)* farmers and *(b)* commoners to assist in the management of upland areas and commons in each year since 2001. [71329]

Barry Gardiner: English Nature has provided funding for land managers in the uplands, primarily, through the Wildlife Enhancement Scheme. In addition, additional funds were provided through the Sheep and Wildlife Enhancement Scheme. This was a special two-year project that commenced in 2004, and targeted the particular problems in the uplands arising from overgrazing by sheep.

	Total amount (£)	
Financial year	*Upland*	*Upland commons*
2001-02	1,955,000	669,000
2002-03	2,368,000	909,000
2003-04	4,635,000	2,306,000
2004-05	5,149,000	3,126,000
2005-06	3,254,000	1,312,000

The figures for upland commons are a subset of the figures for the uplands.

Water Metering

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment he has made of the merits of allowing water companies discretion in selecting households for water metering. [67899]

Ian Pearson: The Government examined the effects of metering in its review of water charging in 1997-99. The findings informed the development of the Water Industry Act 1999, which provides domestic customers with the option of a measured water bill or to remain on an unmeasured charging basis for water used only for normal household purposes in their present home.

DEFRA is currently leading work on metering in the context of the Water Saving Group. This involves targeted action to increase metering in water stressed areas, and to improve the understanding and delivery of metering generally. As part of this work, DEFRA is assessing how the balance between company discretion and customer choice should be struck.

White Papers

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many White Papers were published by his Department in 2005; how many included an animal health or welfare component; and if he will make a statement. [68259]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA published eight White Papers within the Command Papers series in 2005. The following is a list of these:

Draft Bill—Modernising Rural Delivery;

New UK Sustainable Development;

Departmental Report;

Government Rule of Strategy and draft Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill;

Government Response to the Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) Inquiry to the International Challenge to Climate Change;

Government Response to EFRA Report on Waste Policy and the Landfill Directive;

Autumn Performance Report;

Annual Review: Controls on Imports of Animal Products: April 2004–March 2005 (this Command Paper included an animal health or welfare component).

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Postal Services

Mr. Dismore: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission, what recent assessment he has made of the *(a)* daily and *(b)* annual volume of hon. Members' post dispatched from the House; and if he will make a statement. [71335]

Nick Harvey: The volume of mail dispatched from the House daily or annually is not recorded as there is no business need to do so. The best available estimate is that around five van loads of mail a day are dispatched from the House, suggesting around 18,000 items a working day.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission, pursuant to his answer of 10 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 291-92W, on House mail services, what percentage reduction on the normal price of first and second class postage is given by the

Royal Mail for Parliament's mail service; and if he will make a statement. [71343]

Nick Harvey: No percentage reduction is offered to commercial customers by Royal Mail using standard tariff letters. Reductions are available only if bulk posting arrangements are followed or if mail is meter franked.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission, pursuant to the answer of 10 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 291-92W, on House mail services, if the Commission will consider negotiating with Royal Mail a bulk purchase or business mail discount for hon. Members' post dispatched from the House, and for use by hon. Members who are prepared to bring their constituency post to the House for posting; and if he will make a statement. [71344]

Nick Harvey: In order for House mail to qualify for bulk purchase or business mail discounts, the mail dispatch would at a minimum have to be consolidated and sorted into postcoded bundles; carry typed addresses only; be fully postcoded; have all letters, flats and packages separated and consolidated into postcode area; and be posted before 3 pm each day, rather than the current cut-off of 7 pm each day. These conditions are incompatible with the working practices of individual Members.

Stationery Supplies

Mr. Dismore: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission, pursuant to his answer of 10 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 291-92W, on stationery supplies, if the Commission will make arrangements for hon. Members to obtain stationery of a less high quality and at a lower price than that presently provided; if the Commission will consider negotiating a stationery contract which does not rely on next day delivery and encourages hon. Members to order stationery well in advance but which maintains emergency supply arrangements; and if he will make a statement. [71368]

Nick Harvey: The House moved to next day delivery of stationery in 1997 to reduce the requirement for individual stockholding that led to over ordering, wastage and eventually obsolete stationery. This is a service which many Members and their staff welcome, particularly those with constituency offices in remote locations.

The present stationery range includes environmentally friendly paper in particular sizes and weights so that it can be used in a range of printers. The addition of lower quality paper would be unlikely to result in cost savings, given the consequent reduction in the volume of each type of paper ordered.

Vote Office Print Unit

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission, if he will list the parliamentary publications produced by the Vote Office Print Unit in each of the last six months for which information is available; what his estimate is of the savings to the House by the use of the Vote Office Print Unit during this period to produce publications previously printed by other sources; and if he will make a statement. [71969]

Nick Harvey: Parliamentary publications in all the following categories were produced or reprinted by the Print Services Unit in each of the last six months: House of Commons and House of Lords Bills and Explanatory Notes; House of Commons and House of Lords Debates; Standing Committee Debates ('Brown Covers'); House of Commons Papers; Select Committee transcripts of evidence. In total 1,491 titles were printed and 27,309 copies produced. The estimated savings by the use of the Print Services Unit during this period to print items previously printed by other sources is £103,650.

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission, how many staff are employed by the Vote Office Print Unit, broken down by grade; if the Commission will increase the number of staff in the Unit; and if he will make a statement. [71970]

Nick Harvey: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave him on 12 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 859W. There are no plans to increase the number of staff in the Unit.

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission, what the average printing costs of the Vote Bundle per printed page were during the 2005-06 financial year; and if he will make a statement. [71971]

Nick Harvey: The average printing costs of the Vote Bundle per originated printed page during financial year 2005-06 were £69.52. This represents a 6 per cent. reduction from the costs for financial year 2004-05, which were supplied to the hon. Member in the written answer I gave him on 12 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 859W.

PRIME MINISTER

Connexions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister what representations he has received during each of the last six months from members of the public about the Connexions programme; how many *(a)* supported and *(b)* opposed the programme; and if he will make a statement. [70389]

The Prime Minister: Since December 2005, my Office has received approximately 6,000 campaign cards on Disconnect Connexions.

Gleneagles Action Plan

Mr. Soames: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the progress of the Gleneagles Plan of Action. [72338]

The Prime Minister: Implementation of the Gleneagles Plan of Action is being overseen by the Gleneagles Dialogue on Climate Change, Clean Energy and Sustainable Development. The second ministerial meeting of the Dialogue, involving 20 countries with significant energy needs, will be held in Mexico in October. This will further explore the key themes of development and transfer of technology, market mechanisms and economics of climate change and adaptation identified at the first ministerial meeting in London last November. The Gleneagles Dialogue will report back to G8 leaders under Japan's Chairmanship of the G8 in 2008.

I also refer the hon. Member to the Gleneagles Implementation Plan for Africa, which is updated monthly and placed in the Libraries of the Houses.

Government Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister what criteria are used by him in selecting Government Bills that he will not co-sponsor; and if he will make a statement. [72045]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 11 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 643W.

Leased Land

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister what *(a)* land and *(b)* property his Department (i) leases and (ii) leased in (A) 1979, (B) 1983, (C) 1987, (D) 1992 and (E) 1997 in (1) the Southend, West constituency, (2) Essex, (3) Hertfordshire and (4) the Metropolitan Police area of London. [72128]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I have therefore asked my right hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office (Hilary Armstrong) to reply. A copy of the reply will be placed in the Library of the House.

Ministerial Residences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister what the *(a)* name and *(b)* location is of each official ministerial residence which is in his gift; which official residences were in the gift of the Prime Minister in (i) 1976, (ii) 1978, (iii) 1979, (iv) 1983, (v) 1987, (vi) 1992 and (vii) each year between 1993 and 2004; and if he will make a statement. [70874]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 9 March 1998, *Official Report*, columns 19-20W and on 17 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 984-86W.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister to which Ministers the official residences in his gift are allocated; to which Ministers they were allocated in January 2006; and if he will make a statement. [70875]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Members for Hemel Hempstead (Mike Penning) and Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) on 2 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 816W and the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Shipley (Philip Davies) on 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2394W.

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Prime Minister how much has been paid in *(a)* salary, *(b)* travelling expenses, *(c)* subsistence allowance and *(d)* removal expenses to special advisers in his Office in each of the last five years. [69249]

The Prime Minister: Since 2003, the Government have published on an annual basis the names and overall cost of special advisers, and the number in each pay band. For information relating to the last financial year I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement I made on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 158-61WS. Information on special advisers for this financial year is currently being collected and will be published in the normal way when it is ready.

Further information is not available in the format requested and could be obtained only at disproportionate costs.

All travel by special advisers is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Ministerial Code and the Civil Service Management Code.

Security Staff

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Prime Minister which Government Department or Agency employs security staff who protect Ministers; how many are employed; what the cost was in 2005-06; and what criteria are used to decide *(a)* which hon. Members are given protection and *(b)* for how long protection is provided after the individual leaves office. [71835]

The Prime Minister: It has been the practice of successive Governments not to comment on security matters.

West Papua

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister whether during his visit to Jakarta he discussed with the President of Indonesia the situation in West Papua. [71278]

The Prime Minister: In the joint statement following my meeting with President Yudhoyono on 30 March 2006 I expressed the UK's support for dialogue to settle internal differences on Papua. I also refer my

right hon. Friend to the Press Conference I held with President Yudhoyono. A transcript of this is available on the Number 10 website.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General if he will make a statement on the operation of the Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate Act 2000; and what recent representations he has received about the operation of this Act. [71019]

The Solicitor-General: None. The Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate Act 2000 came into effect on 1 October 2000 and established the remit for HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate which is an independent statutory body reporting to the Attorney-General. The legislation has operated satisfactorily. However, the Police and Justice Bill presently being considered by Parliament transfers the functions of the Inspectorate to a Justice, Community Safety and Custody Inspectorate in line with Government policy for rationalising the inspection arrangements of public services.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Solicitor-General what representations he has received regarding the use of counsellor's notes by the Crown Prosecution Service in childhood sexual abuse cases. [71057]

The Solicitor-General: I have not received any representations on this issue.

Where counselling is received, crown prosecutors should review any notes made as these may contain information that may impact upon the decision to prosecute. Wherever possible, prosecutors will safeguard the confidentiality of counselling sessions. However, the notes may contain a statement made by the complainant that would be valuable evidence of the first complaint of the abuse. Alternatively, the notes might contain information that must be disclosed to the defence because it either undermines the prosecution case or assists the case for the defence.

The Crown Prosecution Service, Home Office and the Department of Health have jointly issued two guidance booklets, which aim to assist therapists, including counsellors, in making decisions about therapeutic help for witnesses prior to a criminal trial. These appear at: http://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/docs/pretrial adult.pdf; http://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/docs/therapychild.pdf.

Portland PR

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Solicitor-General what meetings officials in the Law Officers' Departments have had with representatives of the public relations company Portland PR; what contracts Portland PR has with his Department and agencies for which he has responsibility; and what the nature of the contract is in each case. [70045]

The Solicitor-General: The Departments for which I am responsible do not maintain central lists of such meetings. Civil servants meet many people as part of the process of policy development and business delivery. All such meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the civil service code and guidance to civil servants on contacts with lobbyists and people outside Government.

I am unaware of any contacts by my Departments with Portland PR.

DEFENCE

Iraq

12. **Mr. John MacDougall:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the outcomes were of the talks held during his recent visit to Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [72206]

Des Browne: I had a number of discussions with a range of interlocutors in southern Iraq, including senior British officers and Iraqi officials. Our discussions covered the security situation, governance in the Multi National Division (South East) area and economic reconstruction.

15. **David Tredinnick:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the effect of human rights legislation on the ability of members of the UK armed services to respond to incidents on active duty in Iraq with due regard to their own safety. [72209]

Des Browne: British military personnel deployed on operations overseas who come under attack are lawfully entitled to defend themselves including, where necessary, by the use of lethal force. The enactment of the Human Rights Act 1998 has not affected this position.

19. **Mr. David Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the security situation in Iraq. [72214]

Des Browne: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave earlier today to my hon. Friend the Member for North-West Leicestershire, (David Taylor) and the hon. Member for South-West Bedfordshire, (Andrew Selous).

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the British Army has conducted an inquiry into the strength of the Badr organisation in Almal and elsewhere in South East Iraq. [61853]

Des Browne: There has been no inquiry into militia numbers. However, militias are something we routinely monitor. Assessments suggest that there are up to

10,000 people with various affiliations to the Badr organisation in southern Iraq.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British soldiers injured in Iraq since March 2003 have sustained a *(a)* severe, *(b)* moderate and *(c)* mild traumatic brain injury as a result of (i) being wounded in action and (ii) a vehicle or other accident. [65913]

Des Browne: The best centrally available records do not allow us to specify types of injury, such as head injury, for UK personnel who have served on Operation Telic. Nor do they separately identify the number of UK personnel injured in vehicle related or other accidents. However, information on those wounded in Iraq can be obtained on the MOD website at www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/FactSheets/OperationsInIraqBritishCasualties.htm.

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many attacks on multi-national forces were recorded in *(a)* Al Basrah, *(b)* Al Muthanna, *(c)* Dhi Qar and *(d)* Maysan province in Iraq in (i) January, (ii) February, (iii) March and (iv) April 2006. [70936]

Des Browne: The following table outlines the number of attacks by province on multi-national forces in Multi-National Division (South-East) in 2006:

	Al Muthanna	*Basrah*	*Dhi Qar*	*Maysan*
2006				
January	5	21	2	8
February	2	20	3	16
March	1	43	3	10
April	4	71	5	23
May	0	25	1	6

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what level of co-operation exists between multi-national forces and Iraqi *(a)* police, *(b)* military and *(c)* local council officials in (i) Al Basrah,(ii) Al Muthanna, (iii) Dhi Qar and (iv) Maysan provinces in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [71046]

Des Browne: Multi-national forces work closely with the Iraqi police, military and local council officials across the four provinces in Multi-National Division (South East). We have re-established full co-operation with Basrah Provincial Council following its decision earlier this month to end its boycott of UK forces. Elements within Maysan Provincial Council have withdrawn their co-operation with multi-national forces on a personal basis, but there is no official or widespread boycott in operation. Our work with the Governor of Maysan, many of the council officials and the Iraqi security forces has continued unimpeded.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what commitment has been given by the UK Government regarding the reconstruction of the Serious Crime Department building destroyed in the Jamiyal district of Basra in September 2005. [71461]

Mr. Ingram: The Consul General and Provincial Governor have agreed that, as the Jameat police building itself has been deemed structurally unsound, it would be preferable to relocate the facility, rather than refurbish it. Both parties have agreed that it would be sensible to move into a number of sites already partially or wholly funded by the UK as part of the Security Sector Reform process in MND(SE).

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the average daily operational ability is of *(a)* the Warrior fleet, *(b)* Snatch Land Rovers and *(c)* soft skin Land Rovers based in Iraq; [71706]

(2) how many *(a)* Warrior Armoured Fighting Vehicles, *(b)* Snatch Land Rovers and *(c)* soft skin Land Rovers are based in Iraq. [71712]

Mr. Ingram: For reasons of operational security, we do not release details of military capability. On average, however, UK armed forces conduct a total of some 120 to 140 patrols by road vehicle per day across Multi-National Division (South-East).

Veterans' Badge

13. **Laura Moffatt**: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, who is eligible to apply for the UK armed forces veterans' badge. [72207]

Mr. Watson: All those who served in HM Forces up to 31 December 1954 are currently eligible to apply for the HM armed forces veteran's badge, as are war widows and widowers who are in receipt of a war pension where their deceased spouse served over same period. Applications from those who served between 1 January 1955 and 31 December 1959 will be accepted from 27 June 2006. Further extensions to eligibility to cover those who served more recently will be made at the earliest practicable opportunity.

23. **Barbara Keeley:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many veterans' badges have been issued since the badge was introduced. [72218]

Mr. Watson: There have been 240,222 veterans' lapel badges issued up to and including 12 May 2006.

Fleet Submarines

17. **John Penrose**: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many fleet submarines are operational. [72212]

Mr. Ingram: Two types of submarines make up the Royal Navy Submarine Service. There are 10 fleet submarines, of which eight are operational. There are four ballistic missile submarines, of which three are operational.

Trident

18. **Dr. Vincent Cable:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what expenditure he plans to make available in the next five years for preliminary work on renewal of the Trident missile and submarine systems prior to a decision on its future. [72213]

Des Browne: No decisions have been taken on any replacement for the Trident system but we continue to keep options open for the future. We expect to spend around £5 million this year, and a similar amount in 2007-08, on initial preparatory work on possible options for any future deterrent. There is also some additional expenditure on elements of the current system to keep options open but it is not possible precisely to distinguish between elements of this expenditure that support the current system and those necessary to keep options open.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to publish his recommendations on the future of Trident. [70925]

Des Browne: Decisions on any replacement for Trident are likely to be necessary in the current Parliament, although they are still some way off.

Veterans' Day

20. **Mary Creagh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps his Department is taking to encourage the marking of Veterans' Day in West Yorkshire. [72215]

Mr. Watson: We are keen to encourage communities throughout the UK to mark the first Veterans' Day on 27 June. The Ministry of Defence has undertaken a comprehensive publicity campaign to promote the day and to highlight the funding available to assist local communities to organise their own events. This has included letters to all hon. Members, to 14,000 schools and to around 3,000 councils and lord lieutenants. We have also placed information on the internet and have worked closely with the main ex-service organisations.

EU Defence Co-operation

21. **Keith Vaz:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps he is taking to take forward EU defence co-operation. [72216]

Des Browne: During the UK presidency of the European Union last year, we took forward an assessment of the military capabilities the EU needs and assisted partners in developing these capabilities to ensure that EU battlegroups are able to respond rapidly to crises. We also encouraged the EU to adopt a comprehensive approach to missions, better integrating the civil and military contributions that the EU can make to crisis management and disaster response. This year we have encouraged member states to consider what contribution they can make to increasing the amount of strategic lift available for both EU and NATO operations. We will continue to support the development of a European Security and Defence Policy able to complement and reinforce NATO.

Hercules Aircraft

22. **Mr. Devine:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of UK Hercules aircraft deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan have been fitted with anti-explosive foam; and if he will make a statement. [72217]

Mr. Ingram: A programme is currently under way to fit a number of our Hercules aircraft with explosion suppressant foam, but revealing the numbers or types of Hercules being fitted might prejudice the security of our armed forces. The first aircraft fitted is expected to be ready for operational deployment within the next few months.

Afghanistan

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his assessment was of the security situation in Helmand province in January 2006; what his current assessment is; and if he will make a statement. [71909]

Des Browne: The security situation in the south of Afghanistan is less benign than in the north. In the south, authority and the rule of law have yet to be firmly established and, at present, insurgents, drug traffickers and a range of illegally armed groups all pose a threat to security, as they did in January 2006. As anticipated, there has been an increase in attacks in the south as the numbers and profile of NATO troops has increased with the deployment of forces for stage 3. We remain committed to the expansion of the international security assistance force (ISAF) across all of Afghanistan.

Apache Bowman Connectivity

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether Apache Bowman Connectivity will be implemented for the deployment to Helmand Province, Afghanistan. [52305]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 16 February 2006]:* Elements of 16 Air Assault Brigade, the formation currently deployed to Helmand Province, completed part of the conversion to the Bowman family of radios at the end of 2005. Full conversion will not take place until next year although it has received the Bowman capabilities necessary for the operation.

Arms Trade Treaty

Willie Rennie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps his Department plans to take to make progress on international talks on an international arms trade treaty in the next six months. [71132]

Des Browne *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* As part of a cross-Whitehall team the Ministry of Defence (MOD), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for Trade and Industry and the Department for International Development are working together towards an international arms trade treaty.

The MOD is fully supportive of this initiative and will continue to play an active role. When opportunities arise to further progress and raise awareness of this treaty the MOD will seek, as will other Departments, to act.

Army Retirements Board

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the membership of the Army Retirements Board. [71505]

Mr. Watson: The composition of the Army Retirements Board is as follows:

Position	
Chair	Deputy Military Secretary
Members	Colonel Manning (Army) Colonel Personnel Services 2 (Army) Head of Land Forces Secretariat
Secretary	Staff Officer 1, Occurrence Wing, Army Personnel Centre
Statistics Secretary	Staff Officer 2, Terms of Service Officer, Directorate of Manning (Army)

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many pleas of conscientious objection to military service have been *(a)* considered, *(b)* approved and *(c)* rejected by the Army Retirements Board on behalf of the Defence Council in each of the last five years. [71506]

Mr. Watson: Fewer than five cases from officers, which have cited conscientious objection to military service in the Regular Army or Officer Reserves, have been presented to and accepted by the Army Retirements Board within the last five years. To break down this figure any further would contravene the rules of disclosure as individuals could be identified.

No cases citing such reasons have been rejected by the Army Retirements Board within the last five years.

Astute Submarine

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what options have been explored to adapt future Astute submarines to fire *(a)* Trident D5 and *(b)* D5(A) missiles. [70775]

Des Browne: I have nothing to add to the answer given by the then Secretary of State for Defence, my right hon. Friend the Member for Airdrie and Shotts (John Reid) to the hon. Member for North Devon (Nick Harvey) on 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 674W.

Campaign Medal (Iraq)

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many service *(a)* men and *(b)* women have received the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal following service in Iraq. [71521]

Mr. Watson: This information is not held in the format requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Defence Export Services Organisation

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 4 May 2006 to Question reference 68593, on the Defence Export Services Organisation, if he will make a statement on the purpose of the Saudi Armed Forces Project and the number of *(a)* British based and *(b)* Saudi based full-time equivalent staff working on the project. [71437]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 3 November 2003, *Official Report*, column 437W, to the hon. Member for North Norfolk (Norman Lamb). The Saudi Armed Forces Project currently employs 111 staff in the UK and 62 in Saudi Arabia.

Departmental Procurement

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to conclude a Strategic Partnering Agreement for helicopters. [71483]

Mr. Ingram: Good progress has been made towards agreeing a Strategic Partnering Arrangement with AgustaWestland. We expect to conclude these discussions shortly and make an announcement thereafter.

European Union Satellite Centre

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what services available from the European Union Satellite Centre are being used by his Department; [70382]

(2) what information was *(a)* requested and *(b)* received from the European Union Satellite Centre prior to the 2003 invasion of Iraq. [70350]

Des Browne: The European Union Satellite Centre purchases imagery from commercial satellite owners to produce both analysis and geographic information in response to requests from member states. Where the European Union as a whole agrees that requesting information from the Satellite Centre is valuable, this information is designated a "Council Task" and products are made available to both European Union institutions and member states at no additional charge. The Ministry of Defence routinely receives these products.

The Ministry of Defence did not task the European Union Satellite Centre with any requirements prior to the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The Ministry of Defence did receive some products requested by other member states designated as Council Tasks.

Far East Internees

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made in finalising the settlements for Second World War Far East civilian internees. [72195]

Mr. Watson: Ministry of Defence officials have drafted detailed rules for the new 20-year residence criterion and held initial discussions on these with the Chairman of the Association of British Civilians in the Far East Region. Revised rules reflecting these discussions will be considered by the working group which my predecessor, my hon. Friend the Member for Islwyn (Mr. Touhig) announced on 28 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 681-90, at their meeting on the 25 May. We aim to implement the new criterion as soon as possible.

Financial Data

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of his Department's *(a)* chart of accounts and *(b)* resource account codes for financial year 2006-07. [71562]

Mr. Ingram: I plan to do so in the near future.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library copies of the monthly forecasts of payment and receipts provided by his Department to the Treasury under its cash management scheme for the second half of 2005-06. [71564]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 676W, to the hon. Member for Aldershot (Mr. Howarth). The answer provided monthly forecasts of payments and receipts from February to October 2005. I have placed copies of the forecasts for November 2005 to April 2006 in the Library of the House.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library copies of his Department's monthly financial submissions to the Treasury's general expenditure monitoring system for the second half of 2005-06. [71565]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Helicopters

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many times an Army Air Corps *(a)* Lynx and *(b)* Gazelle needed a component (i) repaired and (ii) replaced in each of the past three years. [71911]

Mr. Ingram: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Improvised Explosive Devices

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what *(a)* (i) vehicle armour and (ii) infantry protection has been issued and *(b)* tactics have been implemented to protect the UK's armed forces against improvised explosive devices; [66280]

(2) to what extent the armed forces are co-operating with other coalition partners on tactics aimed at countering improvised explosive devices. [66282]

Mr. Ingram: We are not able to detail our counter-improvised explosive device (IED) measures, as disclosure would or would be likely to prejudice the security of our armed forces. British Forces deployed on operations are equipped with a range of protective procedures and equipment. We co-operate fully with our coalition partners to counter the threat posed by IEDs.

Joint Maritime Exercises

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the cost of joint maritime exercises. [72362]

Mr. Ingram: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Military Aircraft

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many times *(a)* Canberra, *(b)* Nimrod and *(c)* Tornado GR4A aircraft were cannibalised in (i) 2003, (ii) 2004 and (iii) 2005. [71910]

Mr. Ingram: The removal of serviceable parts from one aircraft for use on another is a routine and temporary measure to ensure that the maximum number of aircraft (which are safe, reliable and capable of performing their designated tasks) are available to the front line.

The number of these instances over the last three years for the aircraft specified is given in the following table.

	2003	*2004*	*2005*
Canberra[1]	92	63	23
Nimrod[2]	[3]464	376	309
Tornado GR4A	[4]281	298	207

[1] Figures include PR9 and T4.
[2] Figures include Nimrod R1 and Nimrod MR2.
[3] Estimated for Nimrod R1.
[4] Records for 2003 are incomplete (reporting anomalies).

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many times an RAF *(a)* VC-10, *(b)* Tristar, *(c)*

Hercules C-130J, *(d)* Hercules C-130L and *(e)* C-17A Globemaster aircraft needed a component (i) repaired and (ii) replaced in each of the past three years. [71912]

Mr. Ingram: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Military Medical Staff

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the availability of medical staff in the *(a)* Royal Navy, *(b)* Royal Marines, *(c)* Army and *(d)* Royal Air Force; and if he will make a statement. [70199]

Mr. Watson *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* The Defence Medical Services (DMS) are responsible for the delivery of deployable medical operational capability in support of UK military operations and for providing health care to UK Service personnel to ensure they are "fit for task" and ready to deploy when needed.

Operational medical support required by UK troops deployed on operations is designed to be the most appropriate and robust to enable the commander to complete his mission. This is determined by a rigorous medical estimate of the military tasks to be undertaken. DMS manning requirements are regularly assessed with the aim of ensuring that we have sufficient medical staff to meet these key military requirements.

Manning levels in the DMS vary across different specialities and Services. In some areas we are very well manned, whilst in others we are experiencing shortfalls. However, there is no question of British forces being deployed on military operations without appropriate medical support. Manning shortfalls are being continually addressed through a package of remunerative and non-remunerative measures.

RAF Leconfield

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much has been spent on constructing a new search and rescue hangar at RAF Leconfield; what he expects the total final cost will be; and if he will make a statement. [71422]

Mr. Ingram: The construction costs incurred so far for the project total £8.6 million inclusive of VAT. Due to ongoing commercial negotiations, I am unable to provide an expected total final cost.

I will write to the hon. Member with an expected total final cost at the earliest opportunity.

Non-Proliferation Treaty

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent steps the Government have taken to implement its disarmament obligations under Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. [71522]

Des Browne: The UK is fully committed to its obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, including those on disarmament under Article VI, and has made significant disarmament steps since 1992. For example, the UK has given up both the nuclear Lance missile and artillery roles we undertook previously with US nuclear weapons held under dual-key arrangements, along with our maritime tactical nuclear capability, so that Royal Navy surface ships no longer have any capability to carry or deploy nuclear weapons. In 1998, the UK withdrew and dismantled the last air-launched nuclear weapon, the Royal Air Force's WE117 nuclear bombs. The dismantlement of the last remaining Chevaline (Polaris) warheads occurred in April 2[redacted], so that Trident is now our only nuclear weapons system.

In all, there has been a reduction of the UK's operationally available stockpile of nuclear weapons to fewer than 200 warheads, representing a reduction of more than 70 per cent. in the potential explosive power of our nuclear forces since the end of the cold war. Only one Trident submarine is on deterrent patrol at any one time and that submarine is normally on several days 'notice to fire' and its missiles are not targeted at any specific country.

In addition, the UK announced in 1995 that we had stopped the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and we continually press for negotiations to begin on a fissile material cut-off treaty at the conference on disarmament in Geneva. We have also been more transparent about our nuclear and fissile material stockpiles, publishing an historical account of plutonium stockpiles, along with an account of our highly enriched uranium earlier this year.

We are the only nuclear power that has so far been prepared to take such important steps on the route to nuclear disarmament.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* the United States and *(b)* other states on fulfilling disarmament obligations under Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. [71523]

Des Browne: The UK holds regular discussions with the US and other states on a wide range of security and international issues including the fulfilment of obligations under all articles of the NPT. The fulfilment of obligations under Article VI has most recently been discussed in a multilateral format at the United Nations Disarmament Commission in New York, last held between 10 and 28 April 2006, and at the standing Conference on Disarmament in Geneva earlier this year.

Nuclear Weapons

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether it is his policy that UK nuclear weapons should not be used against a non-nuclear state. [71942]

Des Browne: The United Kingdom's policy has not changed since 1998. I refer the hon. Member to paragraph 31 of Supporting Essay 5 to the 1998 Strategic Defence Review.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the explosive yield is of the Trident warhead. [71943]

Des Browne: I am withholding the information requested because it relates to national security and defence of the UK.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether UK nuclear scientists are involved in the research and development of new US nuclear weapons, with particular reference to the Reliable replacement warhead. [71944]

Des Browne: The Reliable replacement warhead project is a purely US national programme.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the *(a)* present and *(b)* future role of Trident, with particular reference to the potential development of a low yield warhead. [71945]

Des Browne: The Government's policy on nuclear weapons remains as set out in the 1998 Strategic Defence Review (SDR) (Cm 3999) and the 2002 SDR New Chapter (Cm 5566). The UK's nuclear weapons have a continuing use as a means of deterring major strategic military threats and they have a continuing role in guaranteeing the ultimate security of the UK. We would only ever contemplate their use in extreme circumstances of self-defence.

The Atomic Weapons Establishment is not engaged in the development of any new warheads.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether it is Government policy that first strike use of UK nuclear weapons is ruled out. [71989]

Des Browne: The United Kingdom Government would be prepared to use nuclear weapons only in extreme circumstances of self-defence. We would not use our weapons, whether conventional or nuclear, contrary to international law.

A policy of no first use of nuclear weapons would be incompatible with our and NATO's doctrine of deterrence. We have made clear, as have our NATO allies, that the circumstances in which any use of nuclear weapons might have to be contemplated are extremely remote. Our overall strategy is to ensure uncertainty in the mind of any aggressor about the exact nature of our response, and thus to maintain effective deterrence.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for how long he estimates the UK Trident nuclear capability could remain operational were US technical support withdrawn. [71991]

Des Browne: We have not undertaken a detailed assessment of this hypothetical situation, as we have no reason to believe that the withdrawal of US technical support for Trident is remotely likely. However, we anticipate that, in this highly unlikely scenario, the main impact on the UK would be in terms of the cost of maintaining the system rather than on its operational effectiveness.

Pension Entitlement (Service Widows)

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans his Department has to reduce the pension entitlement of widows of servicemen following a successful compensation claim for death in service. [71528]

Mr. Watson: It has been the policy of successive governments, applied to all public sector schemes and in accordance with common law principles, that an individual cannot receive double payment for loss of earnings and support where such compensation has been awarded by two different routes for the same incident. The Ministry of Defence has no plans to change that policy.

The armed forces occupational pension schemes pay death benefits regardless of whether the death was caused by service. This standard level of widows pension is not reduced by any common law compensation award.

Where the death of the serviceman has been caused by service in the armed forces, the widow may receive compensation. Where the cause of death was on or before 5 April 2005, this would be by way of a War Widow's Pension under the War Pensions Scheme (WPS). This pension is paid in full. In addition, an enhanced rate of widows pension under the occupational pension scheme may be paid, which includes an element for loss of earnings and support. It is only this final element that may be affected by a common law compensation settlement, where that settlement also includes an element for loss of earnings and support.

Where the cause of death was on or after 6 April 2005, the widow may receive compensation under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS), which replaces both the WPS and the enhanced elements of the occupational scheme. Because the AFCS benefits will normally be paid before any common law compensation settlement, arrangements are in place to reduce the common law compensation instead of seeking to claw back the AFCS benefit that would already be in payment.

Predator Unmanned Vehicles

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what involvement British officials have had in the *(a)* collection and analysis of data gathered by and *(b)* operation of US predator unmanned aerial vehicles; [64244]

(2) what information *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials have received on the use by US forces of predator unmanned aerial vehicles for the purpose of military attacks in (a) Afghanistan, (b) Iraq and (c) Pakistan. [64374]

Mr. Ingram: UK embedded staff regularly receive information on the use by US forces of US predator unmanned aerial vehicles. UK military personnel are mandated, however, to only get involved in the planning or execution of operations that are within UK rules of engagement and/or comply with British domestic and international law obligations. In this manner, UK personnel have only been involved in five unmanned aerial vehicle strikes in Iraq, and one in Afghanistan.

Redress of Grievance Cases

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many redress of grievance cases in respect of *(a)* officers, *(b)* non-commissioned officers and *(c)* other ranks in each of the armed forces are outstanding after more than eight weeks. [68518]

Mr. Watson: The information requested is shown in the following table.

	Army	*RAF*	*RN*
Officers	73	32	11
NCOs	33	21	[1]14
Other ranks/ratings	121	8	[1]

[1] The RN figures do not differentiate between non-officer categories.

The figures show those cases under consideration now at second or third level where the complaint was originally made more than eight weeks ago. Records are not kept centrally of complaints under consideration at first (commanding officer) level.

Service Accommodation

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent representations he has received on accommodation charges for service *(a)* men and *(b)* women. [71520]

Mr. Watson: Accommodation charges are the same for both male and female service personnel in the same circumstances. Charges are set by the Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB) as part of their deliberations on, and recommendations for, pay and charges for service personnel. The AFPRB listens to the views of service personnel, the services and (where appropriate) families during regular visits to a range of units across all services, some of whom have commented on recent increases to accommodation charges. There has also been correspondence with the chairman of the Army Families Federation on this subject.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many complaints his Department has received about service accommodation in the UK in the last 12 months. [71525]

Mr. Watson: Defence Estates (DE), the Ministry of Defence (MOD) agency responsible for Service Family Accommodation (SFA) in the UK, received 338 complaints between 1 April 2005 and 31 March 2006. An additional 2,249 complaints regarding SFA have been received by MODern Housing Solutions (MHS), the MOD's Housing Prime Contractor since the contract commenced in January 2006. A proportion of these complaints relate to the backlog of work assumed by MHS from the previous contractual arrangements. 1,949 have now been closed.

There have been no complaints sent to DE with regard to single living service accommodation in the UK during the last 12 months.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans are there to upgrade service family quarters at RAF Scampton. [71526]

Mr. Watson: Service Family Accommodation upgrades are currently planned at Scampton within the next three to five years, reflecting the station's position in the Defence Estate's Housing Upgrade Priority List. This list is kept under review in the light of changing priorities.

Submarine Programme Management Organisation

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the establishment of a unified submarine programme management organisation. [71489]

Mr. Ingram: Submarine programme management within the Ministry of Defence has recently been unified under the Director General Nuclear, who is responsible to both the Chief of Defence Procurement and the Chief of Defence Logistics for managing delivery of the submarine acquisition programme from concept to disposal. This organisation will also promote and manage any changes in the re-alignment of the submarine build and support industries that will emerge from implementation of the Defence Industrial Strategy in the Maritime sector.

War Widows' Pensions

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many war widows' pensions have been awarded to widows of British nuclear test veterans since 2000. [71441]

Mr. Watson: The Veterans Agency is aware of a small number (fewer than five) of specific cases where war widows pensions have been awarded to widows of British nuclear test veterans since 2000 (though not necessarily because of their participation in the tests), but does not hold definitive data. It is possible that other such cases exist, but it would not be possible to produce a definitive figure without incurring disproportionate cost.

Weapons of Mass Destruction

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many UK forces are trained to render weapons of mass destruction safe and secure. [54376]

Mr. Ingram: There are currently 463 Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Operators qualified and in-role for all three services who are trained and authorised to deal with biological and chemical ordnance natures.

Of these in-role EOD operators, a limited number have been specifically trained to deal with biological, chemical and non-fissile radiological devices in a counter-terrorist context. Precise numbers are not disclosed as this would prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of our forces.

SCOTLAND

Air Miles

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many free air miles have been accrued by senior civil servants in his Department on official business in each of the last three years; and how they were used. [70629]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office does not hold this information; however, air miles accrued on official business by senior civil servants must be used for official purposes, donated to charity or foregone.

Departmental Credit Cards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what facility is available for senior civil servants in his Department to use credit cards supplied by the Department. [70628]

David Cairns: None.

Foreign Prisoner Releases

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Home Secretary on the release of foreign prisoners due for deportation from Scottish jails. [72929]

David Cairns: My right hon. Friend has regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues on a range of issues affecting Scotland.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discounts are available in relation to hotel accommodation used by *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department. [69103]

David Cairns: Where staff use the Office's travel agent to organise hotel accommodation, the agent arranges such accommodation within the prescribed daily financial limit.

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much has been paid in *(a)* salary, *(b)* travelling expenses, *(c)* subsistence allowance and *(d)* removal expenses to special advisers in his private office in each of the last five years. [69104]

David Cairns: Since 2003, the Government have published, on an annual basis, the names and overall cost of special advisers and the number in each pay band. For information relating to the last financial year, I refer the hon. Member to the Written Ministerial Statement made by my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 158-61WS. Information on special advisers for this financial year is currently being collected and will be published in the normal way when it is ready.

No expenditure on removal expenses has been incurred. The costs of travel and subsistence were as follows:

	Travel	£ *Subsistence*
2001-02	24,818	10,648
2002-03	25,787	12,694
2003-04	8,583	8,258
2004-05	12,318	4,738
2005-06	11,419	6,078

WALES

Cardiff Millennium Stadium

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has received on crowd crushes due to the collapse of safety rails outside the Cardiff Millennium Stadium on 13 May 2006; and if he will make a statement. [71955]

Mr. Hain: None.

I understand that Millennium Stadium management are conducting an internal inquiry into the incident which occurred at gate 2 prior to kick off on Saturday, in which some 'channelling barriers' were damaged. This will include examining CCTV footage to identify the cause.

Fortunately it appears that no crush injuries were reported as a result of the incident.

The Millennium Stadium has an excellent record of hosting major sporting events and many fans have expressed their appreciation for the stadium and the host city of Cardiff.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discounts are available in relation to hotel accommodation used by *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department. [68976]

Mr. Hain: In June 2003 the Wales Office became a separate entity within the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA), and therefore adopts DCA's Travel and subsistence guidance, which sets the accommodation ceiling of £90 a night for London and £72 for other cities in the UK.

The Wales Office does not have its own arrangement for discounts on hotel accommodation.

Racial Abuse Complaints

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many complaints of racial abuse in his Department have *(a)* been investigated and *(b)* upheld in each of the last five years. [72896]

Mr. Hain: None.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Coeliac Disease

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in Northern Ireland have been diagnosed with coeliac disease. [72513]

Paul Goggins: The number of people diagnosed with coeliac disease in Northern Ireland is not available.

Information is available on the number of those suffering with coeliac disease admitted as inpatients to hospitals in Northern Ireland.

During 2004-05 (the latest year for which information is available), there were a total of 532 admissions to hospitals in Northern Ireland, for patients with coeliac disease.

It should be noted that any individual could have been admitted to hospital more than once over the course of a year and would therefore be counted more than once in the figures.

Source: Hospital Inpatients System DHSS and PS

Departmental Publications

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* press notices and *(b)* consultation documents were issued by his Department during the summer recess. [19586]

Mr. Hain: I apologise for the delay in responding to this question. This was due to an administrative error. During the summer recess, 28 July to 10 October 2005 inclusive, the NIO issued the following:

	Number
Press notices	44
Consultation document	1

Prisons

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what advice was given to the governor of HMP Magherberry about the advisability of granting compassionate parole to James Joseph McEvoy. [71601]

Paul Goggins: Decisions on granting compassionate temporary release are matters for Prison Service headquarters acting on the basis of information from the establishment. Mr. McEvoy was returned to custody on 15 May. Following this incident a review of the procedures is in hand.

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what resources are available to the Head of Human Resources of the Police Service of Northern Ireland to enable him to answer correspondence from hon. Members; [65468]

(2) what the average time taken was by the Police Service of Northern Ireland's Head of Human Resources to reply to correspondence in each of the past 12 months. [65469]

Mr. Woodward: This parliamentary question falls under the direct operational responsibility of the Chief Constable, rather than Government policy, and I have therefore asked the Chief Constable to respond directly to the hon. Lady.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 11 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 507W, on police; how many police trainee constables were recruited in financial year 2004-05. [72622]

Paul Goggins: I am advised that 531 police trainee constables out of a total of 11,801 applicants were recruited in financial year 2004-05.

Public Consultations

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many public consultations *(a)* each Northern Ireland Department and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Office undertook in the last 12 months; and what the cost was (i) in total and (ii) of each consultation. [70459]

Mr. Hanson: Details of the number of public consultations undertaken by the Northern Ireland Office and the 11 Northern Ireland Departments between April 2005 and March 2006 and associated costs have been placed in the Library of the House.

Costs include figures for each consultation and a total for each Department. All costs indicated are external and do not include, for example, internal costs such as staff time. The costs reflect the scale of each consultation and the methods used to carry out the consultation whether in writing or electronic form.

Rates

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of an average *(a)* domestic rates and *(b)* water rates bill in Northern Ireland from April 2007. [70577]

Mr. Hanson: The Secretary of State determines the level of the regional rate in NI. The average domestic regional rate bill in 2007-08 is expected to be around

£395. In addition to this, district councils each strike a district domestic rate independently from central Government. Based on current trends, the average district domestic rate next year will be £313.

On 8 December 2005, my hon. Friend the Member for St. Helens, South, the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Woodward) announced the introduction of domestic water and sewerage charges in Northern Ireland. Bills will be set in line with average domestic bills in England and Wales. Charges will be phased in over a three-year period which means that the average domestic water and sewerage bill in April 2007 will be just over £100.

My hon. Friend also announced the introduction of an affordability tariff which will ensure that eligible low-income households spend no more than 3 per cent. of their income on water and sewerage charges. No-one on the tariff will pay more than £60 in 2007-08 regardless of the value of the property in which they live. Up to 200,000 households in Northern Ireland will benefit from the tariff.

Review of Public Administration

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether local councils in Northern Ireland will be prevented from utilising cash reserves in the run-up to the implementation of the findings of the Review of Public Administration. [72624]

David Cairns: Councils may earmark reserves for specific statutory or policy purposes or for contingencies and it is for them to decide how they utilise these funds. Nevertheless, the Local Government Taskforce Finance Sub-Group is currently considering all aspects of local government finance and any recommendations made by this group will ultimately be a matter for Ministers.

Road Safety

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the Department of Environment will set out the new measures to be taken to reduce fatalities on the roads. [71886]

David Cairns: Several new measures are currently being progressed to reduce fatalities on the roads.

New primary road traffic legislation, on which the Department of the Environment (DOE) consulted from October 2005 to January 2006, will be introduced in due course.

The Department will be making an announcement later in the year on the compulsory wearing of seat belts/restraints on buses, coaches, cars and goods vehicles. A new TV publicity campaign to highlight the dangers of not wearing seat belts is planned for September.

The Department is currently preparing a new Highway Code which will be published in March 2007.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will establish a Road Safety Authority in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [71887]

David Cairns: The Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy 2002-2012 provides an integrated approach to the planning, co-ordination and delivery of Government's road safety activities and it requires the three main statutory bodies with responsibility for road safety in Northern Ireland (the Department of the Environment, the Department for Regional Development's Roads Service and the Police Service of Northern Ireland) to work together closely in partnership.

A Road Safety Steering Group, comprising senior management from each of the three partners, is responsible for coordinating delivery of the strategy and ensuring cohesive and complementary education, enforcement and engineering road safety activities.

These partnership arrangements are working well and are making a significant contribution to casualty reductions and there are no plans at this time to change this approach.

Small Change Big Difference

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps his Department and its agencies have taken following the launch of the Government's Small Change Big Difference campaign. [72011]

Paul Goggins: Discussions have been held between officials in the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland and officials within the Department of Health in England, in relation to the extent to which social marketing campaigns being developed by the Department of Health, including the Small Change Big Difference campaign, could be applied to Northern Ireland.

A number of public information campaigns have been developed by the Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland to promote healthier lifestyles, as part of Northern Ireland's public health strategy, Investing for Health. In March 2006, the Health Promotion Agency launched, "Every Step is a Forward Step", to promote the health benefits of physical activity and to encourage members of the public to undertake regular, moderate physical activity.

Traffic Wardens

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many traffic wardens in Northern Ireland were assaulted in the course of their duties in each year between 2000 and 2005. [65313]

Mr. Woodward: To obtain this information would require a manual trawl of assault cases at disproportionate cost.

Waste Transfers

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his estimate is of the amount of waste from the Irish Republic being transferred to Northern Ireland in each of the last three years. [70440]

David Cairns: Waste can be transferred into Northern Ireland under the Transfrontier Shipment of Waste Regulations (1994).

Between March 2005 and February 2006, the total tonnage for waste movements from ROI to NI moved under the regulations and notified to the Department was 14,610 tonnes. However, a significant proportion did not remain in NI, but continued on to GB.

The total quantities of green listed waste (for example, for paper only) transported under these regulations are unknown, as the movement of such waste does not have to be notified.

The Department's Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) has detected some examples of sham recovery, where companies claim to be recycling the waste they ship out, when in fact they send it to landfill. EHS is investigating these cases and its Environmental Crime Team will be increasingly focusing on this area.

Estimates suggest that up to 250,000 tonnes of household waste from the Republic of Ireland (ROI) were illegally deposited on land within Northern Ireland (NI) between October 2002 and the end of 2004.

To date, 57 illegal landfill sites have been discovered in NI containing ROI waste. It is not possible to determine how much waste was deposited in a given year as in many cases the waste is decayed to the point of being untraceable.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE

Local Election Reports

Mr. Pickles: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission what the Electoral Commission's timetable is for publishing its reports on the local elections held on 4 May 2006. [70645]

Peter Viggers: There is no statutory requirement for the Electoral Commission to report on the administration of the recent local government elections other than in respect of its evaluations of the 15 different electoral pilot schemes that took place in 21 English local authority area elections on 4 May 2006. The Commission has informed me that those reports will be available by the statutory deadline of 4 August 2006.

The Commission informs me that it has also scheduled a series of review activities in relation to the conduct of the local government elections held in England on 4 May 2006, in exercise of its power under section 6 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 to keep matters relating to local government elections under review. It intends to publish its conclusions in the summer.

Press Releases

Mr. Heald: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission (1) what steps the Speaker's Committee has taken to satisfy itself that the Electoral Commission's press release of 16 May 2006 on mock elections represents an efficient and effective use of its resources; [72429]

(2) what guidance the Commission has given to its press office on ensuring impartiality in its press releases; [72430]

(3) what discussions the Commission had with political parties prior to issuing its press release of 16 May 2006 on mock elections; [72431]

(4) what discussions the Commission had with political parties on the supporting materials and manifesto guides to the political parties produced for its mock election 2006 campaign prior to the distribution of these materials to schools. [72432]

Peter Viggers: The statutory duties of the Speaker's Committee do not require it to satisfy itself that any specific action of the Electoral Commission represents an efficient and effective use of its resources. It is not therefore its practice to do so.

I have asked the Electoral Commission to write to my hon. Friend, and to place a copy of its letter in the Library of the House.

Voter Registration Campaigns

Mr. Pickles: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission how much the Electoral Commission spent in *(a)* 2005 and *(b)* 2006 on campaigns to increase voter registration, including grants to local authorities. [70644]

Peter Viggers: The Electoral Commission informs me that it spent approximately £2.05 million in Great Britain and Northern Ireland in 2005 on campaigns to increase voter registration and, to date, in 2006 has spent approximately £1.88 million on campaigns in Great Britain. The Commission makes its campaign materials available to local authorities at no cost.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 22 May 2006

CABINET OFFICE

Freedom of Information

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what steps her Department is taking to improve its response rate to Freedom of Information requests. [70004]

Hilary Armstrong: Valuable experience has been gained over the first year of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and overall the Cabinet Office is performing well and in line with other departments. It is, however, often necessary to extend the time for responding to a request where a qualified exemption applies to the information being sought and the public interest is engaged. The Cabinet Office is seeking to improve its performance wherever possible and this is reflected in the quarterly statistics published by the Department for Constitutional Affairs that show the 'in time' figure for the Cabinet Office rising from 80 per cent. in Q1 (January-March 2005) to 94 per cent. in Q4 (October-December 2005).

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many Freedom of Information requests her Department has received since 1 January 2006. [70005]

Hilary Armstrong: The number of Freedom of Information requests received by Cabinet Office between 1 January and 31 March 2006 will be published by the Department for Constitutional Affairs in its quarterly monitoring bulletin. For 2005, the Cabinet Office received a total of 1,337 requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many Freedom of Information requests her Department has not answered within the 20-day deadline since 1 January 2006. [70006]

Hilary Armstrong: The number of Freedom of Information requests answered within the 20-day deadline by the Cabinet Office between 1 January and 31 March 2006 will be published by the Department for Constitutional Affairs in its quarterly monitoring bulletin. Departments are allowed to extend the deadline to consider the public interest and it is appropriate that they take the time necessary to reach the correct decision: that is, to protect information that is legitimately exempt and to release information where the balance of public interest lies in its disclosure.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many representations she has received about her Department's handling of Freedom of Information requests. [70007]

Hilary Armstrong: Complaints about the Cabinet Office's handling of requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 are dealt with under the Department's internal review procedures. Details of internal reviews in 2005, where the requested information was initially withheld, will be published by the Department for Constitutional Affairs in its annual report, copies of which will be available in the Library.

Planning Applications

Mrs. Dean: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many planning applications have been submitted by the Duchy in each of the last five years; how many planning applications are under consideration; and when each current application was submitted. [70666]

Hilary Armstrong: The Duchy of Lancaster currently has 10 planning applications awaiting decisions—three submitted in January, one in February, four in March, one in April and one in May 2006.

To provide full analysis of the applications submitted over the last five years would not be possible without incurring disproportionate cost.

Small Change Big Difference

Anne Milton: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what steps her Department has taken following the launch of the Government's Small Change Big Difference Campaign. [71952]

Hilary Armstrong: The Cabinet Office have a number of initiatives that encourage their employees to make changes advocated by the Small Change Big Difference Campaign examples of which include:

Wellbeing Fitness Centre—available for all Cabinet Office employees to use to increase their levels of physical activity. The centre offers a number of additional services such as lifestyle consultation and nutritional advice.

The staff canteen offers a variety of menu choices, healthy options are clearly indicated and are cooked with no added oils with all vegetables steamed. Additionally a new light and healthy option is now available each day.

The option of working flexibly so that employees can effectively manage their work with outside commitments and remote access service that allows employees to work from home.

Cabinet Office have recently launched two Well-Being pilots. These have taken a holistic approach focusing on improving organisational effectiveness and employee well-being.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Education

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women are attending an adult community education course in each parliamentary constituency in Derbyshire; [61499]

(2) what assessment she has made of the likely impact of Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council's proposed funding allocation for the Adult Community Education Service in 2006-07 on the provision of services; and if she will make a statement; [61545]

(3) how many adult community education learning *(a)* courses and *(b)* venues have been in operation in Derbyshire in each year since 1997; and how many she estimates will be in operation in (i) 2006-07 and (ii) 2007-08 in each case; [61581]

(4) how much funding Derbyshire's Adult Community Education service has received in each year since 1997; and what the allocation is for *(a)* 2006-07 and *(b)* 2007-08. [61582]

Bill Rammell: On 21 October 2005, I made an announcement, setting out the Government's strategic direction for the learning and skills sector for 2006/07 and 2007/08. The main purpose for doing so was to ensure the 2006/07 funding allocations process began with a clear and concise message on the principles that will underpin funding over the next two years. In addition, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) published 'Priorities for Success'—a document that sets out the funding strategy for the next two years in more detail. This document is available on the LSC's website. These clear messages develop priorities further outlined in my Department's Grant letters to the LSC for 2004-05 and 2005-06 and in the White Paper 'Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances' published on 27 March 2006.

Although more public funding will be going into the sector, we will focus funding even more strongly on key priorities of raising participation and achievement 14 to 19 and driving down the skills deficit in the adult workforce.

I reaffirmed our commitment to safeguard the funding for Personal and Community Development Learning in mainstream Further Education and Local Authority funding adult education (Adult and Community Learning) with a budget of £210 million in 2006/07, including family learning, family literacy, language and numeracy and neighbourhood learning in deprived communities.

In addition in the White Paper 'Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances' we set out our intention to reinvigorate this type of learning to improve its planning, its quality and to gear it more to the needs of local communities.

The Department allocates funds for the post-16 education and training sector to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) working through 47 local offices. As this is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, has written to the hon. Member with this information and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 19 April 2006:

Derbyshire Adult Learning Service's Funding Allocation 2006/07

I am writing in response to the four Parliamentary Questions which you raised recently regarding the funding allocation made to Derbyshire County Council's Adult Learning Service (ALS) for 2006/07.

Before answering the specific questions in detail, may I first assure you that the formula by which both the Further Education (FE) and the Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL) budgets for Derbyshire ALS have been allocated has been consistently applied to all FE and ALS providers across the East Midlands region. Colleagues at Derbyshire ALS accept that this is the case. You will also be aware that whilst overall funding is increasing, resources to fund the FE sector are finite and priorities have to be set. In our allocations for 2006/07, we have therefore asked providers to concentrate core funding on four key priorities that make the biggest impact towards delivering the Government's Skills Strategy.

These are:

Education and training for 16 to 18 year olds;

Young people taking Apprenticeships;

People who need to improve their basic skills of literacy and numeracy;

People undertaking their first level 2 qualification.

Learning and Skills Council National Office

	August to July								
	1997-98	*1998-99*	*1999-2000*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
ACL total excl buildings	—	—	—	1,084,112	3,301,631	3,789,693	4,059,972	4,161,091	4,140,718
FE allocation	1,148,404	1,478,379	1,544,154	2,185,041	2,867,515	3,250,703	3,765,000	4,700,000	4,100,000
NDTC	—	—	—	—	—	546,211	884,500	—	—
Total	1,148,404	1,478,379	1,544,154	3,269,153	6,169,146	7,586,607	8,709,472	8,861,091	8,240,718

The Personal & Community Development Learning (PCDL), including Family Learning and Family Literacy & Numeracy funding allocation for 2005/06 is £4.140 million (this comprises Adult & Community Learning, Family Learning and Family Literacy & Numeracy). The PCDL indicative allocation for 2006-07 is £3.758 million. Whilst the PCDL budget for 06/07 has been safeguarded nationally at 05/06 rates (£210 million) this obviously does not mean that each individual provider will receive the same allocation as in 05/06, particularly since £33 million of this £210 million is within FE colleges and not in Adult Learning Services.

Derbyshire Adult Learning Service also receives FE funding. In 2005/06 the FE funding allocation is £4.1 million, including £230,000 for Additional Learner Support. The Indicative

allocation for 2006/07 is £3.516 million, including £236,000 for Additional Learner Support. In addition, the LSC will be allocating £582,000 growth funding for adult delivery within FE across Derbyshire and the Derbyshire Adult Learning Service, alongside the other deliverers of adult learning across the county, are able to bid for these funds.

In addition to these figures, the LSC is currently discussing with Derbyshire Adult Learning Service the possibility of additional transitional funding for 2006/07 in order to help manage the impact of the reduced allocations. Furthermore, the LSC has also agreed to support the investment of £405,000 to create a new Adult & Community Education Centre in Bolsover in partnership with the Derbyshire Adult Learning Service, which is contributing £255,000. In the last four years the LSC has also invested over £4 million in capital improvements in the learning infrastructure for Derbyshire Adult Learning Service, including money to adapt community premises so that they are more accessible for disabled learners.

As outlined above, it is too early to say how many cou , and venues will form part of the offer from September 2006 for the 2006/07 academic year - the LSC is currently in dialogue with Derbyshire Adult Learning Service around funding allocations and the proposed mix and location of the adult learning offer for 2006-07.

The following table shows the number of adult community education courses and venues from 1997 to 2005/06. The number of outreach centres increased significantly in 2003/04 owing to the development of several family learning centres, including those within school premises. However the reduction of external funding such as Single Regeneration and ESF budgets in 2004/05 saw a reduction in some outreach work that year.

Venue Type	*1997/98*	*1998/99*	*1999/2000*	*2000/01*	*2001/02*	*2002/03*	*2003/04*	*2004/05*	*2005/06*
Main Centre	15	16	16	16	16	21	19	22	23
Outreach venue	101	102	105	111	131	118	215	171	181
	116	118	121	127	147	139	234	193	204

Courses	*1999/98*	*1998/99*	*1999-2000*	*2000/01*	*2001/02*	*2002/03*	*2003/04*	*2004/05*	*2005/06*
Voc Courses	910	945	1,033	1,261	1,686	2,246	2,491	2,516	[1]2,642
Non VOC	1,690	1,755	1,836	1,949	2,130	1,991	1,958	2,133	[1]2,100
	2,600	2,700	2,869	3,210	3,816	4,237	4,449	4,649	4,742

[1] Estimated end of year figures

In terms of 2006-07 and 2007-08, it is too early to say how many courses and venues will form part of the offer from September 2006; the LSC is currently in dialogue with Derbyshire Adult Learning Service around funding allocations and the proposed mix and location of the adult learning offer from September 2006. Although indicative funding allocations have been outlined to the Derbyshire Adult Learning Service, the published timescale for confirmation of final allocations is by the end of May 2006.

The funding allocations for the Derbyshire Adult Learning Service since 1997 are detailed below. Prior to 2000, Adult & Community Learning allocations to the ALS were determined by the Local Education Authority and we have no details of these. The NDTC allocation relates to provision transferred to the Adult Learning Service when North Derbyshire Tertiary College was closed.

Areas of education and training outside these priority areas - such as part-time courses for adults that do not lead to basic skills or first level 2 qualifications - will inevitably feel the funding pressure.

This dialogue will consider very carefully the impact of the reduced allocations on service delivery and will be reviewing what transitionary funding may be available to alleviate the same. As part of this review, the LSC will also consider the progress made byerbyshire Adult Learning Service in its ongoing efforts to review the relevance, appropriateness and fit with key government targets of its overall adult offer. This is in he context of significant increases in funding for adult learning across Derbyshire during the 2006-07 period.

There will also be fee income opportunities which Derbyshire Adult Learning Service will want to pursue to reflect the appropriate balance of contributions between the individual and the state for some of this provision - such as part-time courses for adults that do not lead to basic skills or first level 2 qualifications - and in the light of the increasing fee assumption that will apply for 2006/07

Unfortunately we do not hold information on the number of men and women attending adult courses broken down by parliamentary constituencies within Derbyshire. However, the number of learners accessing adult community education across the whole of Derbyshire in 2004/05 totalled 11,955, comprising 9,577 female learners and 2,378 male.

Clearly this is only part of the overall picture, with a further 87,247 adult learners funded via FE across Derbyshire, an additional 4,673 through work-based learning programmes, 6,584 through the Employer Training Pilot and a further 20,303 engaged on ESF-funded projects.

Naturally I am concerned about the impact of the 2006/07 allocation on Derbyshire's Adult Learning Service, and as I mentioned we will be looking to help ameliorate the effects via the provision of transitionary funding. Verity Bullough, the LSC's Regional Director for the East Midlands and Peter Brammall, Executive Director for Derbyshire, are meeting with colleagues from the ALS to discuss this issue more fully.

I trust that this answers the questions you raised in Parliament but if you require any further detail or explanation please do not hesitate to contact me again.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills by what percentage the budget for adult further education changed in each of the local Learning and Skills Council areas between the start of the academic years 2004-05 and 2005-06. [58880]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 16 March 2006]:* Our strategic priorities for adult learning outlined in Priorities for Success are to: support adults who lack basic skills or the platform of skills for employability; ensure a wide range of opportunities at Level 3; and, ensure the continued availability of a wide range of opportunities for personal and community development. Our investment in adult learning will remain broadly stable and focused on these key priorities.

The funding allocated by my Department for the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) major education and training programmes for adults for 2005-06 is

£2,851 million, an increase of £183 million or 7 per cent. on the comparable figure for 2004-05. My Department does not hold details of funding at local level. Mark Haysom, the LSC's Chief Executive has written to my hon. Friend with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 19 May 2006:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Question regarding the budget for adult further education.

As requested please find attached data showing the movement between the academic years 2004-05 and 2005-06 for further education adult learning, broken down by local LSC area. I have also included data which shows the movement in funding for both youth learning and additional learning support, some of which will apply to adult learning.

These three elements comprise the totality of further education funding allocations which are made to further education colleges and other further education providers. These figures do not however include funding paid to these providers under other programmes which benefit adult learners, for example adult and community learning, and employer training pilots/train to gain.

Each provider's funding allocation will have been determined individually in discussion with the provider concerned, taking account of the provider's performance data and the LSC's national, regional and local priorities. The differing levels of movement in funding allocations will be due to a number of factors, including:

Demographic changes creating greater demand for youth learning in the locality;

Providers' prior performance, in terms of delivering both numbers of learners and the quality of the learning;

Historic levels of adult learning and youth participation; and

The type of learning being delivered, for example, whether it contributes towards Government priorities or supports learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Although funding for adult learning has decreased within further education, within the reduced total significantly more funding is now concentrated on priority adult learning. Further education providers should also now receive more funding from the collection of increased fees and from other funding streams, notably train to gain, subject to their ability to provide training which meets the needs of employers. In 2006-07 alone this new adult learning [illegible]me has a budget of 230 million.

I trust this information is helpful.

Percentage Cash Movement

Local Council	*16-18*	*19+*	*ALS*	*Total*
Norfolk Total	18.2	-10.9	-4.4	6.7
Cambridgeshire Total	12.8	-11.4	3.8	4.2
Suffolk Total	17.1	-12.5	6.1	4.3
Bedfordshire and Luton Total	13.8	-8.9	-15.3	2.1
Hertfordshire	13.2	-9.7	-2.7	3.2
Essex Total	14.5	-13.1	12.1	6.8
Derbyshire Total	12.4	-4.2	4.1	4.0
Nottinghamshire Total	11.9	-6.1	2.3	2.5
Lincolnshire and Rutland Total	16.9	-12.0	9.1	5.4
Leicestershire Total	7.9	-2.9	10.9	3.2
Northamptonshire Total	9.2	-4.7	-4.0	3.1
London North Total	8.1	2.4	1.4	5.0
London West Total	9.4	3.6	4.1	6.2
London Central Total	12.8	0.3	3.1	4.6
London East Total	11.2	0.1	-1.3	4.6
London South Total	3.8	0.3	12.6	3.1

Percentage Cash Movement

Local Council	*16-18*	*19+*	*ALS*	*Total*
Northumberland Total	-7.7	-20.3	-4.6	-14.8
Tyne and Wear Total	9.0	-6.6	3.0	1.0
County Durham Total	11.6	-6.2	8.0	2.8
Tees Valley Total	8.5	-3.1	2.8	4.6
Cumbria Total	6.4	-6.9	6.9	0.9
Lancashire Total	9.1	-4.7	2.1	3.8
Greater Merseyside Total	8.0	-1.0	8.3	4.3
Greater Manchester Total	8.7	-4.4	6.2	4.2
Cheshire and Warrington Total	12.2	-6.6	0.7	4.7
Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Total	10.1	-2.0	5.6	4.3
Berkshire Total	10.3	0.2	3.9	5.1
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Total	9.3	2.0	2.3	7.0
Surrey Total	6.5	-7.2	28.1	3.7
Sussex Total	11.2	-0.9	5.9	6.9
Kent and Medway Total	12.0	-4.4	4.4	5.2
Devon and Cornwall Total	9.5	-5.4	-0.7	2.8
Somerset Total	12.4	-11.0	-2.1	3.5
Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Total	5.7	-2.2	10.8	2.6
West of England Total	9.2	1.7	4.1	5.4
Wiltshire and Swindon Total	8.1	-7.2	3.7	2.5
Gloucestershire Total	11.4	-10.3	15.9	4.5
Shropshire Total	9.2	3.7	5.0	6.9
Staffordshire Total	16.9	-6.2	-0.8	5.6
Black Country Total	11.3	3.3	1.6	7.1
Birmingham and Solihull Total	8.4	6.2	7.0	7.2
Herefordshire and Worcestershire Total	12.0	1.4	7.7	7.7
Coventry and Warwickshire Total	10.8	-0.2	1.5	5.0
North Yorkshire Total	14.0	-13.1	12.2	3.9
West Yorkshire Total	11.0	-1.2	-2.7	4.7
South Yorkshire Total	13.1	-1.9	-1.3	5.7
Humberside Total	10.2	-5.9	5.9	4.3
Grand Total	10.4	-2.6	3.8	4.6

Note:
ALS = Additional Learner Support.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many different adult education courses were offered in Bath in each year since 1997; how many adults in Bath registered for an adult education course in each year; and how much was spent by the Government on adult education provision in Bath in each year; [62944]

(2) if he will take steps to replace the adult education courses available to Bath residents which have been lost as a result of his Department's re-allocation of funding priorities towards 16 to 19-year-olds. [62946]

Phil Hope: Our White Paper 'Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances' sets out a comprehensive programme of change that will transform our FE system and achieve its potential as a powerhouse of economic prosperity and social

mobility. Its central purpose is to equip both young people and adults with the skills for productive and rewarding employment in a modern economy. In England we will continue to spend between £2.8 billion and £2.9 billion a year of taxpayers' money on support for adult learning. The broad volumes of publicly funded education and training will be maintained; however the balance will shift. We believe that it is right to focus help more on those who need it most,—that is, those without the basic skills or a full level 2 qualification needed if individuals are to become effective and fulfilled members of the work force, their families and local communities.

This does mean that those outside our priority areas may have to pay more for their courses. It does not mean that courses which are valued by learners and providers should close because public funding is reduced. The experience of many colleges, for example the City college, Brighton and Hove, is that it is possible to increase fees and the number of enrolments at the same time as providing safeguards for those adults on benefits. I would look to providers in other areas, including Bath, to follow these examples.

In the White Paper 'Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances' we reaffirmed our commitment to safeguard funding for Personal and Community Development Learning with a budget of £210 million in 2006/07, including family learning, family literacy, language and numeracy and neighbourhood learning in deprived communities. In addition we set out our intention to reinvigorate this type of learning to improve its planning, its quality and to gear it more to the needs of local communities.

As to the specific questions of funding in each area, the Department allocates funds for the post-16 education and training sector to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) working through 47 local offices. As this is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council Mark Haysom, the council's chief executive, has written to the hon. Member with this information and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library

Letter from Mark Haysom:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Questions regarding adult Education.

Firstly, I provide a breakdown of the information you requested on adult education courses in Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) and the reallocation of funding priorities towards 16 to 19 year olds.

Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL) allocations in B&NES 2005/06 and 2006/07

Adult and Community Learning (ACL) funding to B&NES for 2005/6 was £378,715. This can be broken down as follows:

	Amount (£)
Funding for family learning activities (FLLN and WFL)	109,766
Funding for neighbourhood learning in deprived communities (NLDC)	28,802
Main ACL funding covering personal and community development learning and first steps (learning intended to engage the individual and progress them towards level 2).	240,147

In 2006/07 the decision has been taken nationally to protect FLLN&WFL and NLDC activities by supporting them at 100% of the cash value for 2005/06 and to reduce the total budget available to PCDL and first steps' to approximately 90% of its 2005/06 cash value.

This approach has been applied to all providers receiving these funding streams throughout the South West region. It delivers the safeguards on these learning activities laid out in "Priorities for Success" (page 14, paragraph 50) and fully consumes the regional budget for these activities.

Total funding for B&NES in 2006/07 is currently set at £354,897 - please note that this figure is indicative at this stage.

Broken down into:

	Amount (£)
Funding for family learning (FLLN and WFL)	109,766
Funding for neighbourhood learning in deprived communities (NLDC)	28,802
PCDL and first steps	216,329

For comparison the four Unitary Authorities within the West of England LSC area received the following:

Unitary authority	*Total allocation (£)* *2005/06*	*2006/07*	*2006/07 percentage of 2005/06*
Bath and NE Somerset	378,715	354,897	93.7
Bristol	104,5534	979,779	93.7
North Somerset	378,715	354,897	93.7
South Gloucestershire	520,441	487,710	93.7

Further Education (FE) Allocations in B&NES

FE funding information is shown for B&NES and then separately identified for City of Bath College and Norton Radstock College.

We have provided the funding levels for the adult budget for 2004/5, 2005/6 and 2006/07 but please note that 2006/07 is indicative at this stage.

	19+ allocation *2004/05*	*2005/06*	*2006/07 19+ indicative allocation*
B and NES	6,084,717	6,799,830	6,289,303
Bath	3,900,993	4,418,220	4,108,375
Norton Radstock	2,183,724	2,381,610	2,180,928

The main reasons for the decrease in 2006/07 are as follows:

a) Impact of "Priorities for Success" in that the LSC is no longer funding certain adult courses e.g. courses under nine hours and employer mandatory qualifications.

b) The amount of funding is decided upon a number of factors including historical levels of funding, the potential for providing priority provision i.e. Skills for Life and full level 2 qualifications, provider performance and of course affordability.

c) The amounts of funding do vary by Unitary Authority, but this is to be expected as factors outlined in paragraph b) above, also vary.

Secondly, you asked about the activity and funding allocated to adult education in Bath in each year since 1997.

Prior to the establishment of the LSC in 2001 funding for further education in England was provided by the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC).

The FEFC allocated funding to a different cohort of providers using a different funding methodology to the LSC and therefore it is not possible for us to provide the information you require for adult education between 1997 and 2001.

The funding of adult and community learning was passed to the LSC in 2002/03. Prior to that the planning and funding of this activity was subsumed within local authorities. It is therefore also not possible to supply you with the data you request for between 1997 and 2001.

I attach therefore a breakdown of the information requested for the Bath and North East Somerset area from 2002/03 to 2006/07. The figures show the number of enrolments taken up, the number of distinct learners who accessed learning and the total funds earned. The figures for 2005/06 are an estimate based on current activity and the figures for 2006/07 are still under negotiation.

Adult learning in Bath and North East Somerset.

FE funded	*2002/03 claimed*	*2003/04 claimed*	*2004/05 claimed*	*2005/06 expected*	*2006/07 Indicative*
Enrolments	18,960	18,452	17,170	16,009	n/a
Learners	12,019	12,729	11,252	10,471	9,845
Funds (£)	5,190,782	6,306,502	6,516,487	6,397,604	6,289,303

n/a = not available.

ACL/ PCDL funded	*2002/03 claimed*	*2003/04 claimed*	*2004/05 claimed*	*2005/06[1] expected*	*2006/07 indicative*
Enrolments	n/a	2,260	3,036	—	n/a
Learners	n/a	1,621	1,933	1,051	1,172
Funds (£)	494,356	533,485	579,522	378,715	354,897

n/a = not available.

[1] Significant reorganization of ACL took place in this year. An additional £200,000 was granted to B and NES colleges to support costs incurred in this transition which is not shown.

Child Protection

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made since the statement of 19 January in investigating the 13 cases of sex offenders in which information was not complete; and in what respect the data on two of these was inconsistent. [47064]

Alan Johnson: In my predecessor's statement of 1 March she made clear that each of the 13 cases had been considered further. In 10 of the 13 cases the individuals concerned had been assessed and, where necessary, additional information has been sought from the police. None of these 10 individuals is considered to pose a risk to children and no further action is now being taken.

In the remaining three cases Sir Roger Singleton advised considering the possible barring of the individuals concerned. On the basis of the most recent information Sir Roger Singleton has advised that in two of the cases there is no reason to proceed further, and the cases are closed. One case has been reopened and additional information will enable us to consider whether this individual should be barred. Police know the whereabouts of this individual and have assured us that the individual is not working with children or in our schools.

The inconsistent data related to reconciliation of information relating to offences in two cases held by Departmental Officials with Police information. Verification was not completed by the time of the Parliamentary Statement, but was subsequently completed.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people on List 99 have been given permission to teach in an establishment which does not admit female pupils. [47285]

Alan Johnson: List 99 does not give permission to teach. Employers should satisfy themselves that an individual is suitable and a List 99 check is one element of this process. Other checks should include Criminal Records Bureau checks and following up references from previous employers or training establishments where appropriate.

Returning to the question it is not possible to provide this information in the format requested. As my predecessor said in her statement of 19 January there are 210 people listed on List 99 as being partially barred. As set out in the statement of 19 January an expert panel will review all cases involving a sexual offence or allegation which resulted in a decision not to include on List 99, or which resulted in a restriction or partial bar. Sir Roger Singleton's panel, the membership of which was announced in the statement of 1 March, will conduct a review of all cases resulting in a partial bar or restriction and will be reporting back in due course.

I should add that under previous legislation an individual identified as a risk to a particular age group or gender could have a restriction imposed preventing them from working with that particular group, but not with others outside of that group. However, under current legislation (introduced in October 2000) if an individual is perceived to be a risk to children they are barred on the grounds of unsuitably. Barring them on this ground prevents them from working in the education sector in any capacity and also disqualifies them from working with children in other sectors.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people on List 99 have been given permission to teach in schools but not to reside in a boarding school. [47286]

Alan Johnson: List 99 does not give permission to teach. Employers should satisfy themselves that an individual is suitable and a List 99 check is one element of this process. Other checks should include Criminal Records Bureau checks and following up references from previous employers or training establishments where appropriate.

Returning to the question it is not possible to provide this information in the format requested. As my predecessor said in her statement of 19 January there are 210 people listed on List 99 as being partially barred. As set out in the statement of 19 January an expert panel will review all cases involving a sexual offence or allegation which resulted in a decision not to include on List 99, or which resulted in a restriction or partial bar. Sir Roger Singleton's panel, the membership of which was announced in the statement of 1 March, will conduct a review of all cases resulting in a partial bar or restriction and will be reporting back in due course.

I should add that under previous legislation an individual identified as a risk to a particular age group or gender could have a restriction imposed preventing them from working with that particular group, but not with others outside of that group. However, under current legislation (introduced in October 2000) if an individual is perceived to be a risk to children they are barred on the grounds of unsuitability. Barring them on this ground prevents them from working in the education sector in any capacity and also disqualifies them from working with children in other sectors.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills under what exceptions people on List 99 have been allowed to teach children. [43929]

Alan Johnson: Under previous legislation an individual could have a restriction placed on them on grounds of health or misconduct. The nature of the restriction will vary according to individual circumstances. Under current legislation (introduced in October 2000) if an individual is perceived to be a risk to children they are barred on the grounds of unsuitably. Barring them on this ground prevents them from working in the education sector in any capacity and also disqualifies them from working with children in other sectors.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to her oral statement of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 966-70, on safeguarding children, for what reason each of the 210 people are on List 99; and what type of ban each person is under. [45368]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* As my predecessor said in her statement of 19 January there are 210 people listed on List 99 as being partially barred. She made clear at the time of her statement that an expert panel would review all cases involving a sexual offence or allegation which resulted in a decision not to include on List 99, or which resulted in a restriction or partial bar. Sir Roger Singleton's panel, the membership of which she announced in her statement of 1 March, will conduct a review of all cases resulting in a partial bar or restriction and will be reporting back in due course.

Broadly speaking there are three categories of behaviour which cover the 210 individuals on List 99 with restrictions on their employment; 204 are on the list on grounds of misconduct, which may relate to sexual or non-sexual impropriety and 6 for health reasons.

I should add that under previous legislation an individual identified as a risk to a particular age group or gender could have a restriction imposed preventing them from working with that particular group, but not with others outside of that group. However, under current legislation (introduced in October 2000) if an individual is perceived to be a risk to children they are barred on the grounds of unsuitably. Barring them on this ground prevents them from working in the education sector in any capacity and also disqualifies them from working with children in other sectors.

City Academies

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the projected capital cost is of each of the City Academies that were announced as being in the pipeline in the press release issued on 16 March. [67850]

Jim Knight: 27 Academies are currently open. Of the remaining 73 Academy projects announced as being in the pipeline, 23 have signed funding agreements which include a figure for the capital cash limit. Those figures are:

Academy	*Current agreed capital cash limit (£)*	*Total planned pupil numbers*	*Capital cash limit per (projected) pupil (£)*
Westminster	30,200,082	1,175	25,702
Petchey (Hackney)	34,214,999	1,200	28,512
John Madejski (Reading)	27,656,303	1,100	25,142
Sandwell	27,149,860	1,200	22,625
Paddington	31,175,682	1,175	26,532
North Liverpool City	32,552,363	1,750	18,601
Grace (Solihull)	31,278,736	1,350	23,169
David Young Community (Leeds)	23,700,000	1,170	20,256
Barnsley	25,506,332	1,150	22,179
Thomas Deacon (Peterborough) [1]	46,431,203	2,200	21,105
St. Matthew (Lewisham)	30,856,162	1,345	22,941
Samworth Enterprise (Leicester)	19,501,915	1,046	18,644
Harris Academy at South Norwood	34,491,000	1,300	26,532
The Bridge (Hackney)	34,688,469	1,150	30,164
Oasis (Immingham)	24,999,582	1,150	21,739
Oasis (Wintringham)	23,751,543	1,100	21,592
Oasis (Enfield)	29,295,641	1,150	25,474
Folkestone	36,651,169	1,480	24,764
Bradford	20,471,117	1,150	17,801
Walthamstow	29,950,551	1,150	26,044
Sheffield Park	29,000,000	1,300	22,308
Sheffield Springs	27,300,000	1,300	21,000
Leigh (Dartford)	36,590,284	1,500	24,394
Langley (Slough)	31,000,000	1,150	26,957
Average	29,933,875	1,281	23,370

[1] Thomas Deacon Academy replaces 3 existing schools.

It is not possible to give an estimated capital cost for Academies which are still only in feasibility, as these may change in terms of their size, scope and location. However, the average cost of a completed Academy with 1,300 pupils and a sixth form in a high-cost inner-city area is £25-30 million. The average cost of a new secondary school of this size and location is similarly £25-30 million. For example, the average cost per pupil of new build voluntary aided schools which the Department is currently funding is £23,886, and the total cost of these new VA schools ranges up to £35,578,800.

Classroom Assistants

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what his policy is on the use of classroom assistants to cover for the planning, preparation and assessment time allocated to a school's fully qualified teachers; and if he will make a statement. [71398]

Jim Knight: It is for schools to determine what arrangements they make to staff classes when teachers may be out of the classroom having their planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time. A number of options are available to them, including using other teachers and support staff (such as teaching assistants). We and the other signatories to the National Agreement on Raising Standards and Tackling Workload, believe that well-trained and experienced support staff (such as higher level teaching assistants), can, under the direction and supervision of a teacher, play a valuable role in taking whole classes, while teachers are undertaking PPA activities. However, we are absolutely clear that teachers and support staff are not interchangeable.

Where support staff do take whole classes, they will be able to help pupils progress with their learning, based on their knowledge of the learning outcomes planned by the classroom/subject teacher. We have made clear, through the regulations and guidance that we have published, that head teachers must satisfy themselves that support staff carrying out this role are suitably trained, and have the relevant skills, expertise and experience.

Connexions

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much the Connexions Card Project has cost; how much *(a)* has been paid and *(b)* remains to be paid to Capita for the IT component of the project; and how many cards have been issued in each year since the scheme has been in operation, broken down by local authority. [71716]

Beverley Hughes: The total cost of the Connexions Card Project up to 17 May 2006 is £72.38 million of this, £66.14 million has been paid to Capita. The IT element of the Connexions Card service is not paid for as a separate element. The remaining Connexions Card budget for payment to Capita is £41.48 million until December 2008.

The following table shows how many cards were issued each year from the start of the project in 2001 to April 2006, broken down by local authority.

Local education authority	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*Grand Total*
Barking and Dagenham	—	104	424	291	575	70	1,464
Barnet	—	4,050	1,966	949	1,232	242	8,439
Barnsley	—	1	56	247	909	245	1,458
Bath and North East Somerset	—	1,155	617	42	623	80	2,517
Bedfordshire	—	2,800	4,690	1,855	1,381	621	11,347
Bexley	—	1,717	417	472	1,024	994	4,624
Birmingham	—	188	3,047	1,816	4,554	2,237	11,842
Blackburn with Darwen	—	492	375	506	656	440	2,469
Blackpool	—	1	1	12	1,649	11	1,674
Bolton	—	1,487	770	1,025	2,271	179	5,732
Bournemouth	—	610	203	312	955	298	2,378
Bracknell Forest	—	1,216	396	431	609	112	2,764
Bradford	—	703	2,057	1,717	1,407	263	6,147
Brent	—	120	1,706	780	1,346	183	4,135
Brighton and Hove	—	2,451	2,061	3,568	1,752	389	10,221
Bristol City of	—	1,136	483	1,051	2,977	1,053	6,700
Bromley	—	1,917	1,218	2,905	2,329	531	8,900
Buckinghamshire	—	680	1,791	1,916	1,042	513	5,942
Bury	—	1,640	1,151	1,342	1,730	487	6,350
Calderdale	—	185	920	464	585	877	3,031
Cambridgeshire	—	782	2,404	1,281	4,220	875	9,562
Camden	—	1,093	489	482	766	131	2,961
Cheshire	—	708	2,334	3,767	3,672	1,408	11,889
City of London	—	—	7	1	5	3	16
Cornwall	—	3,833	1,902	1,928	2,901	964	11,528
Coventry	—	695	2,602	724	2,210	78	6,309
Croydon	—	520	947	1,925	1,860	650	5,902
Cumbria	—	1,861	1,975	1,822	3,127	381	9,166
Darlington	5	166	7,433	648	640	364	9,256
Derby	—	41	486	373	1,479	585	2,964
Derbyshire	—	2,089	2,165	1,845	3,273	391	9,763
Devon	—	4,022	4,921	2,285	4,291	227	15,746
Doncaster	—	336	1,163	1,038	1,274	119	3,930

Local education authority	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Grand Total
Dorset	—	1,789	935	437	1,129	66	4,356
Dudley	—	1,498	1,458	948	2,108	405	6,417
Durham	599	2,592	3,945	3,782	4,993	1,385	17,296
Ealing	—	430	1,021	1,204	1,536	352	4,543
East Riding of Yorkshire	—	1,146	2,214	1,161	1,436	552	6,509
East Sussex	—	708	418	1,690	1,846	619	5,281
Enfield	—	2,541	4,237	2,791	2,851	681	13,101
Essex	—	3,131	12,948	10,549	11,497	2,787	40,912
Gateshead	281	828	849	479	859	206	3,502
Gloucestershire	—	606	1,594	4,425	4,874	1,576	13,075
Greenwich	—	847	1,639	744	1,714	980	5,924
Hackney	1	374	377	454	531	77	1,814
Halton	—	826	198	178	786	265	2,253
Hammersmith and Fulham	—	1	407	5,180	1,145	174	6,907
Hampshire	—	391	5,770	5,815	9,055	2,764	23,795
Haringey	—	443	708	830	592	310	2,883
Harrow	—	1	293	1,988	4,375	1,146	7,803
Hartlepool	—	626	1,560	305	921	490	3,902
Havering	—	2,615	1,394	2,001	781	1,655	8,446
Herefordshire	—	52	443	295	174	437	1,401
Hertfordshire	—	1,971	5,865	5,393	7,343	1,776	22,348
Hillingdon	—	580	928	1,578	1,481	571	5,138
Hounslow	—	1,064	1,109	730	2,311	1,014	6,228
Isle of Wight	—	1,002	805	841	853	123	3,624
Islington	—	2	37	174	235	163	611
Kensington and Chelsea	—	84	1,015	372	867	92	2,430
Kent	—	6,575	7,690	7,079	8,582	2,109	32,035
Kingston upon Hull City of	—	1,385	1,785	1,484	2,645	697	7,996
Kingston upon Thames	—	412	39	669	333	100	1,553
Kirklees	—	728	453	591	834	203	2,809
Knowsley	—	1,079	1,817	18	416	517	3,847
Lambeth	—	505	672	471	477	90	2,215
Lancashire	—	1,465	1,037	1,274	5,449	3,137	12,362
Leeds	—	2,638	2,312	2,317	2,760	789	10,816
Leicester	—	5,387	3,578	2,334	2,362	959	14,620
Leicestershire	—	2,903	812	2,237	4,176	1,942	12,070
Lewisham	—	1,199	612	1,289	1,527	711	5,338
Lincolnshire	—	2,291	4,150	4,032	4,011	794	15,278
Liverpool	—	1,601	1,825	1,900	1,312	1,059	7,697
Luton	—	4	75	1,448	2,493	668	4,688
Manchester	—	13	1,446	1,154	1,895	1,355	5,863
Medway	—	2,481	3,388	1,131	2,022	499	9,521
Merton	—	311	165	784	1,251	115	2,626
Middlesbrough	915	490	1,535	980	1,101	453	5,474
Milton Keynes	—	569	342	797	650	321	2,679
Newcastle upon Tyne	552	5,410	1,466	2,360	1,866	104	11,958
Newham	—	3	388	1,447	3,226	289	5,353
Norfolk	—	3,631	1,257	2,822	4,117	664	12,491
North East Lincolnshire	—	1,104	2,020	2,365	792	862	7,143
North Lincolnshire	—	1,252	1,763	978	614	1,911	6,518
North Somerset	—	347	147	545	1,443	233	2,715
North Tyneside	792	665	1,772	888	682	645	5,444
North Yorkshire	—	1,796	1,067	1,574	2,152	974	7,563
Northamptonshire	—	3,628	4,980	3,771	3,677	1,242	17,298
Northumberland	4	2,213	2,144	1,820	2,616	1,081	9,878
Nottingham	—	2,211	1,013	1,961	2,160	765	8,110
Nottinghamshire	—	3,645	3,830	3,218	5,168	848	16,709
Oldham	—	208	488	765	1,124	223	2,808
Oxfordshire	—	1,704	1,466	2,028	2,254	3,190	10,642
Peterborough	—	817	2,034	1,237	804	329	5,221
Plymouth	—	977	1,589	1,182	681	77	4,506

Local education authority	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Grand Total
Poole	—	—	177	165	243	149	734
Portsmouth	—	2	781	686	856	298	2,623
Reading	—	239	296	1,004	854	132	2,525
Redbridge	—	429	475	1,504	1,510	495	4,413
Redcar and Cleveland	—	1,442	1,908	1,353	1,112	513	6,328
Richmond upon Thames	—	3,614	1,423	2,821	2,034	77	9,969
Rochdale	—	634	505	942	916	413	3,410
Rotherham	—	175	1,101	1,359	1,074	142	3,851
Rutland	—	1	52	4	53	5	115
Salford	—	804	2,883	1,611	2,231	1,042	8,571
Sandwell	—	795	302	691	1,536	406	3,730
Sefton	—	1,390	1,076	1,383	829	447	5,125
Sheffield	—	678	1,573	1,570	2,464	913	7,198
Shropshire	—	648	1,130	1,286	1,536	185	4,785
Slough	—	120	760	474	407	450	2,211
Solihull	—	622	171	255	582	29	1,659
Somerset	—	746	800	864	2,932	243	5,585
South Gloucestershire	—	2,828	1,690	533	855	180	6,086
South Tyneside	1	217	679	350	2,522	199	3,968
Southampton	—	1	13	2,960	315	424	3,713
Southend-on-Sea	—	283	647	460	969	49	2,408
Southwark	—	11	618	310	2,141	366	3,446
St. Helens	—	8	745	1,055	691	532	3,031
Staffordshire	—	1,430	2,893	5,306	3,428	974	14,031
Stockport	—	45	3,077	209	2,778	71	6,180
Stockton-on-Tees	766	901	2,621	990	1,504	775	7,557
Stoke-on-Trent	—	486	1,388	856	462	230	3,422
Suffolk	—	836	1,984	2,236	3,563	618	9,237
Sunderland	711	2,285	1,069	1,515	1,971	498	8,049
Surrey	—	2,978	7,300	6,606	6,021	1,365	24,270
Sutton	—	636	324	1,302	2,406	775	5,443
Swindon	—	34	2,620	1,200	991	474	5,319
Tameside	—	308	365	121	780	1,843	3,417
Telford and Wrekin	—	74	935	594	880	193	2,676
Thurrock	—	31	14	31	559	158	793
Torbay	—	451	413	194	922	507	2,487
Tower Hamlets	—	3	2,337	585	1,399	579	4,903
Trafford	—	38	328	1,074	1,405	141	2,986
Wakefield	—	110	1,248	1,063	1,800	529	4,750
Walsall	—	306	3,143	413	1,255	572	5,689
Waltham Forest	—	170	328	892	634	406	2,430
Wandsworth	—	146	778	1,460	1,358	468	4,210
Warrington	—	756	251	362	606	251	2,226
Warwickshire	—	2,049	2,468	2,158	1,611	1,065	9,351
West Berkshire	—	400	1,933	3,394	1,128	130	6,985
West Sussex	—	507	1,730	1,877	3,329	750	8,193
Westminster	—	4	433	450	768	224	1,879
Wigan	—	1,746	1,391	899	1,757	546	6,339
Wiltshire	—	115	1,033	664	803	464	3,079
Windsor and Maidenhead	—	567	311	811	520	40	2,249
Wirral	—	1,536	2,285	1,559	2,473	914	8,767
Wokingham	—	883	540	437	653	189	2,702
Wolverhampton	—	336	304	113	3,270	600	4,623
Worcestershire	—	408	593	935	2,507	389	4,832
York	—	74	739	456	529	205	2,003
GO region/ partnership/LEA no/ primary LC not set	—	489	465	756	3,049	411	5,170
Grand total	4,627	163,419	233,947	220,472	289,070	91,665	1,003,200

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many learning centres are distributing the Connexions Card; and how many of them are returning attendance data. [71717]

Beverley Hughes: 2,684 learning centres have distributed the Connexions Card and 1,301 are currently returning attendance data.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills why the introduction of the Connexions Card was not combined with the introduction of education maintenance allowance. [71718]

Beverley Hughes: Connexions Card and education maintenance allowance are different Government projects which were introduced in different years. Elements of both were contracted out under separate tendering processes in line with Government procedure.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the expected length is of the contract with Capita for *(a)* the Connexions Card Project and *(b)* the education maintenance allowance. [71719]

Beverley Hughes: The Connexions Card contract with Capita was signed in July 2001 and is due to expire in December 2008. The education maintenance allowance is a five-year contract signed in July 2003 and is due to expire 31 July 2008, with an option to extend for a further two years.

Consultants

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the reports commissioned by his private office from consultants since he took up his post. [68628]

Alan Johnson: No reports have been commissioned by members of my private office from consultants since 16 December 2004.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what mechanisms are in place in his Department to monitor payment of external consultants; what guidelines apply to their use; who is responsible for monitoring the cost-effectiveness of using consultants; and if he will make a statement. [68629]

Alan Johnson: There are a range of mechanisms in place for the Department to monitor payment of external consultants.

The Department has a number of contract managers and budget officers who are delegated the responsibility for monitoring the payment of external consultants and the cost-effectiveness of using consultants, both individually and across their budgets as a whole. In addition, the Department holds a set of consultancy framework agreements which are monitored both individually and centrally.

Contract managers and budget officers have access to web-based guidance and practical support on relevant Government policy and regulations and, specifically, on how to identify and establish the need for consultancy support, how to appoint a consultant and how to get the best from consultancy.

Following a review in March 2005 on the engagement and use of consultants by the Department's internal audit division and the National Audit Office (NAO), a good practice guide was published by the NAO. This also forms a part of the Department's internal guidance on consultancy. A copy has already been placed in the House Library.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he will answer the letter to him dated 6 March from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Adele Reynolds. [67483]

Alan Johnson: My predecessor responded to my right hon. Friend's letter on 3 May.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will answer the letter to her dated 16 March from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Joane Carr. [67486]

Alan Johnson: My predecessor responded to my right hon. Friend's letter on 3 May.

Departmental Initiatives

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the departmental initiatives for each year since 2000 which required bids for funding from *(a)* voluntary organisations and *(b)* local authorities together with the total resource allocated to each initiative in each year; how many successful bids there were in each year; what proportion this figure represents of the total bids received; and what assessment she has made of the costs of (i) preparing bids for each initiative and (ii) assessing those bids. [66017]

Mr. Dhanda: The following tables list money allocated to Departmental initiatives between 2000-01 and 2005-06 requiring bids from local authorities and voluntary organisations.

Table 1: Departmental initiatives requiring bids from local authorities (£000)

Name	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*Amount spent 2005-06*
Independent/State Schools Partnership Scheme	1,203	387	777	778	1,646	1,399
Playing for Success [1]	3,750	—	3,300	—	1,950	7,800
Supported Early Retirement Scheme for Head Teachers [2]	—	10,000	—	—	—	—

Table 1: Departmental initiatives requiring bids from local authorities (£000)

Name	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	Amount spent 2005-06
Primary Language Pathfinder [3]	—	—	—	2,980	1,144	—
Treatment Foster Care [4]	—	—	—	—	—	2,200
Secure Accommodation Capital [4]	—	—	—	—	—	4,900
14-19 Pathfinders [5]	—	—	8,814	5,861	—	—
Total [4]	—	—	—	—	—	16,299

[1] Bids from local authorities were not taken every year.
[2] This was a two year scheme but in the second year it moved from a bidding process to an allocation of funds by formula.
[3] This scheme that was only run for two years.
[4] Figures for earlier years can only be provided at disproportionate cost because of Machinery of Government changes to Children's Services.
[5] The 14-19 Pathfinder Programme ran for the three years from 2002-03 to 2004-05 but bids were only made in the first two years.

Table 2: Departmental initiatives requiring bids from voluntary organisations (£000) [1,2]

Name	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	Amount spent 2005-06
Safeguarding Children Supporting Families Grant [1,2]	—	—	4,097	4,138
Consultation Fund [1,2]	—	—	729	650
National Voluntary Youth Organisation [1,2]	5,972	6,108	6,023	6,857
Strengthening Families Grant [1,2]	—	—	7,771	13,667
Sure Start VCS Strategic Contracts [1,2,3]	7,263	7,811	8,310	8,000
Total [2]	—	—	26,930	33,312

[1] Some grants cover a period greater than one year so money allocated to any one year is different from money bid for by voluntary organisations.
[2] Figures for earlier years can only be provided at disproportionate cost because of Machinery of Government changes to Children's Services. No figures are available for 2000-01.
[3] This scheme has become the Sure Start VCS Grant in 2005-06.

Information on the number of successful bids in proportion to the number of bids received and the costs of assessing and preparing each initiative are not kept centrally within the Department. To gather all the information required would involve disproportionate cost.

Departmental Policies

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the Answer of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1165-7W, on departmental policies, what measures are being investigated by his Department for disseminating information about the effects of his Department's policies at local level; what discussions have taken place to ensure political neutrality is maintained; what the target audience will be; and what budget will cover such operations. [68754]

Jim Knight: The Department continues to give a high priority to the release of information about education and skills in all local areas on its own research and statistics[1] website and In Your Area[2] website. Officials in the Department also work closely with the Office for National Statistics and the Department for Communities and Local Government to develop the Department's response to the Neighbourhood Statistics Service by publishing increasing levels of information about local areas on the Neighbourhood Statistics[3] website and other dissemination vehicles. The information released on these websites complies with the National Statistics Code of Practice and is objective and politically neutral. The political neutrality of data is guaranteed by the Department's chief statistician who reports to the Office for National Statistics on such matters. On the recommendation of the National Audit Office the Department has introduced template driven commentaries to ensure that information about local areas is accompanied by consistent and objective commentary that complies with the National Statistics Code of Practice. Additional steps have also been taken to make it clear to users of the information that the commentary accompanying statistics about local areas refers to the national picture.

The Department provides information required by a wide ranging audience for a variety of uses. Customers include members of the public, academics, practitioners, local authorities, other front line organisations and other government departments. In this regard the Department is continually looking to improve its range of statistical products by reviewing the relevance, quality, timeliness, content and presentation of its statistical products. The content of much of the local information released to data has been developed in response to demand from customers and many of the statistics and geographies displayed are relevant to the information requirements and priorities of the Neighbourhood Statistics and Neighbourhood Renewal programmes. My Department will continue to work closely with customers including the Office for National Statistics and the Department for Communities and Local Government to increase the range of information about education and skills in all local areas.

The release of information about local areas is covered by the Department's administrative budget with additional administrative and programme funding provided by the Office for National Statistics and Department for Communities and Local Government.

[1] http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway
[2] http://www.dfes.gov.uk/inyourarea
[3] http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of the staff in his

Department is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled, broken down by grade. [69042]

Mr. Dhanda: The information is given as follows:

Responsibility level	*Male*	*Female*	*Percentage Declared disabled*
AA	54	46	7
AO	32	68	5
EO	35	65	5
HEO	43	57	6
SEO	44	56	3
G7/6	51	49	4
SCS	60	40	2
Total	42	58	5

Departmental records of disabled staff are based solely on the voluntary declaration of disability under the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995.

Drug Abuse

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action he has taken to reduce drug abuse in schools since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [71986]

Mr. Dhanda: Since 1997 the Department has introduced a number of measures to reduce drug abuse in schools. This has included: funding of £70 million for Local Authority School Drug Advisers and improvements in the quality of drug education; training for teachers through the drug, alcohol and tobacco training package and the PSHE certification programme; the National Healthy School programme which includes standards for drug education; and the production of guidance on all matters relating to drugs within schools and materials for classroom teachers. Additionally, in partnership with the Home Office and Department of Health, the Department has supported a major research programme to evaluate the effectiveness of a drug prevention initiative in schools and the FRANK drug awareness campaign.

The Department is committed to reducing Class A drug use and the frequent use of any illicit drug among the under 25s. Ensuring all young people, including the most vulnerable, have access to credible drug education and information is key to this. The responsibility of schools in relation to educating and supporting young people on drug issues and ensuring schools are drug-free was made clear in "Drugs: Guidance for Schools (2004)".

Education Maintenance Allowance

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the budget was for education maintenance allowance payments in West Lancashire in 2005-06; and what proportion of post-16 students are in receipt of the allowance. [64120]

Bill Rammell: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, who operate education maintenance allowances for the DfES and hold the information about take-up of the scheme. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive has written to the hon. Lady with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 25 April 2006:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question that asked "what the budget was for education maintenance allowance payments in West Lancashire in 2005-06; and what proportion of post-16 students are in receipt of the allowance."

The full EMA budget for financial year 2005-06 was £425 million. EMA is a national scheme and there are no regional budget allocations. All young people who meet the criteria are eligible to receive EMA.

By the end of March 2006, 416,184 young people nationally had received one or more EMA payment in the academic year 2005/06. Information on the number of young people who have applied, enrolled and received EMA is available at local education authority (LEA) level, but not at constituency level. In the Lancashire LEA area 10,250 young people applied, enrolled and received EMA.

For the academic year 2005-06, we estimate that around 55 per cent. of students will be eligible for EMA on income grounds.

Home Working

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in his Department have been enabled to work from home in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [68000]

Mr. Dhanda: The information requested is not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

I can however confirm that home working is available to all staff in the Department for Education and Skills and currently 1,814 people can access the Department's IT infrastructure from home.

Indian Students

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students from India his Department expects to study at educational institutions in England in the next five years. [67194]

Bill Rammell: Latest data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) shows that there were 16,685 Indian domiciles enrolled at UK HE institutions (13,555 at English HE institutions) in 2004/05. The Department does not make projections of future numbers of students from individual countries.

The Government wish to encourage Indian students and those from other countries to study in the United Kingdom. On 18 April, the Prime Minister announced the second phase of his international education initiative, which aims to attract an additional 100,000 international students to the UK and encourage partnerships between universities and colleges here and their counterparts overseas.

Learning and Skills Council

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1259W, on the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), how the estimates of redundancy costs arising from the restructuring of the LSC were calculated *(a)* when the estimate was given by the LSC in evidence to the Public Accounts Committee in October 2005 and *(b)* for the purposes of the figure given in the answer. [70325]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 12 May 2006]:* At the Public Accounts Committee in October 2005 my right hon. Friend the Member for Swansea, West (Mr. Williams) asked about

'the redundancy costs to the LSC to date.'

Mark Haysom replied as per the following table:

	Statutory redundancy	*Reshaping and redundancy*	*Total*
2001-02	3,083,274	—	3,083,274
2002-03	307,646	—	307,646
2003-04	386,408	11,799,561	12,185,969
2004-05	185,995	52,996	238,991
2005-06	105,231	16,007	121,238
Total	4,068,554	11,868,564	15,937,118

Please note that the data only includes redundancy or voluntary severance payments to employees and excludes the cost of early retirement. This data excludes other associated redundancy costs such as outplacement consultants or tribunal costs as well as costs associated with the current re-structuring exercise.

The LSC's estimated cost of £32 million for redundancy associated with restructuring is based on the maximum numbers of possible redundancies at each band level multiplied by the estimated average redundancy cost. The average redundancy was calculated by taking the greater cost for each individual of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme or four weeks salary for every year of service (actual sample of size of over 3,500 current staff), totalling these for each band and dividing by the number of cases in the sample.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many members there are of learning and skills councils; and what political affiliation each has declared. [70498]

Bill Rammell: On 31 March 2006 there were 710 members of the Learning and Skills Council: this includes the LSC National Council and its 47 local Councils. Information on political affiliation is not collected. However, 107 (15 per cent.) of these declared a political activity on their application for Council membership.

Appointments to the LSC are made through fair and open competition, in accordance with guidance issued by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Members are appointed on the basis of a wide range of appropriate experience, regardless of any declared political activity.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether a decision has been made to transfer the powers of the learning and skills councils in London to the Mayor of London. [70501]

Bill Rammell: The Government are considering the results of the consultation on the powers and responsibilities of the Mayor of London and the London Assembly. Its response to the consultation will be issued in due course.

Middlesbrough Academies

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* revenue and *(b)* capital support has been provided to (i) the King's Academy, (ii) the Unity City Academy and (iii) the Macmillan Academy in Middlesbrough since their formation. [67186]

Jim Knight: The following table shows the capital support for King's, Unity City and Macmillan Academies since their formation until 31 March 2006. Capital covers the costs of construction and any further capital work.

	2001-02	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	£ *2005-06*
King's Academy (opened September 2003)	253,213	10,005,471	9,609,051	433,370	—
Unity City Academy (opened September 2002)	—	1,876,816	10,800,780	5,764,004	517,698
Macmillan Academy (opened September 2005)	—	—	—	171,969	821,273

The following table shows the revenue costs for the same period. Revenue covers the costs of establishing the Academies and then their day-to-day running costs. Running costs are comparable to other local schools as they are based on the local authority funding formula.

	2000-01	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	£ *2005-06*
King's Academy (opened September 2003)	—	144,988	650,603	4,817,400	5,447,106	6,752,662
Unity City Academy (opened September 2002)	93,275	508,761	4,378,682	5,525,109	6,196,624	8,044,595

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	£ 2005-06
Macmillan Academy (opened September 2005)	—	—	—	—	169,263	4,619,188

MOSAIC

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when the results of the pilot programme using MOSAIC in local learning and skills councils will be available. [65432]

Bill Rammell: A wide range of methodologies, including MOSAIC, are used to help planners and providers develop an accurate profile of their learners. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has been piloting MOSAIC and is evaluating its effectiveness. Mark Haysom, the LSC's Chief Executive has written to my hon. Friend with more information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 16 May 2006:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Question regarding the LSC pilot project on Mosaic.

Socio-economic Data

The LSC has always used socio-economic data, through snapshot reports for each LSC region and local area. These reports, which are at a set point in time limit how the data can be used and currently does not allow a direct interface with out large datasets, such as the Individualised Learner Record (ILR). The pilot was initiated by the increased interest of local LSCs, providers and policy makers in the use of postcode analysis as a means of better understanding educational markets. Mosaic software is one such tool that provides this detailed integration and analysis.

Mosaic Pilot

The Mosaic pilot project is being delivered by the Learning and Skills Network (LSN), previously the Learning and skills development Agency (LSDA) on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council. The project is trialling the use of the standard Mosaic UK package in adding value to analysis of learning and skills sector datasets, to help inform strategic planning. The research question being explored in this pilot project is;

"How can the application of the Mosaic UK postcode classification system assist understanding of patterns of post-16 participation, retention and achievement, so as to assist local LSC planning?"

The project objectives that have been agreed are set out below:

To link the time series data from the post-16 education sector with Mosaic UK thereby deriving a breakdown of postcodes according to their patterns of participation, retention and achievement.

To develop a database that enables the national, regional and local profiles to be updated annually.

To pilot the use of Mosaic UK analysis with four local and one Regional LSC and consult on the provision of other information to provide more effective support for their respective remits, in particular those aspects relating to widening participation and raising achievement. The piloting exercise will involve support to Regional and local LSC staff from LSDA and Experian (the suppliers of Mosaic UK).

For one local LSC already familiar with Mosaic UK, there is also an equivalent pilot exercise using Education Mosaic.

Potential of Mosaic within the Sector

The application of Mosaic UK segments to learner databases, along with the development of detailed summary tables at the regional LSC level, should enable more useful intelligence to be available to providers. The potential of this work is especially promising for initiatives aimed at widening participation in a more focused and cost effective manner.

Project Outputs

Detailed tables for each LSC area will be produced, along with a database that allows yearly updating with new LSC information. In addition a report will be produced on the impact of the analysis in the pilot LSCs.

Online Child Protection Task Force

Margaret Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many meetings of the online child protection taskforce have been attended by representatives from his Department since its inception. [72504]

Mr. Dhanda: Officials do not keep formal records of attendance at taskforce meetings but my Department has been represented at most meetings of the taskforce either by officials and/or by staff from the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (Becta). Becta is the Department's strategic partner on technology in education.

Postgraduates

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will place in the Library a list of titles of research projects being undertaken by postgraduate students from *(a)* Iran, *(b)* Syria, *(c)* the Sudan, *(d)* China, *(e)* Arab Palestine and *(f)* North Korea into (i) nuclear physics, (ii) biochemistry, (iii) pollution dispersal, (iv) genetics, (v) ballistics, (vi) rocketry and (vii) explosive reactions; and if he will indicate the research funder in each case. [71400]

Bill Rammell: This information is not collected centrally.

Public Consultations

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many public consultations his Department undertook in the last 12 months; and what the cost was *(a)* in total and *(b)* of each consultation. [70473]

Mr. Dhanda: A list of consultations my Department has consulted the public on can be found at www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/ Over the year 2005 the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) undertook 36 formal public consultations in order to inform the Department's policy development. Information on the cost of each consultation and the total cost of all consultations could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Runaways

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what development projects have been established to test services for children and young people who run away or go missing from home or care. [72154]

Mr. Dhanda *[holding answer 18 May 2006]:* Following the recommendations of the SEU report on Young Runaways (2002), six development projects have tested how best to provide safe, flexible and responsive community-based services to young runaways that can be easily incorporated into mainstream children's services. We are currently analysing the evaluations from the projects in order to disseminate the lessons learned to local authorities.

In addition, DfES is monitoring the progress of a "Talk Don't Walk" project in Warrington, funded through the 'Treasury's Invest to Save' initiative, working on similar issues for young runaways. This project will run until 2008, and lessons from this will also be disseminated.

More widely, all local authorities have responsibilities to minimise and respond to 'missing from care' incidents as part of their wider duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their care. They are also required to appoint a senior manager to monitor missing from care incidents, so that local trends in children being absent from care can be identified and any necessary action to respond to these can be taken, to identify and address any patterns of young people going missing.

School Finance

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total schools budget is of each local education authority for 2006-07; and what proportion is delegated to schools in each authority. [72359]

Jim Knight: The information requested is not yet available. The Department is awaiting a complete dataset relating to the 2006-07 financial year. I shall write to the hon. Member as soon as the information is to hand.

Dr. Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the funding per pupil in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools is in each (i) region of England and (ii) local education authority in the north-east region; and if he will make a statement. [72554]

Jim Knight: Detailed information on 2006-07 is not yet available. In 2005-06 the relevant funding was:

	Funding per pupil (£)	
Government region	*3-10*	*11-15*
North East	3,830	4,770
North West	3,780	4,680
Yorkshire and the Humber	3,750	4,620
East Midlands	3,610	4,430
West Midlands	3,750	4,640
East of England	3,670	4,530
London	4,670	5,770
South East	3,680	4,580
South West	3,550	4,380

	Funding per pupil (£)	
Local authorities in north east region	*3-10*	*11-15*
Darlington	3,710	4,600
Durham	3,770	4,640
Gateshead	3,810	4,850
Hartlepool	3,920	4,910
Middlesbrough	4,230	5,720
Newcastle upon Tyne	4,010	4,980
North Tyneside	3,620	4,650
Northumberland	3,650	4,540
Redcar and Cleveland	3,860	4,770
South Tyneside	3,970	4,870
Stockton-on-Tees	3,780	4,730
Sunderland	3,820	4,760

Notes:
1. Total 2005-06 Education Revenue Funding per pupil (£s) aged 3-10 and 11-15, cash terms. Figures include the pensions transfer to EFS.
2. Figures reflect relevant sub-blocks of Standard Spending Assessment/Education Formula Spending (EFS) settlements. Figures include the pensions transfer to EFS.
3. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES Departmental Expenditure Limits relevant to pupils aged 3-10 and 11-15 and exclude Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs) and grants not allocated at LEA level.
4. The pupil numbers used to convert m figures to per pupil are those underlying the EFS settlement calculations.
5. Figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.

School Leavers

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils left school without basic *(a)* arithmetic and *(b)* English language skills in 2005. [68634]

Jim Knight: The answer to this question is based on the English and mathematics indicators that were piloted as part of the 2005 Achievement and Attainment tables.

The following table shows the number of pupils ending Key Stage 4 without the following qualifications in mathematics or English in 2005.

	Pupils	Percentage
Number of Pupils at the End of Key Stage 4	633,464	—
Number not achieving A* to C in GCSE mathematics	301,671	47.6
Number not achieving A* to C in GCSE English	265,678	41.9
Number not achieving level 2 functional mathematics	300,309	47.4
Number not achieving level 2 functional English	264,333	41.7

	Pupils	Percentage[1]
Number not achieving A* to G in GCSE mathematics	47,088	7.4
Number not achieving A* to G in GCSE English	45,691	7.2
Number not achieving level 1 functional mathematics	46,286	7.3
Number not achieving level 1 functional English	44,829	7.1

[1] Of the number of pupils at the end of Key Stage 4.

The trend over the last ten years is of continued improvement in achievement. The 14 to 19 White Paper placed achieving functional skills in English and mathematics at the heart of the 14 to 19 phase. We will expect more teenagers to achieve five plus A* to C grade GCSEs including English and maths and will toughen the Achievement and Attainment Tables to encourage this. We will ensure that no-one can get a GCSE grade C or better without mastering the functional elements; where a teenager achieves the functional element only, we will recognise that separately.

School Statistics

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the 20 lowest performing *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools over the last five years. [69790]

Jim Knight: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

School Transport Subsidies

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether he plans to issue guidance to local education authorities on the provision of transport subsidies to faith schools in their area; and if he will make a statement. [72157]

Jim Knight: The Department made draft guidance to local authorities on school travel available to Committee Members scrutinising the Education and Inspections Bill. This includes advice to local authorities on their duties and powers relating to travel arrangements to schools preferred on grounds of religion or belief.

The draft guidance will be subject to formal consultation later this year, and final guidance will be published in early 2007.

Schools (Energy)

Helen Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what requirements there are for new schools *(a)* to use renewable sources of energy and *(b)* to maximise energy efficiency under the Building Schools for the Future programme. [70811]

Mr. Dhanda: Schools built under Building Schools for the Future need to comply with the new Part L of the Building Regulations which came into force in April 2006. It requires low and zero carbon energy sources and renewable energy to be considered and to be used where feasible on all new build projects over 1,000 square metres in size. The 2006 edition of Part L also requires buildings to be energy efficient so that they emit 25 per cent. less carbon than buildings built to the previous 2002 edition. Where it is not feasible to use low and zero carbon energy sources Part L requires an increased energy efficiency to deliver the same carbon target as would have resulted from 10 per cent. of the energy being provided by on-site renewable energy sources. Many Planning Authorities are also making the 10 per cent. contribution from on-site generated renewable energy a condition of planning.

In addition, the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive requires the energy certification of both new and existing schools over 1,000 square metres in area. This will lead to increased energy efficiency as a result of improved operational performance.

Helen Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what his assessment is of the contribution of the Building Schools for the Future programme to achieving the Government's targets on reducing carbon emissions. [70812]

Mr. Dhanda: DfES have not made an assessment of the contribution of the Building Schools for the Future programme to achieving the Government's targets on reducing carbon emissions. However, schools built under Building Schools for the Future need to comply with the new Part L of the Building Regulations which came into force in April 2006. Part L requires buildings to be energy efficient so that they emit 25 per cent. less carbon than buildings built to the previous 2002 edition.

Southend-on-Sea (Schools)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what are the names and addresses of *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools in Southend-on-Sea; what the (i) name of the head teacher and (ii) number of pupils attending is in each case; and on what date each was last inspected by Ofsted. [71962]

Jim Knight: The following table provides the information requested for maintained primary and secondary schools in Southend-on-Sea local authority. The pupil numbers are as at January 2006 (provisional).

The head teacher names are the latest available. It is possible that the Department has not been notified of some head teacher changes.

School name	Street	Town	Postcode	Head teacher	Phase of education	Date of last Ofsted inspection	Total number of children
Chalkwell Hall Junior School	London Road	Leigh-on-Sea	SS9 3NL	Mr. Richard Spence	Primary	23 January 2006	417
Chalkwell Hall Infant School	London Road	Leigh-on-Sea	SS9 3NL	Mrs. Elaine Palmer	Primary	12 January 2004	313
Earls Hall Junior School	Carlton Avenue	Westcliff-on-Sea	SS0 0QN	Mr. Ashley Eastwood	Primary	24 June 2002	355
Earls Hall Infant School	Carlton Avenue	Westcliff-on-Sea	SS0 0QN	Mrs. H. Foster	Primary	3 December 2001	255
Hamstel Junior School	Hamstel Road	Southend-on-Sea	SS2 4PQ	Mr. D. Groom	Primary	5 July 2004	475
Hamstel Infant School and Nursery	Hamstel Road	Southend-on-Sea	SS2 4PQ	Mrs. V. Tarte	Primary	21 September 2005	439
Hinguar Community Primary School	Hinguar Street	Southend-on-Sea	SS3 9AN	Mrs. Vivienne Stevens	Primary	14 December 2005	262
Leigh North Street Junior School	North Street	Leigh-on-Sea	SS9 1QE	Mr. M. Frampton	Primary	28 November 2005	358
Leigh Infant School	North Street	Leigh-on-Sea	SS9 1QE	Mrs. P. Lucas	Primary	28 February 2005	266
Thorpe Greenways Junior School	Greenways	Southend-on-Sea	SS1 3BS	Mr. P. N. H. Fairbrass	Primary	16 November 2005	481
Thorpe Greenways Infant School	Greenways	Southend-on-Sea	SS1 3BS	Mrs. D. D. Matthews	Primary	13 January 2003	329
West Leigh Junior School	Ronald Hill Grove	Leigh-on-Sea	SS9 2JB	Mrs. C. Woolf	Primary	12 November 2001	513
West Leigh Infant School	Ronald Hill Grove	Leigh-on-Sea	SS9 2JB	Mrs. Lynn Gent	Primary	17 June 2002	360
Bournes Green Junior School	Ladram Road	Southend-on-Sea	SS1 3PX	Mr. Rupert Snow	Primary	2 December 2002	264
Barons Court Infant School and Nursery	Avenue Road	Westcliff-on-Sea	SS0 7PJ	Mrs. G. Wood	Primary	21 May 2001	156
Heycroft Primary School	Benvenue Avenue	Leigh-on-Sea	SS9 5SJ	Mr. Chris Russell	Primary	10 June 2002	416
Darlinghurst Primary and Nursery School	Pavilion Drive	Leigh-on-Sea	SS9 3JS	Mr. Robert Knight	Primary	20 May 2002	396
Bournes Green Infant School	Burlescoombe Road	Southend-on-Sea	SS1 3PX	Mrs. A. Keech	Primary	14 October 2002	180
Temple Sutton Primary School	Eastern Avenue	Southend-on-Sea	SS2 4BA	Ms F. Gulley	Primary	23 November 2005	744
Blenheim Primary School	School Way	Leigh-on-Sea	SS9 4HX	Mrs. M. Turner	Primary	24 September 2001	421
Fairways Primary School	The Fairway	Leigh-on-Sea	SS9 4QW	Mrs. D. K. Allen	Primary	15 September 2003	400
St. Mary's, Prittlewell, C of E Primary School	Boston Avenue	Southend-on-Sea	SS2 6JH	Mrs. Frances E. Neil	Primary	1 July 2002	417
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and Nursery	Windermere Road	Southend-on-Sea	SS1 2RF	Mrs. B. Frampton	Primary	10 November 2003	236
St. Helen's Catholic Primary School	North Road	Westcliff-on-Sea	SS0 7AY	Mrs. E. Mouchel	Primary	18 September 2000	201
Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School	Manchester Drive	Leigh-on-Sea	SS9 3HS	Mr. J. M. Love	Primary	3 July 2002	421
St. George's Catholic Primary School	Eagle Way	Southend-on-Sea	SS3 9RN	Mr. J. M. Bardy	Primary	17 October 2005	207
The Westborough Primary School and Nursery	Macdonald Avenue	Westcliff-on-Sea	SS0 9BS	Mrs. J. A. Davies	Primary	24 January 2005	703
Thorpedene Infants' School	Delaware Road	Southend-on-Sea	SS3 9NP	Mrs. A. M. Meek	Primary	8 September 2003	241
Thorpedene Junior School	Delaware Road	Southend-on-Sea	SS3 9NP	Mr. M. Williams	Primary	5 November 2001	331
Prince Avenue Primary Foundation School and Nursery	Hornby Avenue	Westcliff-on-Sea	SS0 0LG	Mrs. J. Watson	Primary	7 March 2005	368
Milton Hall Primary School and Nursery	Salisbury Avenue	Westcliff-on-Sea	SS0 7AU	Mrs. M. Haynes	Primary	15 March 2004	470
Porters Grange Primary School and Nursery	Lancaster Gardens	Southend-on-Sea	SS1 2NS	Mrs. R. Ferdinand	Primary	17 March 2003	490
Bournemouth Park Primary School	Bournemouth Park Road	Southend-on-Sea	SS2 5JN	Mrs. A. Hutchinson	Primary	29 March 2006	533
Richmond Avenue Primary School	Richmond Avenue	Southend-on-Sea	SS3 9LG	Mrs. Bronwyn Smith	Primary	19 October 2005	398
Friars Primary School and Nursery	Constable Way	Southend on Sea	SS3 9XX	Mrs. Ann Germanacos	Primary	1—	475

School name	Street	Town	Postcode	Head teacher	Phase of education	Date of last Ofsted inspection	Total number of children
Eastwood Primary School	Rayleigh Road	Leigh-on-Sea	SS9 5UT	Mr. Philip Davies	Primary	1—	394
Edwards Hall Primary School	Bosworth Road	Leigh-on-Sea	SS9 5AB	Mrs. Linda Wells	Primary	1—	466
Shoeburyness High School	Caulfield Road	Southend-on-Sea	SS3 9LL	Mrs. Susan Murphy	Secondary	16 November 2005	1,548
The Prittlewell Technology College	Prittlewell Chase	Westcliff-on-Sea	SS0 0RT	Mrs. Denise Allen	Secondary	8 February 2006	902
The Thorpe Bay School	Southchurch Boulevard	Southend-on-Sea	SS2 4UY	Ms Jean Alder	Secondary	28 November 2005	565
Belfairs High School	Highlands Boulevard	Leigh-on-Sea	SS9 3TG	Mr. J. R. Duprey	Secondary	15 October 2001	1,242
Southend High School for Boys	Prittlewell Chase	Southend-on-Sea	SS0 0RG	Mr. M. Frampton	Secondary	1 February 2006	938
St. Thomas More High School for Boys	Kenilworth Gardens	Westcliff-on-Sea	SS0 0BW	Mr. F. Keenan	Secondary	23 November 2005	978
Cecil Jones College	Eastern Avenue	Southend-on-Sea	SS2 4BU	R. Hellen	Secondary	17 September 2001	1,573
St. Bernard's High School and Arts College	Milton Road	Westcliff-on-Sea	SS0 7JS	Mrs. Patricia Barron	Secondary	21 January 2002	864
Westcliff High School for Boys	Kenilworth Gardens	Westcliff-on-Sea	SS0 0BP	Mr. A. J. Baker	Secondary	7 February 2005	1,000
The Eastwood School (11-18)	Rayleigh Road	Leigh-On-Sea	SS9 5UT	Mr. D. Penketh	Secondary	3 November 2003	966
Westcliff High School for Girls	Kenilworth Gardens	Westcliff-on-Sea	SS0 0BS	Dr. P. B. Hayman	Secondary	19 January 2004	1,028
Southend High School for Girls	Southchurch Boulevard	Southend-on-Sea	SS2 4UZ	Mr. David Mansfield	Secondary	11 November 2002	996

[1] These schools opened relatively recently and have not yet been inspected by Ofsted.

Teaching

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the starting salary of a *(a)* teacher and *(b)* classroom assistant in Hartlepool constituency was in (i) 1997 and (ii) 2005. [72615]

Jim Knight: The Department does not hold local information about teachers or support staff pay. The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document sets out national pay scales for teachers. From April 1997 the minimum starting salary for qualified teachers with a good honours degree was £14,280 and from December 1997 was £14,463. From April 2005 the minimum starting salary for a qualified teacher was £19,023 and from September 2005 was £19,161.

Salaries for support staff are determined locally and records are not available centrally with regard to the Single Status Agreement which was introduced by the National Joint Council for local government services.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list which maintained schools teach Mandarin. [71557]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 17 May 2006]:* Information is not collected on the subjects taught in schools. However, it is possible to provide figures on the number of schools where at least one pupil has been entered for a particular subject. It is not possible, however, to say whether the school has actually taught the subject or whether the pupil has been entered privately.

The number of maintained schools where at least one 15-year-old[1] pupil was entered for a GCSE full course in Chinese[2] in 2005[3] was 500. A full list of these schools has been placed in the House Library.

[1] Age at start of academic year i.e. 31 August.

[2] GCSE Chinese qualifications are accessible to both Mandarin and Cantonese speakers.

[3] Includes attempts by these pupils in previous academic years.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in maintained schools in England are being taught Mandarin. [70799]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* The Department does not hold information on how many children learn languages, only the number taking these exams in England. In 2005 there were 822 15-year-olds[1,2] taking GCSE Chinese[3] in maintained schools.

[1] Age at start of academic year i.e. 31 August.

[2] Includes attempts by these pupils in previous academic years.

[3] GCSE Chinese qualifications are accessible to both Mandarin and Cantonese speakers.

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many mathematics teacher vacancies there are in each *(a)* local authority area and *(b)* region in England; and if he will make a statement. [71376]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 18 May 2006]:* The following table provides the number of mathematics teacher vacancies in maintained secondary schools by local authority and Government office region, in January 2005 and January 2006. Information for 2006 is provisional and is not yet available at local authority level.

The mathematics vacancy rate in maintained secondary schools in England for January 2005 was 1.2 per cent. compared to the provisional 2006 figure of 1.0 per cent.

Number of full-time and part-time mathematic teacher vacancies[1] in maintained secondary schools in England, January 2005 and 2006

Vacancies

	2005		2006[2]	
	Full-time	*Part-time*	*Full-time*	*Part-time*
Darlington	0	0	n/a	n/a
Hartlepool	2	0	n/a	n/a
Middlesbrough	0	0	n/a	n/a
Redcar and Cleveland	1	0	n/a	n/a
Stockton on Tees	0	0	n/a	n/a
Durham	0	0	n/a	n/a
Northumberland	0	0	n/a	n/a
Gateshead	1	0	n/a	n/a
Newcastle upon Tyne	1	0	n/a	n/a
North Tyneside	0	0	n/a	n/a
South Tyneside	0	0	n/a	n/a
Sunderland	4	0	n/a	n/a
North East	9	0	7	1
Blackburn with Darwen	2	0	n/a	n/a
Blackpool	1	0	n/a	n/a
Halton	0	0	n/a	n/a
Warrington	0	0	n/a	n/a
Cheshire	0	1	n/a	n/a
Cumbria	0	0	n/a	n/a
Bolton	0	0	n/a	n/a
Bury	0	0	n/a	n/a
Manchester	0	0	n/a	n/a
Oldham	3	0	n/a	n/a
Rochdale	0	0	n/a	n/a
Salford	3	0	n/a	n/a
Stockport	2	0	n/a	n/a
Tameside	1	0	n/a	n/a
Trafford	2	0	n/a	n/a
Wigan	1	0	n/a	n/a
Lancashire	13	0	n/a	n/a
Knowsley	0	0	n/a	n/a
Liverpool	2	0	n/a	n/a
St. Helens	1	0	n/a	n/a
Sefton	0	0	n/a	n/a
Wirral	1	0	n/a	n/a
North West	32	1	11	0
East Riding of Yorkshire	1	0	n/a	n/a
City of Kingston Upon Hull	2	0	n/a	n/a
North East Lincolnshire	1	0	n/a	n/a
North Lincolnshire	0	0	n/a	n/a
York	0	0	n/a	n/a
North Yorkshire	2	0	n/a	n/a
Barnsley	2	1	n/a	n/a
Doncaster	4	0	n/a	n/a
Rotherham	1	1	n/a	n/a
Sheffield	3	0	n/a	n/a
Bradford	2	1	n/a	n/a
Calderdale	0	0	n/a	n/a
Kirklees	2	0	n/a	n/a
Leeds	7	1	n/a	n/a
Wakefield	0	1	n/a	n/a
Yorkshire and the Humber	27	5	18	3
Derby	0	0	n/a	n/a
Leicester	1	0	n/a	n/a
Nottingham	4	0	n/a	n/a
Rutland	0	0	n/a	n/a
Derbyshire	1	0	n/a	n/a
Leicestershire	2	0	n/a	n/a
Lincolnshire	1	1	n/a	n/a
Northamptonshire	2	0	n/a	n/a
Nottinghamshire	5	0	n/a	n/a
East Midlands	16	1	12	1
Herefordshire	0	0	n/a	n/a
Stoke on Trent	2	0	n/a	n/a
Telford and Wrekin	1	0	n/a	n/a
Shropshire	2	0	n/a	n/a
Staffordshire	4	0	n/a	n/a
Warwickshire	2	0	n/a	n/a
Birmingham	5	0	n/a	n/a
Coventry	2	0	n/a	n/a
Dudley	2	0	n/a	n/a
Sandwell	2	0	n/a	n/a
Solihull	2	1	n/a	n/a
Walsall	5	1	n/a	n/a
Wolverhampton	1	0	n/a	n/a
Worcestershire	1	0	n/a	n/a
West Midlands	31	2	24	5
Luton	1	0	n/a	n/a
Peterborough	1	0	n/a	n/a
Southend on Sea	2	1	n/a	n/a
Thurrock	1	0	n/a	n/a
Bedfordshire	3	0	n/a	n/a
Cambridgeshire	3	1	n/a	n/a
Essex	6	0	n/a	n/a
Hertfordshire	10	1	n/a	n/a
Norfolk	3	0	n/a	n/a
Suffolk	1	0	n/a	n/a
East of England	31	3	34	2
Camden	1	0	n/a	n/a
City of London	0	0	n/a	n/a
Hackney	1	0	n/a	n/a
Hammersmith and Fulham	0	0	n/a	n/a
Haringey	0	0	n/a	n/a
Islington	1	0	n/a	n/a
Kensington and Chelsea	1	0	n/a	n/a
Lambeth	0	0	n/a	n/a
Lewisham	1	0	n/a	n/a
Newham	3	0	n/a	n/a

Number of full-time and part-time mathematic teacher vacancies[1] in maintained secondary schools in England, January 2005 and 2006

Vacancies

	2005		2006[2]	
	Full-time	*Part-time*	*Full-time*	*Part-time*
Southwark	0	0	n/a	n/a
Tower Hamlets	0	0	n/a	n/a
Wandsworth	0	0	n/a	n/a
City of Westminster	1	0	n/a	n/a
Barking and Dagenham	0	0	n/a	n/a
Barnet	0	0	n/a	n/a
Bexley	3	0	n/a	n/a
Brent	0	0	n/a	n/a
Bromley	0	0	n/a	n/a
Croydon	1	0	n/a	n/a
Ealing	2	0	n/a	n/a
Enfield	3	0	n/a	n/a
Greenwich	2	0	n/a	n/a
Harrow	3	0	n/a	n/a
Havering	4	0	n/a	n/a
Hillingdon	5	0	n/a	n/a
Hounslow	3	0	n/a	n/a
Kingston upon Thames	1	0	n/a	n/a
Merton	0	0	n/a	n/a
Redbridge	0	0	n/a	n/a
Richmond upon Thames	4	0	n/a	n/a
Sutton	0	0	n/a	n/a
Waltham Forest	1	0	n/a	n/a
London	41	0	34	2
Bracknell Forest	1	0	n/a	n/a
Brighton and Hove	1	0	n/a	n/a
Isle of Wight	0	0	n/a	n/a
Medway	1	0	n/a	n/a
Milton Keynes	0	0	n/a	n/a
Portsmouth	2	0	n/a	n/a
Reading	2	0	n/a	n/a
Slough	0	0	n/a	n/a
Southampton	3	0	n/a	n/a
West Berkshire	1	0	n/a	n/a
Windsor and Maidenhead	0	0	n/a	n/a
Wokingham	0	0	n/a	n/a
Buckinghamshire	8	0	n/a	n/a
East Sussex	1	0	n/a	n/a
Hampshire	3	2	n/a	n/a
Kent	3	2	n/a	n/a
Oxfordshire	2	0	n/a	n/a
Surrey	4	1	n/a	n/a
West Sussex	2	0	n/a	n/a
South East	34	5	44	2
Bath and North East Somerset	0	1	n/a	n/a
Bournemouth	0	0	n/a	n/a
City of Bristol	0	0	n/a	n/a
North Somerset	1	0	n/a	n/a
Plymouth	0	0	n/a	n/a
Poole	1	0	n/a	n/a

Number of full-time and part-time mathematic teacher vacancies[1] in maintained secondary schools in England, January 2005 and 2006

Vacancies

	2005		2006[2]	
	Full-time	*Part-time*	*Full-time*	*Part-time*
South Gloucestershire	0	0	n/a	n/a
Swindon	2	0	n/a	n/a
Torbay	1	0	n/a	n/a
Cornwall	0	0	n/a	n/a
Isles of Scilly	0	0	n/a	n/a
Devon	0	0	n/a	n/a
Dorset	1	0	n/a	n/a
Gloucestershire	2	0	n/a	n/a
Somerset	0	0	n/a	n/a
Wiltshire	2	0	n/a	n/a
South West	10	1	8	1
England	231	18	192	17

n/a = not available

[1] Advertised vacancies for permanent appointments (or appointments of at least one term's duration). Posts filled by somebody on a contract of a term or more are not counted as being vacant.

[2] Provisional

Source:

Survey of teachers in service and teacher vacancies, 618g.

University Staff (Pay Dispute)

Mark Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will take steps to ensure that the pay dispute involving university academic staff does not have an adverse impact on students. [72377]

Bill Rammell: It is a matter for higher education institutions (HEIs) to consider how best they can minimise the adverse effects on students of the current dispute, including making contingency arrangements for examinations and other assessments. HEIs, as autonomous bodies, are responsible for determining their own academic and administrative affairs, including deciding what to pay their own staff. Pay and conditions of service are subject to negotiations between employers, their staff and their representative trade union bodies. The Government plays no part in this.

While this is a matter for unions and employers, I am disappointed that this has come to industrial action and that students' progress is being threatened by this dispute. The employers have made an offer of 12.6 per cent. over three years, which I believe the academic unions should now formally put to their members with a view to ending this damaging dispute.

Unspent Budget

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much of the budget for his Department remained unspent in the 2005-06 financial year. [70472]

Alan Johnson: The 2006 Departmental Annual Report (Cm 6812) published on 16 May shows an estimated outturn of £30,342 million for programmes

lying within the Departmental Expenditure Limit. This gives an overall underspend of £468 million—approximately 1.5 per cent. of the Department's budget. The majority of the underspend relates to capital programmes where resource has been committed to local authorities, schools and others but will not now be spent until 2006-07. Final figures for the year will be published in the Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper in July.

Violence

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the incidence of reported violence towards *(a)* staff and *(b)* pupils was in the 100 (i) primary and (ii) secondary schools with the (A) highest and (B) lowest percentage of children receiving free school meals in each of the last three years. [66089]

Jim Knight: The information requested has been placed in the House Library.

Young Carers

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to ensure that further and higher education establishments support young carers. [69984]

Bill Rammell: Further and higher education institutions are self-governing independent bodies. Each institution is responsible for its own arrangements to widen participation and to facilitate their students' access to learning. Most institutions provide a range of student services for existing students who need particular help.

Carers may also be eligible for financial support from further and higher education establishments. Awards from the Learner Support Fund are made by further education colleges on the basis of individual need, using locally defined criteria. For students in higher education, the Access to Learning Fund, a non-repayable discretionary fund, covers students with caring responsibilities. Information on the extent to which young carers have benefited from these funds is not collected at national level.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Ministerial Duties

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many times he has visited Wales on official duties in the past 12 months; and for what purposes. [70149]

The Deputy Prime Minister *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* I have not visited Wales on official duties in the past 12 months.

Ministerial Office/Staff

Mrs. May: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many civil servants work in *(a)* his private office and *(b)* his office; where they are located; and where his ministerial office is located; [71063]

(2) how much the relocation of his ministerial office and staff cost. [71074]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Rugby and Kenilworth (Jeremy Wright) on 17 May 2006, *Official Report,* column 983W. These administrative support arrangements are still being finalised.

Ministerial Responsibilities

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his responsibilities as Deputy Prime Minister give rise to a budget for *(a)* entertainment and *(b)* travel; and if he will make a statement. [69970]

The Deputy Prime Minister *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* I shall continue to receive a budget in the usual way to enable me to carry out the role that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has asked me to fulfil.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 17 May 2006, *Official Report,* column 983W, on ministerial responsibilities, what the forecast total annual cost to the public purse is of the execution of his duties and responsibilities for each of the next three years. [73139]

The Deputy Prime Minister: The administrative arrangements to support me in the role that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has asked me to fulfil are still being finalised.

Surveys

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will co-ordinate across Government Departments measures to reduce the number of surveys sent to private businesses. [71055]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister on 17 May 2006, *Official Report,* columns 984-86W.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Anhydrite Mines

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 24 March 2006, *Official Report,* column 924W, on anhydrite mines, how many bids there were for funding in the current round of the Land Stabilisation Programme; what the total amount

was of such bids; and what the total value is of the Land Stabilisation Programme. [67388]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Since 1 April 2005 English Partnerships has received two applications for funding totalling £4.16 million through the Land Stabilisation Programme.

The current Land Stabilisation Programme budget is £236 million, which encompasses expenditure since the start of the Programme in 1999 and funding already committed and forecast to the end of the Programme in 2011.

Areas of Great Landscape Value

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what plans the Government have *(a)* to remove and *(b)* to abolish Areas of Great Landscape Value designation. [70702]

Yvette Cooper: Areas of Great Landscape Value are local designations established by local authorities. Government policy on such designations is set out in Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS7) Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (2004). While recognising the value of local landscapes, the Government believe that carefully drafted criteria-based policies in development plans provide sufficient protection for such areas without the need for rigid local designations that may unduly restrict acceptable sustainable development and economic activity that underpins the vitality of rural areas. Such designations should therefore only be maintained, or, exceptionally, extended where it can clearly shown that criteria-based policies cannot provide the necessary protection. PPS7 indicates that the Government expect planning authorities to consider rigorously the justification for retaining such designations when preparing local development documents, and to ensure that such designations are based on a formal and robust assessment of the qualities of the landscape concerned.

Arm's Length Management Organisations

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will list the forthcoming Audit Commission inspections of arm's length management organisations. [72278]

Mr. Woolas: This is an operational matter for the Audit Commission. I will ask the chief executive to write to the hon. Member and to ensure the answer is made available in the Library of the House.

Brownfield Development

Greg Clark: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what the statistical basis is of the estimates given in the statements on brownfield development attributed to a spokesman from his Department in *The Daily Telegraph* on 22 April 2006; [67957]

(2) what percentage of new homes built on brownfield sites were built on previously residential land in each year for which figures are available. [68037]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The estimates given in the statement were based on information from Land Use Change Statistics (LUCS). The latest LUCS show that in 2004, 72 per cent. of new dwellings, including conversions, were built on brownfield land (technically known as 'previously-developed' land). Claims that two-thirds of new dwellings built on brownfield land are on gardens are contradicted by the statistics in LUCS.

Of the dwellings built on brownfield land in 2004, 22 per cent. were on land that was previously used for residential purposes (which includes buildings and the land associated with those buildings). This is 15 per cent. of all new dwellings built.

There are no statistics on how much of this residential previously-developed land comprises the footprint of the previous homes on the site and how much is the surrounding area. Nor are there detailed statistics on what area of the land is covered by new buildings and what is surrounding open space and garden. It is therefore incorrect to suggest that even 15 per cent. of new homes are built on gardens.

LUCS are derived from information on individual sites recorded by Ordnance Survey during their map revision work and supplied to the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Information relating to the percentages of new dwellings, including conversions, built on all brownfield land and on land that was previously used for residential purposes is set out in the following table for 1986 onwards.

The majority of new homes built in the last few years have been on non-residential brownfield land.

Percentage

	New dwellings on previously developed land as a proportion of all new dwellings, including conversions	*New dwellings on previously residential land as a proportion of all on previously-developed land*	*New dwellings on previously residential land as a proportion of all new dwellings*
1986	54	50	26
1987	51	46	22
1988	53	39	19
1989	55	35	18
1990	54	39	20
1991	53	31	16
1992	56	29	16
1993	56	23	12
1994	54	22	11
1995	57	21	12
1996	57	21	11
1997	56	21	11
1998	58	21	12
1999	59	21	12
2000	62	24	14
2001	63	23	14
2002	67	23	15
2003	70	23	15
2004	72	22	15

Casinos

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment his Department has made of future trends in the number of planning applications for new casinos under the Gambling Act 2005. [62257]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has made no assessment of future trends in the number of planning applications for new casinos under the Gambling Act 2005. However, the Gambling Act permits only one regional, eight large and eight small casinos. The independent Casino Advisory Panel will recommend the areas where the 17 new casinos permitted by the Act should be located.

Concessionary Bus Travel

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government which local authorities in the county of Tyne and Wear made representations concerning the formula used to distribute the sum of money allocated to cover the cost of the concessionary bus travel scheme announced in the 2005 Budget. [72182]

Mr. Woolas: We received such representations from Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Sunderland.

Council Tax

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the average *(a)* band D and *(b)* overall council tax bill was in 2005-06. [72775]

Yvette Cooper: Details of the average Band D council tax and overall council tax bill in 2005-06 in England are published in a statistical release "Council Taxes in England 2005-06", which is available on the Department for Communities and Local Government website at: http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/ctax/data/sr056.pdf.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what her estimate is of the number of second homes claiming a council tax discount in *(a)* Torbay and *(b)* Devon. [72019]

Mr. Woolas: The number of properties designated as second homes and eligible for a discount in council tax as at 19 September 2005 in the Devon area (including Torbay) are shown in the following table.

	Number
East Devon	2,399
Exeter	468
Mid Devon	292
North Devon	1,533
South Hams	4,375
Teignbridge	1,241
Torridge	1,186
West Devon	521
Torbay DA	1,550
Plymouth UA	1,248

Dr. Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will introduce proposals to make landlords of student properties liable for council tax on those properties. [71116]

Mr. Woolas: The Government will consider what, if any, changes to make to the council tax system in the light of Sir Michael Lyon's Independent Inquiry into Local Government which is due to report at the end of the year.

Decent Homes Standard

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will make a statement on progress towards the decent homes standard for social housing in each region of England. [71431]

Yvette Cooper: Data on the progress towards the decent homes target are measured through the English House Condition Survey. Data for 2001 are published on our website at: www.communties.gov.uk/ehcs. Updated regional data for 2003 will be published in the summer.

Departmental Initiatives

Lynne Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the departmental initiatives for each year since 2000 which required bids for funding from *(a)* voluntary organisations and *(b)* local authorities together with the total resource allocated to each initiative in each year; how many successful bids there were in each year; what proportion this figure represents of the total bids received; and what assessment he has made of the costs of (i) preparing bids for each initiative and (ii) assessing those bids. [66016]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The Special Grants Programme provides funding for innovative work by voluntary and community organisations exploring diverse ways of involving people in improving the quality of our public spaces, and delivering on the issues to create cleaner, safer and greener communities. No bidding round was held for 2006-07. No assessment has been made on the cost of preparing or assessing bids.

	Resources allocated (£ million)	Number of successful new bids	Percentage of successful bids
2000-01	2.2	11	18
2001-02	2	25	21
2002-03	2	17	17
2003-04	2	17	7
2004-05	2.3	21	7
2005-06	2	9	3
2006-07	2.25	0	0

Deprivation

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to her answer of 8 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 85W, on deprivation (Somerset), if she will list the areas referenced by Super Output Area code which are amongst the 30 per cent. most deprived areas of England. [70237]

Mr. Woolas: A spreadsheet containing a full list of Lower Layer Super Output Areas (SOAs) that fall within the 30 per cent. most deprived SOAs in England has been made available in the Library of the House.

Home Condition Inspectors

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how he plans to monitor the performance of home condition inspectors; and what estimate he has made of the cost of conducting such monitoring. [64343]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of the performance for Home Inspectors will be a matter for the relevant Certification Scheme. Schemes will operate to standards laid down by the Secretary of State and published later this year.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether home inspectors' qualifications will need to be certified by the Award Body for the Built Environment. [64344]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Home Inspectors will be required to hold a qualification that complies with the National Occupational Standards in Home Inspection. The Diploma in Home Inspection offered by the Awarding Body for the Built Environment has been approved by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and is recognised by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as delivering the appropriate Standards. It is open to other prospective awarding bodies to develop qualifications compliant with the National Occupational Standards.

Home Information Packs

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how long he estimates it will take to put together a Home Information Pack. [64429]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Home Information Pack will need to be available before the first point of marketing of the property. We expect at this stage most Home Information Packs to be put together within five days, and we shall review that estimate in the light of the experience of practitioners as part of the dry run.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the likely impact on *(a)* house supply and *(b)* house prices if sellers are required to produce a Home Information Pack. [64666]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The number of properties available for sale at any one time and the price at which they are sold will depend on a range of factors, including interest rates and the strength of the economy. Home Information Packs will help to ensure that house prices are set realistically and buyers are not faced with unexpected repair bills and other commitments they cannot afford.

Michael Gove: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many commercial insurers have agreed to provide professional indemnity insurance in relation to the contents of Home Information Packs. [64945]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Regulations to be made under part 5 of the Housing Act 2004 will provide that Home Condition Reports must be produced by a Home Inspector where work is covered by suitable indemnity insurance. Discussions with insurers indicate that such cover will be available in the market. Surveyors are able to get professional indemnity insurance for the surveys they currently carry out.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what estimate he has made of the level of participation in the dry run for home information packs (HIP) prior to June 2007; and what the legal status will be of a voluntary *(a)* HIP and *(b)* Home Condition Report; [66228]

(2) whether the dry run for home information packs will start before the Home Information Certification Scheme is in place; [66227]

(3) what assessment his Department has made of whether mortgage lenders will be able to take part fully in the dry run of home information packs prior to June, including participating in electronic access to the Register of Home Condition Reports. [66230]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The first phase of the dry run is already in progress with 49 organisations in England and Wales providing more than 2,500 home information packs on a voluntary basis. More than 150 organisations who plan to offer voluntary home information pack related services prior to 1 June 2007 have already approached the Department to become involved in the dry run and we expect the number to increase as we approach the second phase of the dry run.

The legal status of a voluntary home information pack, with the exception of the home condition report, will be same now as after 1 June 2007 with all components retaining their existing indemnity. Home condition reports will not be included in voluntary

home information packs until the second phase of the dry run, which is due to commence in October 2006, after the first certification scheme has been set up. This will ensure that home condition reports will only be produced by home inspectors who are members of a Government approved certification scheme.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what powers the Government have to delay the implementation date of home information packs. [66233]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Home information packs will be commenced by order, under the power in Part 5 of the Housing Act 2004. We expect to make such an order early in 2007 in order to implement Home Information Packs on 1 June 2007.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what legal redress home buyers will have against inaccurate or misleading information in a Home Information Pack once the packs are introduced. [66491]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Under the new arrangements home buyers will have the right to rely on information in the Home Information Pack, including that in the Home Condition Report, and to seek redress against those principally responsible for its provision. Home Inspectors will need to be members of a certification scheme and to have professional indemnity insurance. We are currently discussing with industry and others the detail of how best to ensure that both sellers and buyers can action redress arrangements as quickly and simply as possible.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether *(a)* the police and *(b)* local authority trading standards will be responsible for enforcing the requirement to produce a home information pack before selling a home. [70603]

Yvette Cooper: Local authority trading standards officers will be responsible for enforcing the home information pack duties.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what local authority searches will be required to produce material for home information packs. [70613]

Yvette Cooper: The home information pack will include a search of the local land charges register and the standard additional enquiries that are currently contained in the Law Society form CON.29 Part 1. All these are currently required and paid for by buyers under the existing system.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will place in the Library a copy of the *(a)* presentation and *(b)* handout produced by Mr. Denis Purshouse for the seminar on home information packs on 29 March 2006. [70634]

Yvette Cooper: A copy of the presentation has been deposited in the Library. There was no handout.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether *(a)* home condition reports and *(b)* home information packs will be required for (i) right to buy property transactions and (ii) sale or extension of a leasehold. [70636]

Yvette Cooper: As right to buy properties will not be openly marketed they will not require either a home information pack or a home condition report. However, the Government are considering whether tenants exercising their right to buy would benefit from receiving some of the information available in home information packs.

The sale of a leasehold property will require both a home condition report and a home information pack before first point of marketing, unless they are covered by those exemptions outlined in Part 5 of the Housing Act 2004. An extension to a leasehold will not require a home information pack as the property is not being marketed.

Hotels

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many hotels registered for business rates are on the Ratings List in England; and what the average rateable value is for such a business in the Ratings List category for hotels. [70604]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 10 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 347W. Neither the Valuation Office Agency nor the Department for Communities and Local Government make estimates of the average rateable value for such businesses.

Housing

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what research the Government have commissioned on the use of geographic information systems for mass appraisal of residential property in the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [70574]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister commissioned, in 2003, the development of a generalised land use database (GLUD), which identifies the location of nine land use types, including residential. Further details of this ongoing work can be found on the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) website under Research and Statistics, Planning Research and Statistics, Planning Statistics, Generalised Land Use Database (URL: http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1146084).

In addition to GLUD, DCLG have explored, and continue to explore, the suitability of a range of geographic information, including commercial products, new build intelligence from Ordnance Survey and the collation of local authority planning information to improve assessments of residential development.

The Valuation Office Agency has commissioned no research on the use of geographic information systems for mass appraisal of residential property in the last five years.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what plans the Government have *(a)* to increase density targets for new residential development and *(b)* to reclassify the brownfield designation of gardens in residential properties. [70695]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) on 7 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1140-41W, and to my right hon. Friend the Member for North Tyneside (Mr. Byers) on 6 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1164W.

We will make a final decision on this issue when we publish revised planning policy statement 3: 'Housing' later in the year.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what plans there are to assist councils which do not have access to existing investment options to meet the decent homes standard. [71023]

Yvette Cooper: The Government have increased investment available for all councils to invest in their stock. Since 1997 the cash available to councils for repairs, maintenance and refurbishment has increased by 30 per cent. per house. 94 local authorities are able to meet the decent homes standard on the basis of this investment. On top of this the Government have made available further options for bringing in additional investment through Arm's Length Management Organisations, Private Finance Initiative or stock transfers. There will be a further bidding round for these options.

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what initiatives she is pursuing to encourage affordable housing developments in Easington constituency; and if she will make a statement. [71054]

Yvette Cooper: The Government are working in partnership with local authorities in the region, including Easington district council, to achieve a better balance between housing availability and the demand for housing, including improving affordability. Among the measures which have been employed in Easington has been the successful transfer of their housing stock to East Durham Homes and successful on-going progress towards achieving the decent homes standard. The work has allowed housing which was previously vacant to be brought back into use and has improved the quality of the stock generally.

In addition to this, the Housing Corporation have made available £7 million over the last three years to provide 140 new affordable housing units in Easington. English Partnerships are working with the Durham Coalfield Housing Renewal Partnership with strategic proposals to assist in the regeneration of settlements within the former coalfield areas. A strategy is being drawn up which should facilitate significant investment in these areas including the provision of affordable housing.

The Government have also introduced changes to lessen the impact of Right-to-Buy through the Housing Act 2004 through extending the initial qualification period, extending the period that owners need to repay all or some of their discount and the requirement for owners selling homes within 10 years to offer the properties back to a local social landlord. The Government Office for the North East continues to work with Easington district council and other partners including the Regional Housing Board to address housing issues in the area.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether she plans to impose sanctions on councils who do not meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2010. [71000]

Yvette Cooper: Ministers will decide on a case by case basis how best to respond to situations where councils fail to meet the decent homes standard.

Margaret Moran: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what was the level of Housing Corporation grant available for *(a)* general needs housing and *(b)* sheltered/OAP housing in each of the last five years. [67751]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The following table shows Approved Development Programme (ADP) expenditure for each of the past five years for social rented housing, and for rented sheltered housing for elderly people.

Approved development programme expenditure by year (£ million)

	General needs	*Of which: sheltered housing for OAPs*
2001-02	646	34
2002-03	760	41
2003-04	1,171	72
2004-05	1,050	52
2005-06 provisional	960	57
2006-08 planned	2,938	159

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many individuals resided in Government-subsidised housing in Milton Keynes in each of the last eight years. [68142]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Information on the number of individuals in Government-subsidised housing is not available centrally. Information on the number of council homes and Registered Social Landlord units and bed spaces is published on the ODPM website. Table 115 gives the RSL rented stock by local authority from 1997 and is available at:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/21/Table115Excel96Kb_idl156021.xls

Table 116 gives the local authority rented stock by district from 1994 and is available at:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/22/Table116Excel127Kb_idl156022.xls

Andrew George: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much of the £970 million for shared equity housing announced by the Chancellor in his Budget statement on 21 March was new money not previously announced or budgeted for before that announcement. [63872]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The £970 million forms part of the 2006-08 Regional Housing Pot of which Regional Housing Boards recommended that around £3.9 billion be channelled through the Housing Corporation's Affordable Housing Programme for the provision of affordable housing between 2006-08. The announcement provided details on how one element of the Affordable Housing Programme would be spent.

Liverpool City Council

Jane Kennedy: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what resources are being deployed by the Audit Commission to ensure that Liverpool city council social services department complies with national standards of service delivery in care of *(a)* the elderly and *(b)* vulnerable adults. [72461]

Mr. Woolas: The Audit Commission is not the body responsible for ensuring national standards are being met in Liverpool city council's social services department. That responsibility falls to the Commission for Social Care Inspection, which is the independent inspectorate in England responsible for regulating and inspecting all social care providers, whether in the public or independent sector.

Local Government

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what recent assessment she has made of the impact of councillors' allowances on the efficient operation of local government in England and Wales; and if she will make a statement. [69955]

Mr. Woolas: No assessment has been made of the sort referred to. It is a matter for each local authority to draw up its own scheme for councillors' allowances, having regard to the recommendations of its remuneration panel.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps the Government are taking to ensure that local authorities are *(a)* efficient, *(b)* transparent and *(c)* accountable. [70075]

Mr. Woolas: Councils have an annual 2.5 per cent. efficiency target. A guide to the assistance available and update on the substantial progress made is contained in the report "Delivering Efficiency in Local Services: One Year On", published February 2006 and available at: www.rcoe.gov.uk/rce/aio/16537

Local government is indeed transparent and accountable for efficiency. Annual efficiency statements are published by each council and may be accessed at: www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1134484

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what guidance the Government have given to local authorities on *(a)* contract compliance and *(b)* imposing conditions in the procurement process unrelated to cost, quality or quantity of services. [70654]

Mr. Woolas: Section 17 of the Local Government Act 1988 prevents authorities from introducing "non-commercial" considerations, such as the political affiliations of contractors, into the procurement process.

There is a range of advice and guidance on good procurement which local authorities can draw on. Sources include the Office of Government Commerce (OGC), the Public Private Partnership Programme (the 4ps) and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA). Specific guidance on local government procurement includes the joint ODPM/ Local Government Association 'National Procurement Strategy for Local Government'. This makes clear that council requirements can also include social, environmental and other strategic objectives that are relevant to the subject of the contract.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment she has made of the impact on a local authority of entering into a local area agreement. [71034]

Mr. Woolas: My Department has commissioned a consortium led by the Office for Public Management to evaluate the negotiation process and initial impacts of pilot and second round local area agreements (LAAs). The first report is available at http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1161635. A second report will be published in the summer.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden of 26 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1198W, on local government finance, if she will place in the Library a copy of the accompanying manual and documentation for the toolkit in *(a)* hard copy and *(b)* CD-rom. [70559]

Mr. Woolas: There is no manual or documentation to accompany the toolkit.

My Society

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much funding was allocated to My Society in each of the last five years; and what other support has been provided to the organisation. [70153]

Mr. Woolas: A grant of £250,000 was allocated to West Sussex county council under the Local e-Government e-Innovations Round 1 Programme in 2004-05 for My Society.

Further support of £163,150 was made available to the organisation through the e-Innovations Product

and Marketisation strand via Kirklees MBC who were grant aided to carry out this role on behalf of the Local e-Government Programme.

Parliamentary Questions

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when she will reply to question 63872, on shared equity housing, tabled by the hon. Member for St. Ives on 30 March. [72741]

Yvette Cooper: I have answered the hon. Member's question today. I apologise for the delay in replying.

Passenger Transport Authorities

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what measures are being taken by her Department to avoid a shortfall in funding for individual passenger transport authorities to cover the cost in future years of the concessionary bus travel scheme announced in the 2005 Budget. [72162]

Mr. Woolas: Funding for the concessionary bus travel scheme announced in the 2005 Budget has been distributed to councils through formula grant, which is unhypothecated. It is up to councils to decide how to use their resources, consistent with delivering their statutory responsibilities. In the case of Tyne and Wear, I have had a number of discussions with stakeholders to explore whether a local solution can be found to address particular local issues.

Pedestrianised Town Centres

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate she has made of the number of towns in England which pedestrianised their town centres and subsequently opened them up to *(a)* all vehicles and *(b)* buses and taxis only; and if she will make a statement. [69872]

Gillian Merron: I have been asked to reply.

Information about the number of authorities which have been pedestrianised is not held centrally and the answer could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Planning

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment her Department has made of the effect of the implementation of special protection areas on the planning process. [70694]

Yvette Cooper: Special protection areas (SPAs), designated under the EC birds directive, receive statutory protection through the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994. Since 1994 planning policy has reflected the statutory protection given to SPAs, and planning permission for development which will have a significant effect on them can only be given in tightly defined circumstances. Details are set out in the joint ODPM/DEFRA circular: "Biodiversity and Geological Conservation—Statutory obligations and their impact within the planning system" (ODPM June 2005, DEFRA January 2005).

For the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, the Government have been working in partnership with English Nature, the South East England Regional Assembly, local authorities and other stakeholders to develop a strategic approach to the assessment of planning applications that could impact on the SPA. The Government's aim is to ensure the delivery of much needed housing, while ensuring that the SPA is given appropriate protection.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will list the planning applications called in by her Department and its predecessor since 1997. [71033]

Yvette Cooper: A list of all planning applications called in by the Department for Communities and Local Government and its predecessor departments since 1 April 1999 has been placed in the Library of the House. Information on cases called in before 1 April 1999, when the Planning Inspectorate database became operational, could only be compiled at disproportionate cost.

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate she has made of the amount which will be raised by the proposed planning gain supplement to fund local infrastructure. [72422]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) on 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1034W.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what changes the Government have made to planning fees since 2001. [70717]

Yvette Cooper: Planning fees were increased by 14 per cent. in 2002 and again by an average 39 per cent. in April 2005. Fees were increased on both occasions to enable authorities to recover more of the costs of handling planning applications.

Regional Government

Mike Penning: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the annual cost of regional-level government is for each region. [68507]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Greater London Authority (GLA) will receive £37.868 million this year (2006-07) from central Government for the core GLA itself (through the General GLA Grant). The Mayor is also expected to raise a further £26.9 million for the core GLA from the

GLA precept on London council tax payers, putting the annual cost of the GLA at £64.8 million.

For details of 2006-07 central Government grant to the eight regional assemblies outside London, I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 121W.

Register of Home Condition Reports

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what private sector organisations will have access to the register of home condition reports. [66223]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Access to the registers of home condition reports will be controlled by regulations. This will be limited to buyers and sellers, their advisers and mortgage lenders, and those monitoring the performance and quality of the reports.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions his Department has had with the Information Commissioner on the proposed register of home condition reports electronic database. [66229]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

We have discussed the proposed home condition report register with the Information Commissioner's Office, who have confirmed they are satisfied with the proposals. Access to the register will be tightly controlled by regulations. Only sellers, buyers, their advisers and mortgage lenders and those monitoring the performance and quality of home condition reports will have access.

Science Cities

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when her Department expects to be presented with implementation plans from the regional development agencies for the development of Science Cities; and if she will make a statement. [71040]

Margaret Hodge: I have been asked to reply.

Science Cities is a policy initiative led by the regional development agencies. RDAs are working with other Science City partners to develop detailed implementation plans for Science Cities, in line with regional economic development strategies. The six Science Cities—Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham and York—will present progress reports at the Science Cities National summit, to be held in Manchester at the end of May. The summit will also provide an opportunity to share best practice and consider how national and regional policies can best support Science Cities.

Social Services

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the standard spending assessment was for social services in the south-west in each year since 1997. [72786]

Mr. Woolas: The following tables show the standard spending assessment, formula spending share and relative needs formula for children's social care. Standard spending assessments were replaced in 2003-04 by formula spending shares. A new system of relative needs formulae was introduced for 2006-07. All these formulae look at an authority's relative needs on a particular service.

The Government do not regard any of these measures as an assessment of how much an authority should spend on a particular service.

	Standard spending assessment for personal social services (£ million)
1997-98	641.764
1998-99	682.035
1999-2000	717.628
2000-01	756.284
2001-02	777.610
2002-03	804.752

	Formula spending share for personal social services (£ million)
2003-04	972.919
2004-05	1,073.487
2005-06	1,178.569

	Relative needs formula for personal social services
2006-07	0.02133320314962
2007-08	0.02222190453459

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the social services standard spending assessment was for children's services in Cornwall in each year since 2001. [72788]

Mr. Woolas: The following tables show the standard spending assessment, formula spending share and relative needs formula for children's social care. Standard spending assessments were replaced in 2003-04 by formula spending shares. A new system as introduced for 2006-07. The relative needs formulae look at an authority's relative need to spend on a particular service and are therefore not expressed in pounds.

Please note that during this period none of these measures were the Government's assessment of how much an authority should spend on a particular service nor were they grant. They are simply formula based on the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of an authority.

Standard spending assessment for personal social services for children	*£ million*
2001-02	12.849
2002-03	12.606

Formula spending share for personal social services for children

	£ million
2003-04	21.671
2004-05	26.575
2005-06	28.443

	Relative needs formula for children's social care	*Relative needs formula for children's social care damping*
2006-07	0.00059188635792	-0.00004889798654
2007-08	0.00062002479926	-0.00004368678072

Special Advisers

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many special advisers her Department will employ. [70585]

Angela E. Smith: My Department will employ three special advisers.

Thames Basin

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the population density is of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. [70178]

Mr. Woolas: The best approximate estimate that can be given is 1 per hectare.

Trees

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much money the Government have spent on producing research published within the Research for Amenity Trees series. [67029]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

A total of £1.95 million was spent on producing research published within the Research for Amenity Trees series. The cost for each publication is set out as follows:

Research for amenity trees series

Number	*Title*	*Date*	*Cost of research (£)*
1	Trees in Towns	1993	184,188
2	Diagnosis of Ill Health in Trees	1994	[1]769,750
3	Urban Tree Strategies	1994	22,400
4	The Body Language of Trees—A Handbook For Failure Analysis	1995	0
5	Urban Woodland and the Benefits for Local Air Quality	1996	8,920
6	Arboricultural Practice: Present and Future	1997	[2]576,848
7	Principle of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management	1999	[3]—
8	Tree Roots in the Built Environment	2006[4]	93,700

[1] Total cost of research under contract Arboriculture V shown. Not possible to disaggregate this figure.
[2] Total cost of research under contract Arboricultural VI shown. Not possible to disaggregate this figure.
[3] Included in number 6 above.
[4] In print.

Underground Electricity Cables

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate she has made of the likely additional cost of requiring new houses to be serviced by underground electricity cables. [69978]

Yvette Cooper: Most new urban houses have access to electricity services via low-voltage underground cables, although some developments in rural areas may have a mix of underground and overhead service connections. The cost of providing underground electricity distribution lines to particular housing developments will vary from case to case. Due to the numbers and variability of new development, this information is not practical to collate centrally.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of the *(a)* presentation and *(b)* handouts produced by Diane Leggo, Director of Council Tax for the Valuation Office Agency, for the lecture on 23 November 2005 at the CPD Foundation. [66322]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

A copy of the presentation has been placed in the Library of the House. The handouts were a copy of this presentation.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 826W, on housing, whether the Valuation Office Agency will have access to the Register of Home Condition reports to assist them in the performance of their statutory duties. [66397]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

No.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Meriden of 26 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1200-01W, on the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), why publication of the VOA document "Dwellinghouse Coding—An Illustrated Guide" would breach privacy; what advice she has requested from the Information Commissioner on whether publication would breach privacy; and what categories of personal information the document contains. [70561]

Mr. Woolas: The document—which is for the use of Valuation Office Agency listing officers and their staff only—contains photographs of individual properties. There is potential for the privacy of the occupiers of these properties to be breached if the illustrated guide is placed in the public domain. No advice has been sought from the Information Commissioner.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Meriden of 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1283-84W, on the Valuation Office Agency, whether the Tenet IT Mapping software includes photographic data and vector data; and what data sources are used to provide the mapping information. [70562]

Mr. Woolas: The Tenet IT Mapping software used by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) does not include *(a)* photographic data but does include *(b)* vector data in the form of Land Line and MasterMap products.

The source data that underpins the Tenet IT Mapping software comprises the following map layers provided by Ordnance Survey: Land Line; MasterMap; 1:10,000 Scale Black and White Raster Map; 1:25,000, 1:50,000 and 1:250,000 Scales Colour Raster Map; Postcode Map; Boundary-Line; and Address Point.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer of 26 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1203-04W, on the Valuation Office Agency, if she will place in the Library a list of the 10,000 localities in England. [70564]

Mr. Woolas: To list the localities is a task that would involve disproportionate cost. Each of the localities would need to be given an identifiable name—their existing reference numbers are meaningless in isolation—and this task would need to be undertaken for each of 354 local authority areas in England.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Meriden, of 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2190W, on the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), whether the VOA has supplied information to Ordnance Survey relating to domestic properties. [70566]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given, to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman), on 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2190W. The Valuation Office Agency has recently supplied samples of addresses drawn from the council tax valuation list, followed by compilations of similar data covering the whole of England and Wales.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what use the Valuation Office Agency makes of people's panels for *(a)* business rates and *(b)* council tax purposes. [70579]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency has not used people's panels for business rates purposes. The Agency has used them for council tax purposes to better understand council taxpayers' understanding and perceptions of the valuation and banding system and to explore reactions to communications material under development to ensure that this would achieve its objectives of being clear and readily understood.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will list the *(a)* data and *(b)* software the Valuation Office Agency uses that is provided by Ordnance Survey. [70650]

Mr. Woolas: The data provided by Ordnance Survey for use by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) in its mapping software is: Land Line; MasterMap; 1:10,000 Scale Black and White Raster Map; 1:25,000, 1:50,000 and 1:250,000 Scales Colour Raster Map; Postcode Map; and Boundary-Line. The Ordnance Survey does not provide any software to the VOA.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will place in the Library a copy of the guidance that the Valuation Office Agency uses to assess and value composite/mixed hereditaments. [70693]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) on 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1546W, and the answers given to him on 26 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1203W, and 8 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 79W and 96W.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much the Valuation Office Agency has paid in each of the last five years for *(a)* products and *(b)* information from Ordnance Survey. [70727]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency pays for access to Ordnance Survey's digital mapping products. This is the only material purchased by the Agency.

The total amounts paid by the Valuation Office Agency for these products provided by Ordnance Survey in the last five years are as follows:

	£
2001-02	[1]—
2002-03	[1]—
2003-04	375,000.00
2004-05	375,000.00
2005-06	375,000.00

[1] Details not available—could be provided only at disproportionate cost

Valuebill Project

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what electronic data the Valuation Office Agency will receive from local authorities as a consequence of the rollout of the Valuebill project. [70642]

Mr. Woolas: Electronic data the Valuation Office Agency will receive from local authorities as a consequence of the rollout of the Valuebill project is as follows:

Billing authority name

Billing authority identity code

Process date (of file)
Entry date and time (of file creation)
Number of records
Date sent
The BA transaction
BA identity number
BA report number
Type of tax
Indicated date of change
Property plan reference
Source of update
Remarks
Reason for report
The property address
The current Valuation or Rating List entry
Occupier contact.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Advertising

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much was spent on advertising by her Department in each of the last three years. [70483]

Mr. Lammy: The Department's spend on advertising in each of the last three years is as follows:

	Spend (£)
2003-04	20,987
2004-05	37,085
2005-06	139,578

Art Theft

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent discussions she has had with the Home Secretary about the theft of stolen works of art from private collections. [72294]

Mr. Lammy: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has had no recent discussions with the Home Secretary about the theft of stolen works of art from private collections.

Correspondence

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will reply to the letter of 24 January from the hon. Member for Aylesbury to the then Under-Secretary on the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 on Longwick Village hall. [71169]

Mr. Woodward: I will reply to the hon. Member shortly. I am sorry that there has been a delay in responding.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Isle of Wight dated 15 April 2006 concerning the Osborne Estates Act 1902. [72494]

Mr. Lammy: I replied to the hon. Member's letter on 20 May.

Departmental Advisers

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much has been paid in *(a)* salary, *(b)* travelling expenses, *(c)* subsistence allowance and *(d)* removal expenses to special advisers in her private office in each of the last five years. [69124]

Mr. Lammy: Since 2003, the Government have published on an annual basis the names and overall cost of special advisers and the number in each payband. For information relating to the last financial year I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement made by my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 158-61WS. Information on special advisers for this financial year is currently being collected and will be published in the normal way when it is ready.

The following table shows available data on expenditure on travel and subsistence. An analysis by type of expenditure rating is not recorded on the Department's accounting system and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Financial year	*Travel and subsistence (£)*
2005-06[1]	6,821.47
2004-05	1,838.15
2003-04	1,156.93
2002-03	2,569.52
2001-02	1,969.19

[1] Subject to final resource accounting.

All official travel by special advisers is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Ministerial Code and the Civil Service Management Code.

Hunting

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether *(a)* she, *(b)* Ministers and *(c)* an official instructed that hunting be omitted from her Department's sponsored cultural icons survey. [72519]

Mr. Lammy: No Ministers or officials in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, has instructed the editorial team at the ICONS project on what to exclude from the list of nominated items. Such decisions are entirely a matter for the project's editorial team governed by an independent Advisory Board. Fox-hunting as an icon has not been omitted from the ICONS project. Following a meeting of the Advisory Board on 4 May, fox-hunting is still under active consideration and may well feature in a future release.

Information Technology

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the *(a)* originally estimated, *(b)* most recently estimated and *(c)* outturn cost, was in each of the five largest information technology contracts agreed with outside suppliers over the last five years. [71802]

Mr. Lammy: My Department has not agreed any information technology contracts of this kind over the last five years.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in her Department staying overnight in (i) mainland Great Britain, (ii) Northern Ireland, (iii) the Republic of Ireland and (iv) other countries in each of the last three years. [69122]

Mr. Lammy: The following table shows departmental expenditure on travel and subsistence in each of the last three years. An analysis of expenditure by nation and region is not recorded on the Department's accounting system and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

£

Financial year	*Civil servants UK T&S*	*Civil servants overseas T&S*	*Special advisers UK T&S*	*Special advisers overseas T&S*
2005-06	271,566.53	283,747.83	2,693.82	4,127.65
2004-05	217,415.85	278,761.80	1,838.15	0
2003-04	238,273.33	235,210.16	1,156.93	0

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discounts are available in relation to hotel accommodation used by *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in her Department. [69123]

Mr. Lammy: While the Department can obtain Government discounted hotel accommodation rates through the hotel booking agent Expotel, the main criterion is best value for money. An analysis of full and discounted rates is not recorded on the Department's accounting system and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Municipal Sports Facilities

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the effect on municipal sports facilities of increased energy prices; and if she will make a statement. [70981]

Malcolm Wicks: I have been asked to reply.

I take the recent increases in energy prices very seriously and the Government are very concerned about the impact on all sectors in the UK. In the past year global fossil fuel prices have increased and this has fed through to the UK. Over the past decade energy prices in the UK have been amongst the cheapest in the EU, but I do recognise the serious recent difficulties for all sectors. However, I remain optimistic about investment by local authorities in sports facilities, which will amount to some £1 billion over the next three years. In addition, since 1997 Government and lottery distributing bodies between them have invested over£3 billion in physical activity and sport.

The DTI and Ofgem have been holding a number of seminars to educate energy buyers of all types about the options for purchasing gas and electricity in these times of high prices. In addition, Energywatch has set up a Business Services Team to provide information and guidance to small and medium sized enterprises, and runs a joint campaign with the Federation for Small Businesses called "Make the Connection". For the public sector, the Office for Government Commerce has been developing advice and models for energy purchasing for both local authorities and central government, and these are being rolled out nationally.

Public Service Agreement 2

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department has taken to compensate for slippage on its public service agreement 2 target; and if she will make a statement. [71880]

Mr. Lammy: My Department is working closely with Arts Council England on its Delivery Plan for the current PSA 3 target. This will take account of lessons learned from the experience of work on the previous PSA 2 target.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment her Department has made of the impact of the slippage on its public service agreement 2 target on Exchequer funding for the arts made available by the next Comprehensive Spending Review; and if she will make a statement. [71881]

Mr. Lammy: No decisions have yet been taken on the outcomes of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

Regulatory Impact Assessments

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what guidance she offers to *(a)* her Department's agencies and *(b)* those who receive funding from her Department on undertaking regulatory impact assessments before implementing changes of regulations; what such assessment was undertaken by VisitBritain before undertaking changes to the classification system for hotels and guest houses in England; if she will estimate the cost of such changes to the industry; and if she will make a statement. [72155]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 18 May 2006]*: My Department's sponsored bodies and agencies, in common with those across Government, are made fully aware of the need to assess the possible effects of changes in policy on businesses in their sectors. This includes formal Regulatory Impact Assessments where appropriate, as well as wider cross-Government work on Better Regulation. The tourism sector is also represented on my Department's Better Regulations Task Group.

The Quality Assurance Schemes operated by VisitBritain, the Automobile Association, VisitScotland, and the Wales Tourist Board, are voluntary in nature. Participating businesses pay to be quality inspected, and derive marketing and other benefits from inclusion in the Schemes. The Schemes have, from May 2005, been improved and standardised following work commissioned by VisitBritain and led by Alan Britten CBE. Both inbound and domestic visitors now have confidence in a standardised inspection regime across Britain. This has led to some changes in classification as it affects the descriptions used by hotels and guest houses in their own signage and promotional material.

The changes to the Quality Schemes followed wide industry consultation, and assessments of the cost and benefits to affected businesses. My Department is satisfied that the consultation carried out was more than adequate to reflect the views of affected businesses. The general consensus across the industry was that the changes in classification were highly beneficial in terms of improved consumer certainty when booking accommodation. In addition, my Department considers that the resulting changes to the VisitBritain Quality Scheme (which is funded through grant-in-aid) were primarily operational in nature. It was not, therefore, considered necessary to conduct a formal Regulatory Impact Assessment in these circumstances.

Royal Parks

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the backlog of maintenance works in the Royal Parks. [72334]

Mr. Lammy: The Royal Parks, with DCMS, have conducted a review of the way in which the maintenance liability is assessed using BS 3811:1984 (the British standard for building maintenance). They have prioritised the list of works requiring repair and developed a works programme accordingly.

By end June 2006, the Royal Parks will have a costed plan in place for tackling the backlog, with clear performance milestones and measures.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what guidance she has issued to the Royal Parks Agency on large-scale commercial events in the Royal Parks. [72335]

Mr. Lammy: Ministers endorsed the Royal Parks Events Strategy in February 2004. Which was drawn up after extensive consultation with stakeholders and seeks to balance the demand for events with protecting the fabric of the parks.

The number of major events is limited and the impact on the park and park users is always taken into account in considering possible events and weighed against the benefits that the event brings. Event organisers are required to take out a bond to fund any reinstatement necessary after an event.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what objectives she has set for the Royal Parks Agency for the next five years. [72336]

Mr. Lammy: The Royal Parks corporate objectives for 2006-07 to 2008-09 have been set and are listed as follows:

The Royal Parks objectives

To protect and enhance our "world class" natural park environment for the enjoyment of families, children and visitors;

To understand and respond to the needs of our audiences, reflecting diversity of needs and use; enriching lives and enhancing access to culture and sport;

To work with other organisations and volunteers to deliver clear education, health, sport and participation offers;

To conserve and enhance the historic built environment of the Royal Parks;

To deliver greater value for money for the taxpayer through increased income generation and reduced dependency on vote funding; and

To demonstrate organisational excellence.

The Public (West Bromwich)

Mr. Bailey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans the Arts Council has to support redundant arts workers from The Public in West Bromwich. [71748]

Mr. Lammy: Although Arts Council England was consulted about the redundancies at The Public, the decision itself was taken by the administrators. The administrators are now managing the day-to-day operation of the building and therefore have responsibility for personnel issues.

Lynda Waltho: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much the Arts Council England has paid the firm Robin and Gorringe in relation to the arts organisation, The Public in West Bromwich, in each of the last 10 years. [69179]

Mr. Lammy: The information requested in this question is commercial-in-confidence and should not be disclosed. In addition, as The Public is currently in administration, it would not be appropriate to release the information at this time.

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what arts activity is planned for The Public building in West Bromwich; and if she will list the works under commission. [71730]

Mr. Lammy: Since The Public went into administration, the funders and administrators have been working together to establish a revised and

sustainable business plan for the building within the funding envelope available. Work continues on this business plan.

The following works have been commissioned for The Public:

Access by Marie Sester

Lanscopes by Golan Levin and Zachary Lieberman

Flower of my Secret by Usman Haque

Flypad by Blast Theory

Audio Bounce by Tomas Roope, Andrew Allenson and Rolf Gelhaar Telematic

Embrace by Paul Sermon

Datafall by Miguel Carvalhais and Lia

Regional Voices by Kevin Carter

Tourism

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what progress has been made in achieving the Government's target of increasing revenue from tourism to £100 billion per annum by 2010. [70974]

Tessa Jowell: The UK tourism industry's total revenues were £74.2 billion in 2003, the last year for which complete data are available. Although inbound tourism receipts reached a record level of £14.3 billion in 2005, the overall growth target of £100 billion by 2010 remains a stretching aspiration. My Department continues to work towards achieving the target in partnership with VisitBritain and the industry, especially in improving tourism marketing, product quality, and workforce skills.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Arms Control

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps her Department is taking to promote worldwide arms control. [72410]

Dr. Howells: The Government have been at the forefront of international efforts to strengthen the regulation of the arms trade and to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We were instrumental in securing an EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports, and are leading the way towards revision of the code, and we regularly urge other countries to adopt stricter and more transparent arms export policies. We are active members of all the key multilateral regimes that work to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Australia Group (which deals with chemical and biological weapons), and the Wassenaar Arrangement, which promotes transparency in conventional arms transfers. The UK is also a member of key arms control treaties, such as the Ottawa Convention on Landmines, the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

The Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) is to be held this June, and the UK, in co-operation with a wide range of other partners, has made positive progress in building support for agreement there minimum common criteria to underpin controls on transfers of SALW.

The Government are committed to pursuing an international arms trade treaty that includes all conventional arms. We believe that such a treaty needs to include a wide range of signatories, including the world's major arms exporters. We are engaging on this with other countries at various levels, including through ministerial contacts, specific events, direct expert-level talks and by using our network of overseas posts. This work will continue with the aim of building the consensus needed for the start of a formal process at the UN later this year.

Belarus

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of reports that Belarus has sold arms illegally to Iran. [68196]

Dr. Howells: The Government take a close interest in all reports of arms transfers to and from countries whose current activities give rise to issues of potential concern. We are aware of media reports alleging Belarus has re-exported arms brought from Russia to Iran and are monitoring the situation.

British Indian Ocean Territories

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the Government of Mauritius on the sovereignty of the British Indian Ocean Territories; and if she will make a statement. [72979]

Mr. Hoon: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has had no recent discussions with the Government of Mauritius on sovereignty.

The Government do not recognise the claim by Mauritius to sovereignty over the British Indian Ocean Territory. However, we have recognised Mauritius as the only state which has a right to assert a claim of sovereignty when the United Kingdom relinquishes it own sovereignty, and successive Governments have given undertakings to the Government of Mauritius that the territory will be ceded when no longer required for defence purposes.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the income has been from fishing licences in the British Indian Ocean Territories for each of the last three years; and what the expected income is for *(a)* 2006-07 and *(b)* 2007-08. [72980]

Mr. Hoon: Income from fishing licences in the past three years in the British Indian Ocean Territory was as follows:

Financial year	*Income (£)*
2003-04	566,318
2004-05	657,844
2005-06	720,641

Income for the financial year 2006-07, to date, is approximately £45,000. It is difficult to predict exactly the expected level of income for the rest of this year, or for 2007-08. But it is likely to be of a similar level to previous years.

China

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect upon religious *(a)* institutions and *(b)* activity of the new regulations on religion which came into effect in China and Tibet on 1 March 2005; and if she will make a statement. [72963]

Mr. McCartney: The Government are concerned about limitations on freedom of religious belief in China and the treatment of religious practitioners. We regularly raise these concerns with the Chinese Government. We assess that the regulations that came into effect in China on 1 March 2005 are aimed primarily at limiting and controlling the development of religion and religious institutions. Freedom of religion was a focus of the last round of the EU-China human rights dialogue in October 2005. The EU Troika raised freedom of religious practice in demarches on the Chinese Government in Beijing on 29 December 2005 and 15 February 2006. We will continue to raise our concerns about religious freedom with the Chinese authorities.

Cyprus

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of the prospects for a new initiative to resolve the Cyprus problem; and if she will make a statement. [72084]

Mr. Hoon: A comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem remains a priority for the UK. We welcomed the recent agreement to begin bicommunal discussions on a number of issues of common concern to the two communities. But I would echo the call of the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan for the gap between words and actions to be bridged by the leaders of the two communities. We look forward to further developments and remain ready to do anything we can to facilitate progress towards a settlement.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what tracking she undertakes of asylum seekers returned to the Democratic Republic of Congo after failing to be accepted into the UK. [70302]

Mr. McCartney: As with returns to all countries, neither the Home Office nor the Foreign and Commonwealth Office routinely monitor the treatment of individual Congolese nationals once removed from the UK. However, our embassy in Kinshasa has found no evidence to suggest that unsuccessful asylum seekers are mistreated by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) authorities on return for claiming asylum. The DRC Government have stated that they have no policy of mistreating failed asylum seekers returning from abroad. Members of the embassy staff and official visitors regularly monitor the general security conditions and human rights situation, including for returned asylum seekers, in the DRC. They would not be removed if it were considered likely that they would suffer persecution on their return.

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what monitoring her Department undertakes of the treatment of repatriated asylum seekers in the Democratic Republic of Congo; and what her latest assessment has been of their treatment; [71419]

(2) what evidence her Department has received of persecution of repatriated asylum seekers by the authorities in the Democratic Republic of Congo. [71420]

Mr. McCartney: The Congolese Government have stated that they have no policy of mistreating failed asylum seekers returning from abroad. Staff from our embassy in Kinshasa and official visitors regularly monitor the general security conditions and human rights situation, including for returned asylum seekers, in the Democratic Republic of Congo. They have found no evidence to suggest that unsuccessful asylum seekers are mistreated by the Congolese authorities on return for claiming asylum. As with returns to all countries, neither the Home Office nor the Foreign and Commonwealth Office routinely monitor the treatment of individual Congolese nationals once removed from the UK. They would not be removed if it were considered likely that they would suffer persecution on their return.

Departmental Budget

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much of the budget for her Department remained unspent in the last financial year. [70533]

Margaret Beckett: The final figure for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's budgetary spend will be published in the Provisional Outturn White Paper, which will be published before the summer recess in July. A copy of the White Paper will be placed in the Library of the House.

Diplomatic Posts

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans her Department has to improve facilities available at the British high commission in Harare; and if she will make a statement. [70932]

Mr. McCartney: We plan to complete work on a new embassy in Harare in 2008, offering better public access and better and more secure working conditions for staff.

EXPO 2010

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what preparations her Department has made for EXPO 2010 in Shanghai; and if she will make a statement. [70798]

Mr. McCartney *[holding answer 15 May 2006]*: The Chinese Government have formally invited 160 countries, including the UK, to participate in the 2010 EXPO. We are considering that invitation. UK Trade and Investment has prepared a business case for UK participation and has had discussions with a wide range of possible stakeholders including other Government Departments, Devolved Administrations, VisitBritain, the British Council, city authorities and with many private sector companies.

Gibraltar

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will publish the preamble to the new draft constitution for Gibraltar prior to a referendum being held in the territory. [72053]

Mr. Hoon: I am aware of the importance the people of Gibraltar attach to agreeing and publishing the preamble to the Constitution prior to a referendum being held. I will be discussing this matter further with the Chief Minister in London on 22 May.

HIV/AIDS (UK Citizens)

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions she has had with her US counterpart on entry restrictions for UK citizens with HIV/AIDS. [71734]

Mr. McCartney: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not had any discussions with her US counterpart on entry restrictions for UK citizens with HIV/AIDS.

Indigenous Peoples

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's policy is on the UN Convention on the collective rights of indigenous peoples. [72604]

Mr. McCartney: The Government have been participating in the UN Working Group elaborating a draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for the past 11 years. It is likely that the international community will seek action on this text at the first session of the new Human Rights Council in June 2006. The UK had a number of concerns with the original draft of the Declaration, including on the issue of collective rights, but have participated fully in negotiations and worked with partners to seek solutions to the real and difficult issues in the text for both states and indigenous peoples. We believe that the concerns of parties on both sides of this debate have now been accommodated in the draft Declaration. If the Declaration is put forward for adoption at the forthcoming session of the Council, the UK will support it.

Indonesia

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking to encourage good relations between Muslims and Christians in central Sulawesi, Indonesia. [67665]

Mr. McCartney: Through our embassy in Jakarta and our contacts with the Indonesian embassy in London, we continue to encourage the Government of Indonesia to ensure freedom of religion across Indonesia. The Interfaith Dialogue Conference held in Bali in July 2005, and co-chaired by the UK and Indonesia, is one prominent example of our work in support of good relations between faiths, both in Indonesia and other Association of South East Asian nations.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations she has made to the Government of Indonesia about the *(a)* trials and *(b)* planned execution of Fabianus Tibo, Dominggus da Silva and Marianus Riwu; and if she will make a statement. [70344]

Mr. McCartney: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave her on 9 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 179W.

Since my reply, the Supreme Court has turned down a second appeal by the three men. The review panel reached a unanimous verdict stating that there was no new evidence to warrant a further review of the case. Unless new evidence comes to light the three have no further recourse for appeals in Indonesia.

We will support further representations made to the Indonesian Government through the European Union.

Iran

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions she has had with her *(a)* US and *(b)* Russian counterpart on the US Administration's call for Russia to cease its support for the Iranian nuclear reactor at Bushehr; what the UK Government's position is on the US Administration's call; and if she will make a statement. [68208]

Margaret Beckett: As set out in the 5 August 2005 proposal to Iran by the Governments of France, Germany and the UK, with the support of the High Representative of the EU, the Government fully support long-term co-operation in the civil nuclear field between Iran and Russia within the context of an overall and mutually acceptable agreement on long-term arrangements.

The Bushehr reactor issue was raised during the discussions in which I participated during my visit to New York on 9 May.

This is part of ongoing diplomatic negotiations and it is a matter for the US, Russia and Iran.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what her latest assessment is of the threat posed to regional security by Iran's nuclear programme. [73070]

Dr. Howells: The United Nations Security Council reaffirmed in Resolution 1540 that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons as well as their means of delivery constitutes a threat to international peace and security. The proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Middle East would be deeply damaging for stability and security in the region and beyond, and for the multilateral non-proliferation system.

We have serious concerns about the nature of Iran's nuclear activities, its history of concealment and inadequate co-operation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and its failure to take the steps that the IAEA Board and the Security Council have deemed essential. These have all contributed to the international community's lack of confidence that the aims of the Iranian nuclear programme are, as Iran claims, exclusively peaceful.

These concerns are only heightened by Iran's ballistic missile programme, threatening rhetoric towards Israel, and its links to Lebanese Hizballah and Palestinian rejectionist groups.

We are working, with our partners, to ensure that Iran meets in full the requirements of the IAEA Board and the Security Council, including reinstating a full suspension of all enrichment related and reprocessing activities, and returns to a negotiation on long-term arrangements.

Israel

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when she plans to visit the state of Israel; and if she will make a statement. [72039]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary is keen to visit Israel and the Occupied Territories. However, foreign engagements for my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and other Ministers are kept under constant review. It is not our practice to announce such visits until they are finalised. Because of the unpredictable nature of world events, final decisions on overseas visits are often not possible until very shortly before the day of travel.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British citizens *(a)* visited and *(b)* emigrated to Israel in each year since 1997. [72040]

Dr. Howells: According to the Israeli Bureau of National Statistics, the following numbers of UK citizens visited Israel between 2001 and 2005:

	Number of UK tourists (Thousand)
2001	157
2002	140
2003	97
2004	104
2005	146

Figures for the number of British citizens who have emigrated to Israel are not available. However, between 2004 and April 2006, the Israeli Ministry of Immigrant Absorption has reported that a total of 2,289 people have emigrated from western Europe to Israel:

	Number of emigrants from western Europe
2004	654
2005	830
2006 (to April)	805

The number of British citizens who have visited and emigrated to Israel in other years since 1997 is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions she has had with *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials from other Government Departments about British relations with the state of Israel; and if she will make a statement. [72041]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not held discussions with Ministers or officials from other Government Departments about UK relations with Israel.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether it is the policy of the Government to refuse to recognise Hamas so long as it retains its intent to destroy the State of Israel; and if she will make a statement. [72043]

Dr. Howells: We support the three principles set out by the Quartet (EU, US, UN and Russia) and that EU Foreign Ministers made clear on 30 January. These are that Hamas should renounce violence; recognise Israel; and accept previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap. Hamas needs to start implementing these principles and make clear the path they intend to take. We recognise Hamas's democratic mandate as a result of free and fair elections. But with this mandate comes responsibilities. The full text of the Quartet statement of 30 January is available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website at: http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1138869357937.

Kenya

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the Government of Kenya on *(a)* sexual equality and *(b)* tackling homophobia. [70002]

Mr. McCartney: The UK engages bilaterally with the Kenyan Government on human rights issues as they arise. Our high commissioner in Nairobi most recently emphasised the importance of promoting gender equality and tackling violence against women during a speech on 8 May at the Nairobi Women's Hospital.

Kenya has ratified most of the international human rights treaties and regional human rights instruments. These cover non-discrimination, including on the basis of sexual orientation. However, homosexuality is illegal in Kenya. We are concerned that this cuts across Kenya's international human rights obligations.

The EU is in the process of relaunching its discussions with the Government of Kenya, under the provisions of Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement. These discussions are wide-ranging and cover economic and political governance, including human rights.

Maldives

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what measures her Department is taking *(a)* to assist and *(b)* to encourage President Gayoom of the Maldives to complete his promised democratic reforms; and if she will make a statement. [71882]

Dr. Howells: We welcome the important democratic changes that the Government of the Maldives have already introduced, including the legalisation of political parties in June 2005 and a recently published Roadmap for reform, which usefully set out some clear timescales. But we remain concerned about the pace of this and about the human rights situation in the Maldives, including freedom of expression and association and the right to fair trials conducted with due legal process. Some recent trials of political activists appear to have political motivations.

We monitor developments in the Maldives closely, regularly making clear both bilaterally (most recently Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials met the Maldivian Minister of State on 28 April) and with EU partners to the Government of the Maldives the need for progress with existing reforms and concerns about the need for further reform and improved human rights. We also maintain regular contact with the opposition parties.

Agreement on, and implementation of, further major democratic and constitutional changes will require an inclusive process reflecting the views of political parties, civil society and the general public in the Maldives. Dialogue between the political parties is essential. We fully support the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat in facilitating dialogue on constitutional reform between the political parties.

Nepal

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many meetings the British ambassador in Nepal has had with the King of Nepal since 1 January; and on what dates each meeting took place. [68136]

Dr. Howells: None. Our ambassador in Kathmandu's last meeting with the King of Nepal was on 21 December 2005, when he accompanied General Philip Trousdell, Colonel Commandant, Royal Gurkha Rifles, at the presentation of the Annual Report on the Brigade of Gurkhas. Prior to that, the ambassador's previous audience with the King was on 25 May 2005.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the government of Nepal about *(a)* human rights, *(b)* good governance and *(c)* the transition to democracy. [68178]

Dr. Howells: The UK has had regular discussions with the Nepalese Government at all levels on human rights, including with the King after he took direct power of the country last year. We have also made repeated public statements deploring human rights violations by both the Nepalese security forces and the Maoists. Most recently, senior Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials met the Nepalese ambassador on 2 March and raised our concerns about the continued detention of political leaders and activists, and the restrictions on the media. We also registered our ongoing concerns about the democratic deficit in Nepal with the absence of consultations between the parties for a full return to democracy, including through elections.

In October 2005, as EU President, the UK led an EU directors level Troika delegation to Nepal. The aim of the Troika visit was to encourage reconciliation and dialogue between the King and the political parties. They discussed human rights and the return to democracy with both the Government of Nepal and the political party leaders.

We have had several discussions with the Government of Nepal, including the King, calling on them to restore democracy and pursue a negotiated political settlement to the conflict involving all of the main actors. In February 2006 a parliamentary delegation led by the right hon. Member for Tonbridge and Malling (Sir John Stanley) visited Nepal and called on party leaders and Government officials to discuss the return of democracy in Nepal. The aim of the visit was to support the democratic movement and encourage the return of democracy.

Following three weeks of violent pro democracy demonstrations the King announced, on 24 April, that he will hand power to the parties and reinstate the Parliament. On 28 April 2006 the first session of the reinstated Parliament took place. We welcome the King's announcement on 24 April and the appointment of the new Prime Minister, G. P. Koirala. On 30 April G. P. Koirala was sworn in to office and the Parliament agreed his proposals to reciprocate the Maoist cease-fire and for a constituent assembly. This represents a genuine opportunity for the restoration of peace.

democracy and human rights in Nepal. The UK stands ready, with international partners, to work with the new Government and the people of Nepal.

North Korea

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) if she will make it her policy to encourage other EU member states to raise concerns about the situation of Mr. Son Jung Nam in an EU demarche to the Government of North Korea; [71155]

(2) what representations she has made to the Government of North Korea concerning the treatment of Mr. Son Jung Nam; [71156]

(3) what representations she has made to the Government of North Korea *(a)* to refrain from executing Mr. Son Jung Nam and *(b)* to call for his release. [71157]

Mr. McCartney: The EU presidency has formally raised concerns with the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea (DPRK) authorities about Son Jung Nam's circumstances and fate, as have individual member states including the UK.

We, along with other EU partners, have asked the DPRK authorities to provide further information on Son Jung Nam's circumstances and fate but they have not done so.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials have raised Son Jung Nam's case with the North Korean authorities. We set out our well-known opposition to the use of the death penalty and urged the DPRK not to apply it if it was in question in his case. We are deeply concerned about reports of serious human rights violations in the DPRK, but the lack of access for independent monitors makes it difficult to verify these reports.

Palestinian Authority

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps she is taking to secure the release of taxes owed to the Palestinian Authority which are held by Israel. [71947]

Dr. Howells: We, along with our EU partners, continue to call upon Israel to transfer the customs revenue that they currently collect on behalf of the Palestinian Authority. At the 15 May General Affairs and External Relations Council, the EU urged Israel to transfer this revenue. In addition to this, the UK is leading EU efforts to set up a temporary international mechanism to ensure that assistance can be delivered directly to the Palestinian people.

Public Consultations

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many public consultations her Department undertook in the last year; and what the cost was *(a)* in total and *(b)* of each consultation. [70534]

Margaret Beckett: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office undertook three public consultations in 2005-06, at a total cost of £38,510.

The cost of each consultation was as follows:

	Cost (£)
Forced Marriage	15,000
Know Before You Go Travel Safety—benchmarking survey	18,000
Support for British Nationals Overseas	5,510

Small Change Big Difference

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps her Department and its agencies have taken following the launch of the Government's Small Change Big Difference Campaign. [72014]

Margaret Beckett: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not taken specific steps as a direct result of the launch of the Small Change Big Difference campaign, but our existing occupational health service and health promotion practice very much reflect the campaign's advice.

Strategic Export Controls

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the evidence from the Minister for the Middle-East in her Department to the Quadripartite Committee on 3 May, HC 873-vi, on strategic export controls, what steps are being taken by the Government to investigate reports of an illicit diversion of UK-exported Beretta weapons intended for legitimate use in Iraq. [71452]

Dr. Howells: The hon. Member's question refers to my evidence session before the Quadripartite Committee on 25 April 2006.

Security conditions in Iraq make it very difficult to investigate all such allegations of diversion or theft of British exports of military listed equipment. Our embassy in Baghdad has investigated these reports as far as they have been able to and have found no firm evidence to support them.

Despite the anecdotal nature of such allegations of diversion, officials do take them into account when assessing export licence applications. Whenever appropriate, we take advice from our embassy in Baghdad on the risks of diversion.

Syria

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment she has made of Syrian compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 1559; and if she will make a statement. [73069]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has taken note of the latest report on implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1559 by the UN Secretary-General. This report concluded that a number of operational requirements derived from the resolution had been met, including the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon and the conduct of free and fair legislative elections in Lebanon.

However, the Secretary-General also noted that other requirements of the resolution remained to be implemented, particularly the disarming and disbanding of the Lebanese and non-Lebanese militia; the extension of Government control throughout all Lebanon; and the full restoration and strict respect for the sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity and political independence of Lebanon, most notably through the establishment of normal diplomatic relations and the demarcation of borders between Syria and Lebanon.

In response to the Secretary-General's report, on 17 May, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1680, co-drafted by the UK, calling on the Syrian Government to agree to delineate their common border with Lebanon and to establish full diplomatic relations and representation in Lebanon, noting that such measures would constitute a significant step towards asserting Lebanon's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence, and improving relations between the two countries.

Turkey (EU Accession)

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make a statement on progress with Turkey's application for accession to the EU. [71700]

Mr. Hoon: Since the opening of accession negotiations on 3 October 2005, the Commission has been carrying out the screening process, measuring Turkey's legislation against the 35 chapters of the EU "acquis". The Commission has completed screening on 17 chapters and published screening reports for Science and Research, Education and Culture, Public Procurement and Competition. After the screening of a chapter is complete, member states decide whether to set opening benchmarks, the specific requirements the candidate country must meet before the chapter can be opened. We expect the first chapter to be opened during the Austrian presidency.

Venezuela

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) whether the visit of the President of Venezuela to the United Kingdom will be a State Visit; [69912]

(2) which Ministers and officials will be meeting President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela during his visit to the United Kingdom on 15 to 16 May. [69918]

Mr. Hoon: President Chavez of Venezuela made a private visit to the UK between 14-16 May. It was not a State Visit. There were never plans for meetings with Government Ministers or officials. The Venezuelan Government did not request any official meetings with the Government. A representative of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office met President Chavez on arrival in the UK.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether Ministers will be meeting the President of Venezuela *(a)* publicly and *(b)* privately during his forthcoming visit to the UK. [70868]

Mr. Hoon: There were never plans for meetings with Government Ministers, either publicly or privately, during this recent visit. President Chavez made a private visit to the UK and did not request any meetings with the Government.

Western Sahara

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions she has had at the United Nations on the holding of a referendum on the future Government of Western Sahara. [72978]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not discussed the issue of Western Sahara in the UN.

The UK supports the efforts of the UN Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to Western Sahara, Peter van Walsum, to find a just, lasting and mutually acceptable solution to the Western Sahara dispute, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. On 28 April 2006, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted UN Security Council Resolution 1675 which renewed the mandate for the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara until 31 October 2006. The UK supported this, and UK officials at the UN played an active role in the Security Council's consideration of this issue. There are, however, no plans for a UN referendum to be held in the near future.

TREASURY

Cancer

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people under the age of 18 years in *(a)* England and *(b)* Shropshire were diagnosed with leukaemia in (i) 2004 and (ii) 2005. [72138]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 22 May 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many people under the age of 18 years in (a) England and (b) Shropshire were diagnosed with leukaemia in (i) 2004 and (ii) 2005. I am replying in her absence. (72138)

The most recent available figures for newly diagnosed cases of leukaemia registered in England are the year 2003. Figures for people under the age of 18 years at diagnosis for the years 2002 and 2003 are given in the table below.

Number of newly diagnosed cases of leukaemia[1] for people under the age of 18 years at diagnosis, registered in England and the county of Shropshire, 2002-03

	England	County of Shropshire
2002	454	0
2003	429	2

[1] Figures selected using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD10) C91-C95.

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in *(a)* England and *(b)* Shropshire were diagnosed with (i) leukaemia, (ii) breast cancer and (iii) prostate cancer in (A) 2004 and (B) 2005. [72140]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 22 May 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many people in (a) England and (b) Shropshire were diagnosed with (i) leukaemia, (ii) breast cancer and (iii) prostate cancer in (A) 2004 and (B) 2005. I am replying in her absence. (72140)

The most recent available figures for newly diagnosed cases of cancer registered in England are the year 2003. Figures by selected cancers for the years 2002 and 2003 are given in the table below.

Numbers of newly diagnosed cases of selected cancers[1], registered in England and the county of Shropshire: 2002-03

	England	County of Shropshire
2002		
Leukaemia	5,608	32
Breast cancer (females)[2]	34,319	243
Prostate cancer	26,811	218
2003		
Leukaemia	5,741	22
Breast cancer (females)[2]	36,509	250
Prostate cancer	26,798	209

[1] Figures selected using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD10), all leukaemias coded as C91-C95, breast cancer as C50 and prostate cancer as C61.

[2] Figures provided here are for female breast cancer. However, there are around 300 cases of male breast cancer diagnosed each year.

Children's Trust Funds

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will list the *(a)* banks and *(b)* building societies which do not apply an administration charge to individual child trust funds; and if he will make a statement; [71921]

(2) what recent discussions he has held with *(a)* banks and *(b)* building societies on administration charges on individual child trust funds; and if he will make a statement. [71922]

Ed Balls: All providers of child trust fund accounts, including banks and building societies, take administration charges into account when setting the rate of return they offer.

For the stakeholder child trust fund product only, these charges are capped at 1.5 per cent. a year. The stakeholder charge cap was subject to consultation prior to the launch of child trust fund and the Government continue to monitor that this cap is adhered to. The Government keep the operation of the child trust fund under review and, as a matter of course, meet regularly with providers and distributors.

Coins

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the UK coins that cost more to mint than their face value; and if he will make a statement. [72357]

John Healey: None of the coins currently being issued for circulation cost more than their face value.

Correspondence

Steve Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will reply to the letters of 20 April and 27 April from the hon. Member for Northavon, regarding a constituent, Mrs. Hughes. [72763]

Dawn Primarolo: I have done so.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what *(a)* land and *(b)* property his Department (i) leases and (ii) leased in (A) the Southend, West constituency, (B) Essex, (C) Hertfordshire and (D) the Metropolitan Police area of London in (1) 1979, (2) 1983, (3) 1987, (4) 1992 and (5) 1997. [72482]

John Healey: In 1997 the Treasury held a lease on a property in Allington Street, London SW1.

Electoral Roll

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many and what proportion of those on the electoral register are *(a)* Irish citizens, *(b)* Commonwealth citizens and *(c)* non-UK EU nationals. [72349]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Jil Matheson, dated 22 May 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning what proportion of those on the electoral register are (a) Irish citizens, (b) Commonwealth citizens and (c) non-UK EU nationals. I am replying in her absence. (72349)

The attached table provides figures for 1 December 2005 on the percentage of the local government electorate who are entitled to vote through European Union citizenship. These figures do not include citizens of Malta and Cyprus who qualify under commonwealth status or Irish citizens.

Data on Irish citizens and Commonwealth citizens are not collected separately on electoral returns. Therefore, it is not possible to calculate the proportion of those oh the electoral register.

Total European/Local Government Electorate and Electorate Entitled to Vote through European Citizenship, 1 December 2005

	Electorate Qualifying through European Union Citizenship	*Total European/ Local Government Electorate*	*Percentage of European/Local Electorate Qualifying through EU Citizenship*
England	522,050	37,656,402	1.4
Wales	10,788	2,247,164	0.5
Scotland	24,393	3,884,464	0.6
Northern Ireland	3,620	1,156,991	0.3
United Kingdom	560,851	44,945,021	1.2

Sources:
Office for National Statistics, General Register Office for Scotland, Electoral Office for Northern Ireland.

Euro

Mr. Brady: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment his Department has made of the statement made by the EU Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs that all the current EU member states will adopt the euro within 10 years; and whether he has responded to the Commissioner's statement. [72256]

Ed Balls: Article 122 of the EC Treaty provides the procedure by which the derogation of relevant member states from the third stage of economic and monetary union is abrogated, thereby allowing them to adopt the euro. Under the Protocol on certain provisions relating to the UK, the UK does not have a derogation. The Protocol recognises that

"the United Kingdom shall not be obliged or committed to move to the third stage of economic monetary union without a separate decision to do so by its government and parliament".

Government policy on membership of the single currency is unchanged. It remains as set out by the Chancellor in his statement to the House of Commons in October 1997, and again in the Chancellor's statement on the Five Tests assessment in June 2003.

Financial Services Ombudsman

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take steps to enable the Financial Services Ombudsman to increase the period of time during which a complaint can be filed. [72671]

Ed Balls: The Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (FSMA) sets out the broad framework and the respective responsibilities of the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) and the Financial Services Authority (FSA). The power to determine the detail of the scope of the Financial Ombudsman scheme, how it operates and other detailed matters is split between the FSA and the FOS. Both organisations are operationally independent of Government.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will increase the discretionary powers of the Financial Services Ombudsman. [72672]

Ed Balls: The Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (FSMA) sets out the broad framework of the Financial Services Ombudsman. The Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) gained statutory powers on 1 December 2001. These powers were subject to extensive consultation before introduction.

There are no plans to review the powers of the Financial Services Ombudsman at this time.

Flat Income Tax

Andrew George: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate his Department has made of the level at which a flat income tax would need to be set in order to generate the same anticipated Government income for *(a)* 2005-06 and *(b)* 2006-07 as the present banded income tax system. [63871]

Dawn Primarolo: Assuming that all personal allowances and reliefs remain at their current levels, a flat rate of income tax on earnings of 24 per cent. would be approximately revenue neutral in both 2005-06 and 2006-07, costing about £0.6 billion and £1.1 billion in each year respectively.

This assumes a flat rate of tax on earnings only but that the rates for savings and dividends income remain unchanged.

This revenue neutral estimate has been obtained from the survey of personal incomes 2003-04 and projected forward to 2005-06 and 2006-07 in line with March 2006 Budget assumptions.

The revenue neutral estimate excludes any behavioural response to the tax changes, which could be significant given the scale of the changes.

An estimated 17 million households would lose out under this system, while only 2 million would gain. Of the households gaining, around three-quarters would be in the richest 10 per cent. of households.

Andrew George: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will reply to Question 63871, on a flat rate of income tax, tabled by the hon. Member for St. Ives on 30 March. [72742]

Dawn Primarolo: I have done so.

HM Revenue and Customs

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the conferences held abroad attended by staff from HM Revenue and Customs in the last 12 months. [70675]

Dawn Primarolo: Comprehensive information is not available. All overseas travel on official business is conducted in accordance with the provisions of the civil service code.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what daily subsistence allowance is payable to staff of HM Revenue and Customs working away from home where receipts *(a)* are provided and *(b)* are not provided. [71727]

Dawn Primarolo: Travel and subsistence allowances for staff in HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) have not yet been fully harmonised, but work on this is continuing.

(a) Day subsistence allowances where receipts are required:

Receipts are required for payments relating to meals taken during official travel.

Both former C and E and IR pay:

Over five hours, but not more than 10 hours—the actual cost of one main meal on a train or boat;

Over 10 hours—the actual cost of one main meal on a train or boat, together with the over five hour subsistence rate of £4.25, or the actual cost of two main meals;

Former IR pays:

£4.25 where an early start renders breakfast at home unreasonable. If this is claimed, the actual receipted cost up to two main meals on a train or boat may also be claimed.

(b) Day subsistence allowances where receipts are not required:

Both former C and E and IR pay:

Day subsistence allowances to staff on official business away from their normal office (except when the receipted meals above can be claimed):

absences over five hours—£4.25 for one meal,

absences over 10 hours—£9.30 for two meals

absences over 12 hours—£9.30 plus 4.25 if breakfast purchased due to early start rendering breakfast at home unreasonable.

Former C and E:

late meal allowance—£3.25.

Information Technology

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* originally estimated, *(b)* most recently estimated and *(c)* outturn cost was in each of the five largest information technology contracts agreed by his Department with outside suppliers over the last five years. [71814]

John Healey: The information requested is in the following table.

IT system	*Contract*	*Original estimate*	*Most recent estimate*	*£000 Outturn cost*
COINS—Integration of three government financial data systems to form a Single Data System (SDS).	Descisys for software	1,527	1,678	1,678
	G-Cat supplier for hardware	60	60	60
JIGSAW—Enhancing Electronic Document and Records Management system (EDRMS)	Computacenter for software	477	477	477
	Computacenter for hardware	149	149	149
ACME / TRiP—Replacement of the computer system TACSYS which supports the operational accounting and cashflow forecasting work of the Treasury Exchequer Funds and Accounts team.	City Financials for software	462	462	462
	G-Cat supplier for hardware	109	109	109

Note:
Values incl. VAT. Annual 'Running costs' are not included in the above figures and have been answered previously in the answer given to the hon. Member for Chipping Barnet (Mrs. Villiers) on 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1158W.

Low Earnings

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the change was between 2000 and 2005 in the number of people employed part-time or full-time and earning less than £10,000 per annum. [72621]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 22 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question to ask what has been the change in the numbers of people between 2000 and 2005 who are employed part-time or full-time and are earnings less than £10,000 per annum. I am responding in her absence (72621)

Currently average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

The actual numbers of people are not available from ASHE data. Therefore I attach tables showing proportions of those earning less than £10,000 per annum for the years 2000 and 2005 for Employees on Adult Rates.

The ASHE survey is carried out in April of each year and is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. They are based on a one per cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Gross annual (£) pay for all employee jobs[1]

	Proportion earning less than £10,000
2000	26.4
2005	20.6

Gross annual (£) pay for full-time employee jobs[1]

	Proportion earning less than £10,000
2000	8.8
2005	4.2

Gross annual (£) pay for part time employee jobs[1]

	Proportion earning less than £10,000
2000	81.2
2005	68.8

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.

Notes:

1. Guide to quality: The Coefficient of Variation (CV) indicates the quality of a figure, the smaller the CV value the higher the quality. The true value is likely to lie within +/- twice the CV e.g. for an average of 200 with a CV of 5 per cent., we would expect the population average to be within the range 180 to 220.
2. The above estimates all have a CV of less than 5 per cent.

Source:

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Mortality Statistics

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many deaths there were of people aged *(a)* under one, *(b)* one to five, *(c)* six to 10, *(d)* 11 to 17, *(e)* 17 to 24, *(f)* 25 to 35, *(g)* 36 to 40, *(h)* 41 to 50, *(i)* 51 to 59, *(j)* 60 to 64, *(k)* 65 to 69, *(l)* 70 to 74, *(m)* 75 to 79, *(n)* 80 to 84, *(o)* 85 to 89 and *(p)* 90 years and over from (i) 1 April to 30 September 1997, (ii) 1 October to 30 April 1998, (iii) 1 April to 30 September 2001, (iv) 1 October to 30 April 2002, (v) 1 April to 30 September 2004 and (vi) 1 October to 30 April 2005; and what the death rate per 1,000 was in each case. [72160]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 22 May 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent question concerning how many deaths there were of people in the age group (a) under one, (b) one to five, (c) six to 10, (d) 11 to 17, (e) 17 to 24, (f) 25 to 35, (g) 36 to 40, (h) 41 to 50, (i) 51 to 59, (j) 60 to 64, (k) 65 to 69, (l) 70 to 74, (m) 75 to 79, (n) 80 to 84, (o) 85 to 89 and (p) 90 years and over from (i) 1st April to 30th September 1997, (ii) 1st October to 30th April 1998, (iii) 1st April to 30th September 2001, (iv) 1st October to 30th April 2002, (v) 1st April to 30th September 2004 and (vi) 1st October to 30th April 2005; and what the death rate per 1,000 was in each case. I am replying in her absence. (72160)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2004. Numbers of deaths for the age groups and time periods requested are included in the table below. Age group "18 to 24" has been used to avoid double counting deaths with age group "11 to 17".

ONS does not routinely calculate death rates for sub-annual periods. Annual death rates by sex and five-year age groups can be found in Table 4 in the publication series, "DH2, Mortality Statistics, Cause". Copies of these can be found in the library of the House and, from 1999 onwards, on the National Statistics website at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=618.

Numbers of deaths in England and Wales by age group and selected time periods, April 1997 to September 2004[1]

Number of deaths

Age group	1 April to 30 September 1997	1 October to 30 April 1998	1 April to 30 September 2001	1 October to 30 April 2002	1 April to 30 September 2004
<1	1,852	2,172	1,568	1,904	1,535
01-05	370	503	302	436	272
06-10	229	261	191	200	167
11-17	535	674	453	630	463
18-24	1,301	1,546	1,203	1,395	1,111
25-35	3,167	3,829	2,961	3,410	2,682
36-40	2,047	2,465	2,226	2,594	2,197
41-50	7,728	9,256	7,344	8,994	7,447
51-59	14,302	17,861	14,991	17,962	14,466
60-64	13,372	16,898	12,743	15,388	12,042
65-69	21,846	27,191	18,294	22,713	17,407
70-74	32,756	41,819	28,373	35,598	25,195
75-79	40,316	54,195	40,235	50,652	35,778
80-84	43,708	57,537	42,771	57,056	46,682
85-89	39,259	54,599	41,079	54,846	35,610
90+	30,134	43,785	35,679	50,069	37,691

[1] Deaths occurring in each time period.

National Insurance Contributions

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of people who will retire in the next 12 months without being told what pension they will receive due to HM Revenue and Customs not recording national insurance contributions. [70230]

Dawn Primarolo: National insurance records are updated annually when HMRC processes employers' returns. Any apparent shortfall in the final relevant year is followed-up by DWP with employers.

All people reaching pension age will receive a Retirement Pension pack from DWP four months prior to reaching their pension age. This pack includes a State Pension forecast detailing the amounts of State

Pension they will receive based on the amount of national insurance contributions recorded. If the amount shown in the State Pension forecast is not what an individual expects, DWP's Pension Forecasting Team will advise the customer to contact HM Revenue and Customs who will check and, where appropriate, update the national insurance record to ensure that the correct State Pension is paid. Relatively few people are affected in this way.

Non-fossil Fuels

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 4 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1742W, on non-fossil fuels, if he will summarise the legal argument which led him to conclude that funds in the non-fossil fuel obligation fund were hereditary revenues. [71380]

John Healey: The legal advice concerned was that the funds representing the non-fossil fuel obligation surplus are hereditary revenues and as such are required by law to be paid in the consolidated fund.

Olympics

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what account the Office for National Statistics has taken in its analysis of the public sector net debt of the guarantees given to the International Olympic Committee to underwrite the Olympic Games. [71391]

John Healey: Under reforms to the public spending framework introduced in 2000 the UK Government are one of the few in the world that have a statutory obligation to report liabilities in the same way as private companies, and whose accounts are subject to independent audit.

Contingent liabilities, such as those referred to in the question, are reported in departmental accounts on the same basis as UK GAAP, as well as to Parliament. They are defined as being contingent on an event, or a set of events, whose likelihood of occurring has been accepted by independent auditors as being remote. They are not, by their definition, actual liabilities, and so it would not be right to include them in measures of public sector net debt.

Petrol Prices

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average price was of a gallon of *(a)* leaded and *(b)* unleaded petrol in each country of the UK in March 2006. [71212]

Malcolm Wicks: I have been asked to reply.

The average price of leaded petrol is no longer available due to the low volume of sales of this fuel. The average price of unleaded petrol is given in the following table:

Country	*£/gallon*
Northern Ireland	4.10
Scotland	4.07
Wales	4.10
England	4.09

Population Statistics (Hartlepool)

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many girls under the age of 16 years in Hartlepool constituency gave birth in each year since 1990. [72602]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 22 May 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your question about how many girls in Hartlepool constituency under the age of 16 years gave birth in each year since 1990. I am replying in her absence. (72602)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2005. The table below shows the requested figures for the years 1990 to 2005 In order to protect confidentiality, counts of less than five have been suppressed.

Live births under age 16 Hartlepool constituency 1990-2005

	Number
1990	5
1991	6
1992	6
1993	7
1994	[1]—
1995	7
1996	9
1997	5
1998	8
1999	8
2000	10
2001	6
2002	[1]—
2003	5
2004	[1]—
2005	[1]—

[1] Counts of less than five.

Registered Electors

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many and what percentage of the electorate were registered in each *(a)* ward and *(b)* constituency in (i) England, (ii) Scotland, (iii) Wales and (iv) Northern Ireland in each of the past 10 years, broken down by region. [72591]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Jil Matheson, dated 22 May 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning how many and what percentage of the electorate were registered in each (a) ward and (b) constituency in (i) England, (ii) Scotland, (iii) Wales and (iv)

Northern Ireland in each of the past 10 years, broken down by region. I am replying in her absence. (72591)

The information requested is not readily available on a comparable basis for the ten year period and could only be produced at disproportionate cost.

Information on the percentage of the electorate who were registered is not available for the ten year period because population estimates for wards are available only for 2001 and 2002. The information for these years has been provided previously in response to earlier Parliamentary Questions (No. 38272, 20 Dec 2005, Column 2809w, No. 41187, 19th January 2006, Column 1491w).

Ian Lucas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many electors there were in each ward in Wrexham in each of the last 10 years. [72670]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Jil Matheson, dated 22 May 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question regarding the number of electors in each ward in Wrexham in each of the last 10 years. I am replying in her absence. (72670)

The latest available Welsh ward electorate counts are for December 2005. The electorate counts for the last available 10 years (1996 to 2005) are shown in the attached tables. Table 1 shows wards within the Parliamentary Constituency of Wrexham. Table 2, shows wards for the local authority of Wrexham, including those for the Parliamentary Constituency of Wrexham (as included in Table 1).

Table 1: Parliamentary electors for Wrexham constituency 1996-2005

Ward name	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Acton	2,543	2,520	2,486	2,461	2,385	2,360	2,334	2,249	2,172	2,259
Borras Park	2,136	2,155	2,180	2,187	2,167	2,104	2,114	2,063	2,076	2,075
Brynffynnon[1]	—	—	—	—	1,998	2,121	2,122	1,952	1,779	1,669
Caia Park[2]	4,241	3,944	3,911	3,813	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cartrefle[2,3]	—	—	—	—	1,691	1,580	1,630	1,583	1,483	1,550
Erddig[4]	—	—	—	—	1,786	1,726	1,704	1,627	1,581	1,559
Garden Village	1,662	1,654	1,670	1,688	1,693	1,691	1,696	1,682	1,676	1,670
Gresford East and West	2,344	2,321	2,336	2,360	2,365	2,286	2,302	2,255	2,202	2,188
Grosvenor	1,666	1,835	1,799	1,799	1,727	1,810	1,861	1,708	1,629	2,016
Gwersyllt East and South	3,040	3,032	3,023	3,034	3,046	3,187	3,201	3,158	3,107	3,183
Gwersyllt North	1,895	1,896	1,910	1,902	1,868	1,707	1,740	1,725	1,691	1,797
Gwersyllt West	2,267	2,257	2,270	2,302	2,296	2,258	2,240	2,218	2,124	2,192
Hermitage[4]	—	—	—	—	1,826	1,778	1,757	1,669	1,608	1,663
Holt	1,740	1,791	1,838	1,911	1,992	2,345	2,614	2,685	2,732	2,544
Little Acton	1,938	1,976	1,934	1,856	1,894	1,846	1,865	1,850	1,833	1,845
Llay	3,635	3,608	3,585	3,592	3,633	3,644	3,623	3,582	3,500	3,542
Maesydre	1,619	1,589	1,602	1,599	1,573	1,545	1,531	1,514	1,448	1,478
Marford and Hoseley	1,747	1,752	1,776	1,799	1,776	1,824	1,864	1,839	1,843	1,849
Offa[1, 4]	—	—	—	—	1,790	1,668	1,692	1,596	1,547	1,599
Offa East[4]	4,387	4,420	4,452	4,449	—	—	—	—	—	—
Offa West[1]	2,826	2,797	2,876	2,883	—	—	—	—	—	—
Queensway[3]	3,447	3,399	3,348	3,324	1,713	1,564	1,546	1,424	1,244	1,375
Rhosnesni	2,298	2,340	2,384	2,382	2,410	2,325	2,314	2,292	2,262	2,217
Rossett	2,320	2,346	2,438	2,493	2,556	2,495	2,460	2,420	2,376	2,443
Smithfield[2, 3, 5]	—	—	—	—	1,748	1,683	1,667	1,541	1,484	1,549
Stansty	1,842	1,826	1,801	1,789	1,794	1,724	1,699	1,654	1,628	1,671
Whitegate[3,5]	1,529	1,548	1,565	1,581	1,955	1,927	1,961	2,019	2,110	2,302
Wynnstay[2]	—	—	—	—	1,363	1,338	1,353	1,275	1,112	1,188
Total	51,122	51,006	51,184	51,204	51,045	50,536	50,890	49,5880	48,247	49,423

The following changes took effect on 6 May 1999: [1] Part of Offa West formed Brynffynnon and part merged to form Offa.
[2] Part of Caia Park merged to form Cartrefle, part merged to form Smithfield and the rest formed Wynnstay.
[3] Part of Queensway merged to form Cartrefle, part merged to form Smithfield and part merged with Whitegate.
[4] Part of Offa East formed Erddig, part formed Hermitage and part merged to form Offa.
[5] Part of Whitegate merged to form Smithfield.

Notes:
1. Data for years up to and including 2000 relate to 16 February, data for 2001 and subsequent years relate to 1 December.
2. Parliamentary electors are those people who are entitled to vote in parliamentary elections at Westminster and who meet the residence qualification. These include overseas voters but exclude Peers and European citizens.

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Table 2: Parliamentary electors for Wrexham unitary authority 1996-2005

Ward name	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Acton	2,543	2,520	2,486	2,461	2,385	2,360	2,334	2,249	2,172	2,259
Borras Park	2,136	2,155	2,180	2,187	2,167	2,104	2,114	2,063	2,076	2,075
Bronington	2,345	2,358	2,384	2,427	2,452	2,441	2,469	2,436	2,407	2,431

Table 2: Parliamentary electors for Wrexham unitary authority 1996-2005

Ward name	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Brymbo	2,055	2,059	2,042	2,070	2,025	2,011	2,019	1,987	1,997	2,026
Brynffynnon[1]	—	—	—	—	1,998	2,121	2,122	1,952	1,779	1,669
Bryn Cefn	1,456	1,471	1,489	1,480	1,469	1,468	1,477	1,456	1,415	1,431
Caia Park[2]	4,241	3,944	3,911	3,813	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cartrefle[2,3]	—	—	—	—	1,691	1,580	1,630	1,583	1,483	1,550
Cefn	3,790	3,799	3,745	3,729	3,705	3,540	3,614	3,626	3,487	3,579
Ceiriog Ganol/ Ceiriog Ucha[4]	1,687	1,657	1,679	1,711	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dyffryn Ceiriog/ Ceiriog Valley[4]	—	—	—	—	1,724	1,700	1,740	1,740	1,692	1,672
Chirk North	1,775	1,794	1,822	1,874	1,874	1,888	1,867	1,855	1,844	1,835
Chirk South	1,379	1,377	1,399	1,386	1,420	1,411	1,405	1,390	1,408	1,457
Coedpoeth	3,645	3,620	3,618	3,661	3,652	3,581	3,575	3,511	3,451	3,453
Erddig[5]	—	—	—	—	1,786	1,726	1,704	1,627	1,581	1,559
Esclusham[6]	2,471	2,469	2,435	2,495	2,049	2,022	2,000	1,952	1,925	1,928
Garden Village	1,662	1,654	1,670	1,688	1,693	1,691	1,696	1,682	1,676	1,670
Gresford East and West	2,344	2,321	2,336	2,360	2,365	2,286	2,302	2,255	2,202	2,188
Grosvenor	1,666	1,835	1,799	1,799	1,727	1,810	1,861	1,708	1,629	2,016
Gwenfro	1,320	1,303	1,287	1,284	1,263	1,234	1,239	1,217	1,181	1,180
Gwersyllt East and South	3,040	3,032	3,023	3,034	3,046	3,187	3,201	3,158	3,107	3,183
Gwersyllt North	1,893	1,896	1,910	1,902	1,868	1,707	1,740	1,725	1,691	1,797
Gwersyllt West	2,267	2,257	2,270	2,302	2,296	2,258	2,240	2,218	2,124	2,192
Hermitage[5]	—	—	—	—	1,826	1,778	1,757	1,669	1,608	1,663
Holt	1,740	1,791	1,838	1,911	1,992	2,345	2,614	2,6b5	2,732	2,544
Johnstown	2,386	2,402	2,389	2,495	2,584	2,525	2,521	2,490	2,424	2,466
Little Acton	1,938	1,976	1,934	1,856	1,894	1,846	1,865	1,850	1,833	1,845
Llangollen Rural[7]	—	—	1,479	1,445	1,471	1,449	1,527	1,481	1,459	1,454
Llay	3,635	3,608	3,585	3,592	3,633	3,644	3,623	3,582	3,500	3,542
Maesydre	1,619	1,589	1,602	1,599	1,573	1,545	1,531	1,514	1,448	1,478
Marchwiel	1,799	1,794	1,807	1,801	1,851	1,860	1,870	1,828	1,814	1,846
Marford and Hoseley	1,747	1,752	1,776	1,799	1,776	1,824	1,864	1,839	1,843	1,849
Minera	1,861	1,895	1,921	1,942	1,928	1,917	1,923	1,904	1,893	1,882
New Broughton	2,246	2,233	2,273	2,342	2,501	2,463	2,474	2,410	2,383	2,495
Offa[1, 5]	—	—	—	—	1,790	1,668	1,692	1,506	1,547	1,599
Offa East[5]	4,387	4,420	4,452	4,449	—	—	—	—	—	—
Offa West[5]	2,826	2,797	2,876	2,883	—	—	—	—	—	—
Overton	2,144	2,185	2,242	2,287	2,343	2,316	2,344	2,318	2,338	2,373
Pant	1,740	1,724	1,727	1,718	1,672	1,649	1,642	1,556	1,473	1,515
Penycae[8]	2,622	2,582	2,570	2,540	1,590	1,563	1,580	1,543	1,428	1,546
Penycae and Ruabon South[8]	—	—	—	—	1,809	1,799	1,812	1,85	1,781	1,807
Plas Madoc	1,511	1,453	1,424	1,326	1,242	1,217	1,180	1,114	1,015	1,176
Ponciau[6]	3,174	3,218	3,200	3,174	3,678	3,566	3,531	3,482	3,416	3,469
Queensway[3]	3,447	3,399	3,348	3,324	1,713	1,564	1,546	1,42+	1,244	1,375
Rhosnesni	2,298	2,340	2,384	2,382	2,410	2,325	2,314	2,202	2,262	2,217
Rossett	2,320	2,346	2,438	2,493	2,556	2,495	2,460	2,420	2,376	2,443
Ruabon[8]	2,636	2,618	2,684	2,668	1,730	1,846	1,873	1,820	1,776	1,877
Smithfield[2,3,9]	—	—	—	—	1,748	1,683	1,667	1,541	1,484	1,549
Stansty	1,842	1,826	1,801	1,789	1,794	1,724	1,699	1,654	1,628	1,671
Whitegate[3,9]	1,529	1,548	1,565	1,581	1,955	1,927	1,961	2,019	2,110	2,302

Table 2: Parliamentary electors for Wrexham unitary authority 1996-2005

Ward name	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Wynnstay[2]	—	—	—	—	1,363	1,338	1,353	1,275	1,112	1,188
Total	95,164	95,017	96,800	97,059	97,077	96,002	96,572	94,521	92,254	94,321

Unless otherwise stated the following changes took effect on 6 May 1999:
[1] Part of Offa West formed Brynffynnon and part merged to form Offa.
[2] Part of Caia Park merged to form Cartrefle, part merged to form Smithfield and the rest formed Wynnstay.
[3] Part of Queensway merged to form Cartrefle, part merged to form Smithfield and part merged with Whitegate.
[4] Ceiriog Ganol/Ceiriog Ucha was renamed as Dyffryn Ceiriog/Ceiriog Valley.
[5] Part of Offa East formed Erddig, part formed Hermitage and part merged to form Offa.
[6] Part of Esclusham merged with Ponciau.
[7] Wrexham unitary authority boundary was extended to include part of Llangollen Rural, formerly in Denbighshire unitary authority on 1 April 1997.
[8] Part of Penycae merged with part of Ruabon to form Penycae and Ruabon South.
[9] Part of Whitegate merged to form Smithfield.

Notes:
1. Data for years up to and including 2000 relate to 16 February, data for 2001 and subsequent years relate to 1 December.
2. Parliamentary electors are those people who are entitled to vote in parliamentary elections at Westminster and who meet the residence qualification. These include overseas voters but exclude Peers and European citizens.

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Tax Credits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average cost per minute is of calling the tax credit helpline number. [70255]

Dawn Primarolo: Information is not available on the cost per minute to callers using the tax credit helpline, they will vary according to their service provider.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit claimants have been informed that they were required to repay overpayments in each year since its introduction; how much has been overpaid in total; and how much has been repaid in each year. [72562]

Dawn Primarolo: The number of 2003-04 awards that were overpaid as at April 2004 is shown in the HMRC publication "Child and Working Tax Credits Statistics. Finalised annual awards 2003-04. Supplement on payments in 2003-04". This can be found on the HMRC website at:

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/cwtc-quarterly-stats.htm

The number of 2004-05 awards with overpayments as at April 2005 will be published on 31 May 2006.

Where a family has been overpaid, HMRC will recover the overpayment as explained in code of practice 26 "What happens if we have paid you too much tax credit?", available on our website at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/leaflets/cop26.htm.

The total amount that was overpaid in 2003-04 and how much of this was recovered in 2004-05 is shown in part two of the "Comptroller and Auditor General's Standard Report on the Accounts of the Inland Revenue 2004-05". This can be found on the HMRC website at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/about/annual_reps.htm

Information on the amounts recovered during 2005-06 will not be available until the accounts for 2005-06 have been finalised.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will extend Table 3 on page 30 of Tax credits: reforming financial support for families (March 2005) so as to show marginal deduction rates of over 50 per cent. and over 40 per cent. *(a)* before 1998, *(b)* in 2005-06 and *(c)* in 2006-07. [67870]

Dawn Primarolo: The following table is an extension of table 4.3 in Tax credits: reforming financial support for families (March 2005).

Marginal deduction rate (Percentage)	*Before budget 1998*	*2005-06 system of tax and benefits*	*2006-07 system of tax and benefits*
Over 100	5,000	0	0
Over 90	130,000	30,000	35,000
Over 80	300,000	160,000	170,000
Over 70	740,000	225,000	240,000
Over 60	760,000	1,720,000	1,730,000
Over 50	760,000	1,875,000	1,890,000
Over 40	800,000	2,065,000	2,085,000

Figures for the 2005-06 and 2006-07 system of taxes and benefits are consistent with the analysis presented in Table 4.2 of the 2005 pre-Budget report and 2006 Budget report separately.

Figures are cumulative. This table shows marginal deduction rates for heads of working households in receipt of income related benefits or tax credits, where at least one person works 16 hours or more a week, where the head of the household is not disabled, and where higher earnings would lead to reduced benefits or tax credits. They include the marginal effects of income tax and national insurance contributions, and the withdrawal of tax credits, housing benefit and council tax benefit.

This analysis does not take into account the way in which tax credits respond to rises in income. Since April 2006, tax credits only respond to rises in income in the current year of more than £25,000, disregarding the first £25,000 of any rise. This means that recipients will not see their tax credits reduced as soon as their income rises, so reducing the effective marginal deduction in any one year.

As a result of the Government's reforms, around 500,000 fewer low-income households now face marginal deduction rates in excess of 70 per cent. than did so in April 1998. The increase in the number of households facing marginal deduction rates of between

40 and 70 per cent. is primarily due to the introduction of tax credits, and more recently the extension of support to workers aged 25 or over without children.

Teenage Pregnancies

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many teenage pregnancies there have been in each year since 2000, broken down by ethnic group. [71225]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 22 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many teenage pregnancies there were in each year since 2000, broken down by ethnic group. (71225)

Available figures are estimates of the number of pregnancies that resulted in a live birth, stillbirth or termination.

Number of teenage conceptions in England and Wales from 2000 to 2004 (the most recent year for which figures are available), are shown in the table. Figures for 2004 are provisional. Information by ethnic group is not available.

Teenage conceptions, England and Wales, 2000-2004

	Number
2000	41,349
2001	40,990
2002	41,951
2003	42,162
2004[1]	42,150

Source:
Provisional.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Valuation Office Agency's council tax Automated Valuation Model uses *(a)* a location factor or factors in its multiple regression analysis and *(b)* geo-spatial statistical analysis in computer assisted mass appraisal. [70674]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The Valuation Office Agency's (VGA) automated valuation model (AVM) uses *(a)* location factors in its multiple regression analysis and *(b)* an element of geo-spatial statistical analysis. The extent of the latter is limited to the use of National Land and Property Gazeteer (NLPG) "X-Y Co-ordinates" for precise location information. No other form of geo-spatial statistical analysis is used.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what valuation software the Valuation Office Agency purchased from Capgemini in 2005 for the council tax revaluation in England. [70676]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) has worked with Capgemini, its IT supplier through the ASPIRE contract, to procure (a) a server version of OASIS, the automated valuation modelling software developed by Cole Layer Trumble and to develop (b) workflow software to support automated valuation activity in the VGA's network offices in England.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation by Diane Leggo to the management board of the Valuation Office Agency at its meeting of 26 May 2005 on council tax revaluation in England. [70678]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The presentation by Diane Leggo to the management board of the Valuation Office Agency on 26 May 2005 includes material prepared as an input to the formulation of Government policy and cannot be made available. The council tax revaluation has since been postponed.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the conferences to be held in other countries which Valuation Office Agency staff will attend in the next 12 months. [70679]

Dawn Primarolo: The Valuation Office Agency is asked to share its expertise in the field of property valuation by sending delegates to conferences in the UK and overseas. All travel is undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the civil service code.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what geographical information system data the Valuation Office Agency's council tax automated valuation model uses. [70698]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) does not have a geographical information system (GIS). The only geographical information used within the VGA's automated valuation model (AVM) is the National Land and Property Gazeteer (NLPG) "X-Y Co-ordinate" information, which indicates the precise location of a dwelling.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what domestic dwelling data the Valuation Office Agency has *(a)* purchased and *(b)* intends to purchase from Rightmove; and what the value of the contract is. [70699]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA), through its parent department, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, has a contract with Rightmove.co.uk plc (Rightmove) for a term of 34 months from 1 June 2005, with an option to extend for a further 12 months. The contract gives the VOA rights to use property records within Rightmove's current and historical database of dwellings that are, or have been, on the property market for sale.

Any future intentions, and the value of the contract, cannot be released into the public domain, as this would prejudice the commercial interests of both the VOA and Rightmove.co.uk plc.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether the Valuation Office Agency's council tax automated valuation model *(a)* uses and *(b)* holds data (i) from the Index of Multiple Deprivation and

(ii) on the number of criminal offences committed in an area; [70700]

(2) whether the Valuation Office Agency's council tax automated valuation model *(a)* uses and *(b)* holds local authority ward boundaries data. [70701]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The Valuation Office Agency's (VGA's) automated valuation model (AVM) neither *(a)* uses nor *(b)* holds local authority ward boundary data.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what research the Valuation Office Agency has commissioned in the last five years on the use of geographic information systems for mass appraisal of residential property. [70688]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister commissioned, in 2003, the development of a generalised land use database (GLUD), which identifies the location of nine land use types, including residential. Further details of this ongoing work can be found on the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) website under Research and Statistics, Planning Research and Statistics, Planning Statistics, Generalised Land Use Database (*URL*: http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1146084).

In addition to GLUD, DCLG have explored, and continue to explore, the suitability of a range of geographic information, including commercial products, new build intelligence from Ordnance Survey and the collation of local authority planning information to improve assessments of residential development.

The Valuation Office Agency has commissioned no research on the use of geographic information systems for mass appraisal of residential property in the last five years.

Office for Government Commerce

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what guidance the Office for Government Commerce issues to local authorities on contract compliance. [70716]

Mr. Woolas: I have asked to reply.

Section 17 of the Local Government Act 1988 prevents authorities from introducing "non-commercial" considerations, such as the political affiliations of contractors, into the procurement process.

There is a range of advice and guidance on good procurement which local authorities can draw on. Sources include the Office of Government Commerce (OGC), the Public Private, Partnership Programme (the 4ps) and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA). Specific guidance on local government procurement includes the joint ODPM/Local Government Association 'National Procurement Strategy for Local Government'. This makes clear that council requirements can also include social, environmental and other strategic objectives that are relevant to the subject of the contract.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Agricultural Trade Liberalisation

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has made to the European Commissioner for Trade about his recent comments on agricultural trade liberalisation; and what assessment he has made of the possible effect those comments will have on the World Trade Organisation trade talks. [69929]

Mr. McCartney: I have not had the opportunity to make representations to the European Commissioner for Trade since my appointment as Minister for Trade, or to discuss his recent comments on the Doha Development Agenda negotiations. However, my predecessors in this post had regular contact with the Commissioner for Trade on a wide range of issues.

The UK remains strongly committed to ensuring an *ambitious and pro-development outcome* to the Doha Round that provides real benefits to developing countries and an overall stimulus to world trade, in line with the mandate agreed in 2001. In agriculture, this means agreeing to significant reductions in trade-distorting domestic support, the elimination of export subsidies, and significant liberalisation of trade. We have made clear our view that achieving this requires movement from all the main parties, across the whole breadth of the negotiations—including, but not limited to, agriculture. We will continue to press all key parties, in the EU and beyond to show sufficient flexibility in all areas of the DDA negotiations to secure a successful outcome.

Autism

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research projects into autism are funded by the Medical Research Council. [69402]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Details of research on autism currently funded by the Medical Research Council is provided in the following table:

University/institute	*Project title*
Cambridge University	An investigation of the mechanisms underlying the deficits in contextual processing in autism
Institute of Psychiatry, London	Local-global processing and cognitive style in autism and normal development: cognitive and brain bases
Institute of Psychiatry, London	A morphometric study of the neuropathology of autism
Birkbeck College	Functional brain development in human infants: perceiving the social and physical world
University College London	Autism and social cognition

University/institute	Project title
University of Oxford	Vocal and non-vocal communication in autism
Institute of Child Health, London	Characterising the cognitive phenotype of autism spectrum disorders
Institute of Psychiatry, London	Brain anatomy in autism; a multi-centre study
University of Bristol	The aetiology of traits contributing to autism and the autistic spectrum disorders
City University, London	Integration of complex spatial and temporal elements of episodic memory in adults with Asperger's syndrome
Manchester University	Pre-school autism communication trial (PACT)
Institute of Psychiatry	A population-based twin-study of autism spectrum disorders

Azores (State Aid)

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations the Government have made to the European Court of Justice in the Azores state aid case brought by the Commission against Portugal. [71462]

Mr. McCartney: The United Kingdom has made written and oral representations in support of Portugal who instigated this case. We intervened in order to protect the constitutional arrangements for tax varying powers in the Devolved Administrations. We await the Court's judgment in this matter.

Bank Holidays

Mark Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Twickenham of 26 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1120W, on bank holidays, when the planned consultation will begin. [72387]

Jim Fitzpatrick: We hope to launch an initial consultation on making paid leave for bank holidays additional to the annual leave entitlement, pro-rata for part timers, in the near future.

British Gas

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much natural gas was produced by the British Gas Corporation in each year of its existence. [65836]

Malcolm Wicks: The British Gas Corporation (BGC) existed from 1973 to 1986. During this period BGC had various gas production interests, as an operator or through an interest in production licences in the Rough, Morecambe South and Indefatigable fields; the extent of the interests varied between the different fields and through time. Full details are not readily available from the Department of Energy 'Brown Books' but the total production from these fields was:

	Production (million cubic metres			
	Rough	Morecambe South	Indefatigable	Total
1973	—	—	4,557	4,557
1974	—	—	5,545	5,545
1975	10	—	6,249	6,259
1976	512	—	6,355	6,867
1977	1,063	—	6,779	7,842
1978	931	—	6,450	7,381
1979	1,005	—	6,006	7,011
1980	467	—	6,878	7,345
1981	99	—	5,613	5,712
1982	101	—	5,720	5,821
1983	27	—	4,700	4,727
1984	55	—	5,590	5,645
1985	92	90	5,323	5,505
1986	7	604	6,186	6,797

Business Start-ups

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures he plans to take to encourage business start-ups in the north east region. [71093]

Margaret Hodge: The stimulation of business start-up activity involves complex and long-term issues, which need to be tackled through the coordinated efforts of a range of public, private and community sector organisations.

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) supports, both centrally and through agencies such as the Small Business Service and Regional Development Agency ONE NorthEast, a range of initiatives which are achieving increases in the numbers of entrepreneurs across all sectors of the community in the north east of England.

ONE NorthEast has produced the North East of England Enterprise Strategy in association with regional public and private sector partners. The strategy draws together the priorities for encouraging and developing existing and potential entrepreneurial talent across all sectors of the community, and outlines the actions, timescales and responsibilities for their delivery.

Recognising the importance of high-quality business support in enabling entrepreneurship, the DTI is leading on the restructuring and simplification of business support across Government, with the aim of reducing the number of schemes from some 3,000 to around 100. Regionally, ONE NorthEast is working with regional partners to create a single regional business support network that is easy to access and easy to use.

A number of specific initiatives in the region are also contributing to the encouragement of increased business start-up activity and promotion of opportunities within under-represented groups, including:

£26.4 million to be shared by Easington, Derwentside, Wear Valley, Sedgefield and South Tyneside under the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI);

Some £2 million Phoenix Fund support for four Community Development Finance Institutions in the region to provide finance and support to enterprises and entrepreneurs in under-represented and disadvantaged groups;

Development of a North East Women's Enterprise Action Plan by ONE NorthEast;

Women into the Network, backed by ONE NorthEast, has already achieved success in encouraging an enhanced culture of entrepreneurship in the region by assisting the integration of aspiring women entrepreneurs into existing business networks;

The establishment of a pilot Women's Enterprise Unit to assess measures needed to accelerate rates of women's entrepreneurship in the north east of England;

The ASPIRE initiative, backed by the public and private sectors, is working to raise aspirations among young people, including the encouragement of self-employment.

Car Insurance

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will ask the Office of Fair Trading to investigate the car insurance market, with particular reference to personal injury cover; and if he will make a statement. [71688]

Mr. McCartney: It is for the Office of Fair Trading, as the UK's independent competition authority, to decide whether to investigate competition in particular markets. If anyone has any evidence of anti-competitive behaviour or market failure in the provision of car insurance they should inform the OFT directly.

Concerns about regulation of the insurance market—including car insurance—should be directed to the Financial Services Authority.

China

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with the European Union on the granting of Market Economy Status to China; and if he will make a statement. [71559]

Mr. McCartney *[holding answer 17 May 2006]*: The Government believes that China should be granted Market Economy Status (MES) as soon as possible and made this point to the European Commission and the member states in the run-up to the EU/China summit on 5 September 2005.

There was no consensus within the EU in favour of granting MES to China. The summit concluded with an agreement between the EU and China to launch a high-level political dialogue on MES, among other issues, with a view to achieving positive progress.

Crematoriums

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what schemes his Department is promoting to encourage crematoriums to increase their energy efficiency by recycling energy and heat generated. [69980]

Ian Pearson: I have been asked to reply.

There is no scheme specific to crematoriums, however Government provide funding to the Carbon Trust, a private company that takes the lead on business and public sector energy efficiency and encourages the development of a low carbon sector in the UK. It also provides advice to businesses on how to become more energy efficient.

Export Credits Guarantee Department Staff

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff were employed by the Export Credits Guarantee Department in each of the last eight years. [69864]

Mr. McCartney: The figures are:

Financial year	*Staff*
1998-99	371
1999-2000	361
2000-01	380
2001-02	373
2002-03	379
2003-04	366
2004-05	327
2005-06	[1]304

[1] Accounts not yet published; subject to audit

Source:
Export Credits Guarantee Department's Annual Review and Resource Accounts

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for how many companies the Export Credits Guarantee Department has provided guarantees in the last eight years; and what the total value was of those guarantees. [69865]

Mr. McCartney: Between 1 April 1998 and 31 March 2006, the Export Credits Guarantee Department provided guarantees and insurance for £28.1 billion of business to 294 UK exporters and investors.

Energy Consents

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects the tripartite discussions on energy consents between the Wales Office, the National Assembly for Wales and his Department to be concluded. [71355]

Malcolm Wicks: The issues that the tripartite working group have been exploring are very complex and their discussions will need to be informed by the outcome of the Energy Review, which is due to report

in the summer. I am therefore not in a position to give a precise date at this time, but I would expect the discussions to be concluded as soon as possible following completion of the Energy Review.

Decommissioning

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost was of decommissioning *(a)* nuclear, *(b)* oil, *(c)* gas, *(d)* coal and *(e)* renewables generating installations and platforms in each of the past 30 years; and what projections have been made for the next 10 years. [68027]

Malcolm Wicks: Decommissioning costs are a commercial matter for the companies concerned. However, figures do exist for the following:

Nuclear Generators

British Nuclear Fuels' annual report and accounts state that decommissioning expenditure charged against provisions since financial year 1993-94 was as follows:

	Decommissioning expenditure (£ million)
2005	256
2004	177
2003	145
2002	92
2001	82
2000	76
1999	80
1998	10
1997	1
1996	1
1995	1
1994	7

Prior to this date no decommissioning expenditure charged against provisions was disclosed in BNFL's annual report and accounts.

Between 1994-95 and 2000-01 the cost of decommissioning UKAEA's nuclear power plants amounted to £119.3 million.

Over the period 2006-07 to 2015-16 inclusive, total decommissioning costs of Generating Magnox Stations are:

Generating Magnox station	*Decommissioning costs (£ million)*
Berkeley	149.8
Bradwell	362.2
Calder Hall	182.7
Chapelcross	325.8
Dungeness A	355.4
Hinkley Point A	388.6
Hunterston A	359.1
Oldbury	371.2
Sizewell A	309.2
Trawsfynydd	227.6
Wylfa	253.6
Total	3,285.1

Oil and Gas Installations (including pipelines and wells)

The DTI-UKOOA Activity Survey conducted in autumn 2005 indicates gross (pre-tax) annual spend on decommissioning costs related to offshore oil and gas production activities as follows. All figures are in constant 2005 prices.

	Gross pre-tax annual spend (£ billion)
2016	0.5
2015	0.7
2014	0.9
2013	0.4
2012	0.4
2011	0.4
2010	0.4
2009	0.2
2008	0.2
2007	0.2
2006	0.1
2005	0.1
2004	0.1
2003	0.1

The actual extent of decommissioning costs and the timing of decommissioning of individual fields is inherently uncertain and these figures can at best be only broadly indicative.

Renewables Generators

For offshore renewables I understand that no decommissioning of major, commercial-scale installations is expected in the next 10 years, so costs would be limited to any decommissioning of small-scale demonstration devices that takes place.

For onshore wind farms, we do include for decommissioning in our consents. This currently works out at between £3,500 and £5,000 per turbine depending on the status of the land.

Energy Security of Supply

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the reasons were for the delays in the publication of the sixth report of the Energy Security of Supply Working Group; and if he will make a statement. [69881]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 11 May 2006]*: The sixth report of the Joint Energy Security of Supply (JESS) working group was published on 16 May. Much of the information has been compiled using data already in the public domain. This includes National Grid's Ten Year Statement on gas published in December 2005 and Seven Year Statement on electricity which was updated in October 2005, information published on the Department's website, and company announcements about planned new infrastructure projects. There have also been several opportunities to update Parliament on the security of energy supply since last year's Secretary of State's report on security of gas and electricity supply. The latest JESS report pulls all this information together.

EU/ASEAN/NAFTA Trade

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the level of inter-member trade within the *(a)* EU, *(b)* Association of South East Asian Nations and *(c)* North American Free Trade Agreement. [69936]

Mr. McCartney: The information is as follows.

(a) Intra EU25 trade in goods in 2004 was $2,502.7 billion USD. For comparison, in 1999 intra EU25 trade was $1,600.9 billion USD (Source: Eurostat External Trade).

(b) Intra ASEAN trade in goods in 2004 was $123.7 billion USD. In 1999 it was $74.4 billion USD (Source: Association of Southeast Asian Nations). Please note these figures refer to the ASEAN 10 which includes Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

(c) Intra NAFTA trade in goods in 2004 was $739.2 billion USD. In 1999 it was $579.9 billion USD.

Fuel Prices

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the average price of a gallon of heating fuel was in each country in the UK in March 2006. [71321]

Malcolm Wicks: The calculated March 2006 heating oil prices are:

Country	*£/gallon*
Northern Ireland	1.59
Scotland	1.57
Wales	1.63
England	1.63

Gas Pipeline

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of gas transported through the proposed LNG gas pipeline from Felindr to Tirley will be used in Wales. [66890]

Malcolm Wicks: This is a commercial matter for the companies concerned.

International Arms Trade Treaty

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what involvement he has had in the Government strategy to make progress on the international arms trade treaty. [71497]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave him on 4 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1747W.

Miners' Compensation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* vibration white finger and *(b)* chronic obstructive pulmonary disease claims he expects to be settled in (i) 2006 and (ii) each of the following three years. [69782]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of claims we expect to settle in each year from 2006 onward is as follows:

	Vibration white finger	*Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease*
2006	22,500	135,932
2007	16,000	81,650
2008	3,500	43,988
2009	[1]—	10,912

[1] All VWF claims are expected to have been settled before the end of 2008.

This is our projection based on current plans which may be subject to change.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the *(a)* legal and *(b)* other costs incurred since 1999 in defending claims for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease for surface workers. [69798]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department estimates that approximately £160,000 has been spent on legal costs and £150,000 on other costs in relation to claims for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and surface workers.

Mr. Touhig: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many solicitors' firms have been investigated by his Department in connection with fees charged to ex-miners under the compensation scheme in *(a)* 2004, *(b)* 2005 and *(c)* 2006. [70886]

Malcolm Wicks: Investigations into the professional conduct of solicitors is a matter for the Law Society. The Department did contact all solicitors involved in the schemes in 2003 to encourage them to refund any fees taken from claimants' compensation payments and many have done so. The Law Society also wrote earlier this year urging solicitors who have not already done so to return to all clients any additional charges made in these cases, and is also investigating some solicitors involved in the schemes.

Mr. Touhig: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what average award has been paid in Islwyn under the Government's compensation scheme for *(a)* coal mining-related respiratory disease and *(b)* vibration white finger. [70887]

Malcolm Wicks: The average compensation figure paid in Islwyn for respiratory disease is £7,134 and for vibration white finger is £8,961.

Mr. Touhig: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with Capita about the way they handle witness statements supporting vibration white finger Group 3 claims. [70888]

Malcolm Wicks: Witness statements are an important and essential part of the verification of Group 3 claims, which Capita consider before making a decision on liability. Capita will seek to arrange a telephone interview with the witness as a means of

clarification or to discuss any apparent inconsistencies in the statements made by the claimant and his witness. These interviews are recorded for quality monitoring purposes and claimants' solicitors receive a copy of the interview if so requested. DTI Officials continue to review progress with Capita to ensure they are carried out professionally.

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects alterations to the Dust Calculation Model allowing the full accession of UK Coal plc to the Claims Handling Agreement in respect of coal health compensation to be completed; and if he will make a statement. [71476]

Malcolm Wicks: The DTI and UK Coal have reached agreement on how the Dust Calculation Model should be implemented with regard to claims which have shared liability and offers which will discharge British Coal's liability are due to commence from early July.

Brian Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and *(b)* vibration white finger claims have been submitted from Tamworth constituency, broken down by district electoral ward. [71226]

Malcolm Wicks: Although I cannot provide statistics by electoral ward, I have broken down the claims submitted from Tamworth constituents by postcode [1]. The figures are as follows:

Postcode	*Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease*	*Vibration White Finger*
B77	1,020	289
B78	1,155	396
B79	571	141
WS14	33	5
Total	2,781	831

[1] The postcodes listed include areas beyond the Tamworth constituency boundary.

The figures for Tamworth constituency are 1,700 chronic obstructive pulmonary disease claims and 437 vibration white finger claims submitted.

Miners' Pensions

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many deferred pensioners there are in the mineworkers' pension schemes. [71053]

Malcolm Wicks: As of 31 March 2006 the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme had 99,423 deferred members.

Mini-Motorcycles

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he takes to ensure that retailers act responsibly in the sale of mini-motorcycles. [62019]

Mr. Byrne: I have been asked to reply.

Police and local authorities have a number of powers available to deal with the misuse of these vehicles. The Anti-social Behaviour Unit has held Action Days to share best practice in tackling mini-moto nuisance and has provided guidance on the Together website. Local partnership approaches can usefully involve Trading Standards officials and liaison with retailers.

Northwest Regional Development Agency

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many jobs the Northwest Regional Development Agency has created in each *(a)* district and borough council area and *(b)* sector of the economy in Lancashire in the last five years. [70951]

Margaret Hodge: The number of jobs created by the Northwest Regional Development Agency in each district and borough council in Lancashire is as follows:

	Jobs created		
District	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
Blackburn with Darwen	129	420	333
Blackpool	15	20	29
Burnley	13	136	59
Hyndburn	19	3	3
Lancaster	100	35	11
Pendle	167	292	41
Preston	41	117	0
Ribble Valley	2	17	18
Rossendale	16	17	59
South Ribble	0	40	0
West Lancashire	10	29	87
Wyre	12	10	12
Grand total	523	1,135	652

The agency does not organise its output information by sector. Output figures by district/borough council are only available from 2003-04, as records were not kept prior to that.

Patents

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures are in place to ensure that parties seeking patents have gained access to genetic resources or associated knowledge in a legal way in the country of origin. [71455]

Jim Fitzpatrick: There are no measures under the laws of the UK, but a person violating the access laws of another country would be subject to any sanctions which may be provided for under those laws.

Post Offices

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many post offices have been closed in *(a)* Taunton constituency, *(b)* Somerset and *(c)* the United Kingdom in each year since 1997. [71639]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I understand from Post Office Ltd. that information on the post office branch network has historically only been held at a national level. More recently records have been maintained at a Government office region and at parliamentary constituency level and this level of data commenced from the end of 2001-02.

The number of post offices in the constituencies that cover Taunton constituency is as follows:

Number of post office branches

Taunton constituency	*Number*
2001-02	41
2002-03	41
2003-04	40
2004-05	36

Number of post office branches

Somerset constituency	*Number*
2001-02	218
2002-03	215
2003-04	205
2004-05	195

Information for the network of branches for the whole of the UK is available for each year since 1997 is as follows:

	Number of post office branches
1997	19,251
1998	19,008
1999	18,775
2000	18,393
2001	17,846
2002	17,584
2003	17,239
2004	15,961
2005	14,609

Power Lines

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* adults and *(b)* children were (i) killed and (ii) injured as a result of coming into contact with high voltage power lines in each of the last five years. [71580]

Malcolm Wicks: For reporting years 2000-01 to 2004-05 the figures are as follows:

Reporting year	*Adult fatalities*	*Adults injured*	*Child fatalities*	*Children injured*
2000-01	7	28	0	0
2001-02	3	42	0	3
2002-03	1	30	0	1
2003-04	2	24	0	2
2004-05	5	27	0	1
Total	18	151	0	7

Pre-payment Meters

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will take steps to ensure that customers using pre-payment meters are able to take advantage of price-capping offered by supply companies to other customers; and if he will make a statement. [72146]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government welcome the range of tariffs developed and offered by gas and electricity suppliers, but the setting and marketing of tariffs, including fixed-price or capped tariffs, are commercial decisions for the companies concerned.

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of his private office staff is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled. [69007]

Mr. Darling: My ministerial private offices comprise:

(a) 56 per cent. male staff

(b) 44 per cent. female staff

I am not in a position to provide a percentage for *(c)* disabled staff, since individuals could be identified and in any case, declaration of a disability is voluntary.

Regional Development Agencies

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* total budget and *(b)* administrative costs of the regional development agencies were in each region in each year since their creation; and what the projected costs are for 2006-07. [70573]

Margaret Hodge: The following tables show the regional development agencies' budgets and administration costs for the financial years 1999-2000 to 2005-06 and indicative budgets and estimated administration costs for 2006-07.

	1999-2000		*2000-01*		*2001-02*	
	Budget[1] (£ million)	*Administration (£000)*	*Budget (£ million)*	*Administration (£000)*	*Budget (£ million)*	*Administration (£000)*
Advantage West Midlands	103	7,421	113	8,352	141	8,793
East of England Development Agency	30	4,570	36	4,849	55	5,836
East Midlands Development Agency	41	6,941	67	7,377	86	7,488
London Development Agency	—	—	235	6,009	266	9,470
North West Development Agency	141	11,837	156	13,876	270	14,044
One North East	92	9,585	98	10,513	158	10,103

	1999-2000		2000 01		2001-02	
	Budget[1] (£ million)	Administration (£000)	Budget (£ million)	Administration (£000)	Budget (£ million)	Administration (£000)
South East England Development Agency	63	5,196	73	6,343	97	6,643
South West Development Agency	43	7,255	62	8,380	85	9,099
Yorkshire Forward	121	7,795	125	8,284	207	9,989

	2002-03		2003-04		2004-05	
	Budget (£ million)	Administration (£000)	Budget (£ million)	Administration (£000)	Budget (£ million)	Administration (£000)
Advantage West Midlands	204	13,862	240	17,300	217	18,500
East of England Development Agency	88	9,000	80	9,000	84	10,000
East Midlands Development Agency	101	10,200	117	12,000	119	13,668
London Development Agency	295	17,000	317	17,000	328	30,400
North West Development Agency	274	21,619	309	29,925	367	32,449
One North East	193	18,372	223	21,258	227	21,773
South East England Development Agency	112	14,303	136	16,395	110	16,868
South West Development Agency	103	14,242	99	16,044	113	15,944
Yorkshire Forward	211	16,608	244	17,482	288	17,351

	2005-05		2006-07	
	Budget (£ million)	Administration (£000)	Budget (£ million)	Administration (£000)
Advantage West Midlands	272	20,000	284	20,000
East of England Development Agency	129	11,200	134	10,900
East Midlands Development Agency	156	15,000	163	16,000
London Development Agency	373	29,500	391	[2] n/a
North West Development Agency	382	38,792	400	38,144
One North East	240	22,500	251	22,607
South East England Development Agency	157	18,000	163	17,900
South West Development Agency	153	19,773	159	21,222
Yorkshire Forward	295	19,510	310	19,290

[1] The expenditure figures are net of receipts that RDA's recycle
[2] The London Development Agencies Administration Budget is subject to the approval of their draft 2006-07 Corporate Plan by the Mayor

Renewable Energy

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what grants are available to domestic households to install micro generation renewable energy equipment. [70333]

Malcolm Wicks: Grants for the installation of microgeneration technologies are available to householders through the Low Carbon Buildings Programme (LCBP). This programme takes over from the Clear Skies and Major photovoltaics programmes, which finished in March 2006. The LCBP initially had £30 million to allocate—£1.5 million was used to ease the transition from the previous programmes and the remaining £28.5 million is dedicated to projects proposed by householders, communities and businesses. Further information can be found at www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk.

The Chancellor announced a further £50 million for the LCBP in the Budget. This additional funding will be used for projects in the public sector.

Reviews (Agencies/Bodies)

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which *(a)* non-departmental public bodies and *(b)* executive agencies for which he is responsible have been subject to a peer review in 2005-06; what the (i) purpose, (ii) terms of reference and (iii) outcome was of each review; and what reference to the outcome of the review has been made when making funding decisions for those organisations. [64002]

Mr. Darling: The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) had a peer review in 2005-06. Its purpose was to ensure that the EOC is fit for purpose and able to carry

out agreed objectives during the period up to October 2007 when it is due to be merged into the Commission for Equality and Human Rights.

The terms of reference of the review were as follows:

Ensuring that the EOC is deploying the resources at its disposal most effectively for its purpose and able to deliver agreed objectives and priorities in the period leading up to the creation of the CEHR in 2007.

The operation of the management agreement and the financial memorandum agreed between the DTI and the EOC in November 2004 and the need for any revisions to reflect fully the interests of the Minister for Women.

Assessing competing priorities in terms of organisational capacity.

The review has now been successfully completed and the EOC is pursuing a number of recommendations.

There were no other peer reviews of DTI sponsored bodies or agencies in 2005-06.

Severn Barrage

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the likely cost of a Severn barrage energy generation scheme. [71357]

Malcolm Wicks: Between 1978 and 1994 the Government supported the most comprehensive programme of research and development on tidal energy in the world at an overall cost in excess of £20 million. These studies considered schemes for tidal energy at a number of potential sites, the largest being in the Severn estuary.

The results of the Severn barrage study were reported in Energy Paper 57 (ISBN 0 11 412952 5). In an assessment of the Government Tidal Programme published in 1994 (ETSU R-82) the capital cost of the Severn scheme was estimated to be £11.2 billion.

The most recent study of the Severn scheme carried out by the Severn Tidal Power Group and published in 2003 (available at www.dti.gov.uk/files/file15363.pdf?pubpdfdload=02%2F644) estimated the cost to be in the range of £10.3 to £14 billion (2001 prices).

Sunday Trading

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations his Department has received from the lobby group Deregulate on further liberalisation of current Sunday trading laws. [71352]

Mr. McCartney: From 13 January to 14 April, we asked for views on all aspects of relaxing restrictions on Sunday shopping hours, saying that responses could be provided in confidence. Deregulate responded to our review, asking that their submission be kept confidential. We intend to publish a summary of all the views expressed on our website (www.dti.gov.uk/consumers/buying-selling/Sunday%20Shopping), within three months of the close of the consultation.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he has taken to ensure that employees understand their rights in relation to opting out of Sunday working. [72061]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Full information about the right of shop and betting workers to opt out of Sunday working is available in the employment section of the Directgov website (www.direct.gov.uk/Employment/Employees/WorkingHoursAndTimeOff/fs/en).

Employees who have questions about their employment rights can also call a free helpline to get advice run by ACAS 08457 474747.

Telephone Cold-calling

Jeremy Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department is taking to tackle telephone cold-calling from companies located outside the EU. [71631]

Margaret Hodge: The Department introduced the Telephone Preference Service (TPS) scheme in 1999, under the Telecommunications (Data Protection and Privacy) Regulations, which were updated by Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003. The TPS scheme provides protection to consumers from cold-calling if they have previously notified the caller that they do not wish to receive such calls or have been registered with the TPS for at least 28 days. Those making cold calls from within the UK or on behalf of UK companies from outside the European Union are legally required not to call a number that has registered on the TPS list. However, cold calls from non-UK companies marketing a service or product are not covered by the TSP scheme, as the companies and products have no link with the UK. The Information Commissioner has responsibility for the enforcement of the TPS scheme and considers complaints about breaches.

Trade Statistics

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the level of UK trade was with *(a)* European Monetary Union countries and *(b)* the rest of the world in each year since 1991. [69925]

Mr. McCartney: In response to part *(a)* the following table shows UK trade (exports and imports) in goods and services with economic monetary union countries since 1991.

UK trade in goods and services with the EU12

Country	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	£ million 1997
UK exports							
Austria	930	995	1,156	1,317	1,446	1,612	1,453
Belgium and Luxembourg	6,649	6,594	8,170	8,507	9,748	10,013	10,086
Finland	1,015	1,275	1,424	1,644	2,100	2,371	2,107
France	13,605	13,718	14,751	16,398	18,290	20,403	20,068
Germany	17,077	18,316	19,674	21,263	24,587	25,217	25,326
Greece	994	1,140	1,322	1,380	1,555	1,680	1,658
Ireland	6,074	6,808	7,552	8,685	9,750	10,879	11,646
Italy	7,232	7,497	7,537	8,416	9,567	9,941	10,247
Netherlands	9,215	9,972	9,804	11,490	14,444	15,914	16,738
Portugal	1,238	1,433	1,671	1,588	1,820	2,049	2,067
Spain	5,078	5,441	5,538	6,252	7,336	8,166	8,120
EU12 total	69,107	73,189	78,599	86,940	100,643	108,245	109,516

Country	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
UK exports							
Austria	1,529	1,549	1,532	1,601	1,655	1,646	1,481
Belgium and Luxembourg	10,362	11,476	12,676	12,146	13,073	14,172	13,774
Finland	1,961	2,002	2,414	2,459	2,246	2,325	2,300
France	20,583	21,552	23,869	24,978	24,332	24,411	24,250
Germany	25,719	25,907	29,226	30,367	28,969	27,783	28,465
Greece	1,718	1,929	2,044	1,879	1,918	1,991	2,061
Ireland	12,122	13,272	15,110	17,289	19,533	17,151	19,161
Italy	10,939	10,506	11,038	11,128	11,313	11,375	11,382
Netherlands	16,158	17,623	19,565	19,206	18,374	18,468	17,721
Portugal	2,165	2,275	2,079	2,025	2,009	1,951	2,149
Spain	8,920	9,576	10,513	10,534	11,004	11,683	11,763
EU12 total	112,176	117,667	130,066	133,612	134,426	132,956	134,507

Country	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	£ million 1997
UK imports							
Austria	1,191	1,234	1,328	1,405	1,306	1,530	1,736
Belgium and Luxembourg	6,027	6,312	7,488	7,867	9,201	10,216	10,628
Finland	1,595	1,744	2,009	2,423	2,651	2,883	2,729
France	13,434	14,988	16,748	18,732	20,401	21,128	22,738
Germany	20,197	21,570	22,942	25,251	29,693	31,546	29,049
Greece	1,148	1,241	1,247	1,438	1,470	1,313	1,341
Ireland	4,868	5,679	6,285	6,859	8,139	8,879	9,031
Italy	7,031	7,508	7,650	8,709	9,498	10,739	11,493
Netherlands	10,862	10,966	10,373	11,747	13,260	14,361	14,155
Portugal	1,465	1,671	1,779	1,852	2,123	2,443	2,591
Spain	4,556	5,121	5,892	6,814	7,889	9,283	9,638
EU12 total	72,374	78,034	83,741	93,097	105,631	114,321	115,129

Country	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
UK imports							
Austria	1,864	1,898	1,877	2,389	3,074	3,414	3,029
Belgium and Luxembourg	11,153	11,754	12,477	13,830	15,063	15,147	15,545
Finland	2,545	2,669	3,167	3,323	3,067	2,970	2,613
France	23,645	25,034	26,112	27,594	28,578	28,531	28,238
Germany	28,763	31,385	32,965	34,888	37,502	38,724	40,438
Greece	1,412	1,823	2,058	2,354	2,436	2,590	2,599
Ireland	9,545	10,816	12,469	14,420	15,404	12,381	12,700
Italy	12,054	11,965	12,327	12,815	13,759	14,812	15,527

Country	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Netherlands	15,446	16,121	18,315	18,427	19,364	20,128	21,091
Portugal	2,614	2,825	2,753	2,733	2,956	3,313	3,325
Spain	10,935	11,881	12,616	14,540	16,969	18,106	18,085
EU12 total	119,976	128,171	137,136	147,313	158,172	160,116	163,190

In respect of part *(b)* UK trade with the world since 1991; the figures are as follows:

UK trade in goods and services with world (in £ million)

	Total exports	Total imports
1991	135,940	142,061
1992	144,091	151,659
1993	163,640	170,125
1994	180,508	185,255
1995	203,509	207,051
1996	224,169	227,519
1997	232,887	232,031
1998	231,034	238,978
1999	239,494	254,911
2000	267,347	286,597
2001	273,116	300,061
2002	274,945	306,496
2003	282,231	313,213
2004	289,959	328,384

TV Licences

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether additional Government funding to support a continued role for the Post Office in supplying television licences was discussed with the BBC prior to the decision to end the Post Office's contract to do so. [71697]

Jim Fitzpatrick: No. Post Office Ltd (POL) failed to secure the renewal of the contract to supply television licences following a competitive tender exercise run by the BBC. The decision to award the contract to another network was a commercial one made by the BBC as the television licensing authority looking to the interests of licence fee payers and seeking to achieve value for money with its licence fee income.

UN Conference (New York)

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials from his Department will attend the United Nations conference in New York from 26 June to 6 July 2006 to review progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. [71496]

Malcolm Wicks: This is a matter for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, who will lead the UK delegation.

Union Recognition (Retail Industry)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* employers and *(b)* retailers on union recognition. [72059]

Jim Fitzpatrick: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State has not recently held any discussions on this topic with employers or retailers.

Weights and Measures

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what guidance the Government have issued to local authority trading standards services on the use of imperial weights and measures. [70632]

Mr. McCartney: DTI provided guidance in 2004 to LACORS, which coordinates advice to the regulatory services of local authorities, on the use of switchable metric/imperial weighing machines. There is no other relevant guidance from Government specifically directed to local authority trading standards services, but DTI has issued more general guidance to the public and private sectors on the use of metric units.

World Trade Organisation Talks

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he has taken to encourage a positive outcome from the current World Trade Organisation talks. [70073]

Mr. McCartney: The Government have been and remain fully committed to securing an ambitious, pro-development outcome to the Doha Development Agenda (DDA). In support of this objective, and to press the case for an agreement that facilitates world trade and meets the needs of developing nations, my predecessors were in regular contact with the EU Trade Commissioner, their counterparts in other EU member states, with the Director General of the WTO and with the Trade Ministers of other WTO member countries. They also remained in regular contact with business, NGOs and other interested parties in the UK and internationally, in order to help build a consensus of support for an ambitious outcome to the round. I expect to do the same.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 22 May 2006

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Coroners' Inquests

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what discussions took place between the Oxfordshire coroner and *(a)* her Department and *(b)* Lord Hutton before her decision to issue a death certificate for Dr. David Kelly on 18 August 2003. [70327]

Ms Harman: I did not issue a death certificate for Dr. David Kelly. It is the responsibility of the local registrar to issue death certificates or more properly certified copies of entries in the register of deaths.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the Secretary of State will answer the letter dated 10 April from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Ms Nusrat Bibi. [72168]

Ms Harman: The Secretary of State replied to the right hon. Member on 19 May. I apologise for the delay.

Court of Protection

Tim Farron: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people have died while their cases were being dealt with by the Court of Protection in each year since 1997 in *(a)* Westmorland and Lonsdale and *(b)* England and Wales. [72493]

Ms Harman: The number of people in England and Wales who have died while under the jurisdiction of the Court of Protection pursuant to the proceedings of the Mental Health Act 1983 from 1999 to 2006 are as follows:

	Number
1999	6,347
2000	5,692
2001	5,589
2002	5,055
2003	4,946
2004	4,778
2005	5,234
2006	1,911

The court only holds records for six years following the end of its involvement in the client's case and it is not therefore possible to provide reliable data prior to this period. Neither is it possible to provide this information for clients living in Westmorland and Lonsdale.

The court does not hold reliable information on the number of donors who have died while under its jurisdiction pursuant to the proceedings of the Enduring Power of Attorney Act 1985.

Court Service

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the recent performance of the Court Service in Cambridgeshire. [72093]

Ms Harman: The information is as follows:

Ineffective trials (PSA 1)

2005-06 Crown—14.7 per cent. Target 14 per cent.

2005-06 Mags—16.1 per cent. Target 16.5 per cent.

Timeliness (PSA 1)

2005-06 Crown—80.93 per cent. Target 78 per cent.

YTD (Dec) Mags—33 days from first listing to completion. No formal target.

Persistent Young Offenders (PSA 1)

2005-06 Area (Crown and Mags)—65 days. Target 71 days or less.

Payment rate (PSA 2)

2005-06 Mags—89 per cent. Target 81 per cent.

Confiscation Orders (PSA 2)

2005-06 Mags—Outstanding Balance rate—5 per cent. Target—less than 50 per cent.

2005-06 Orders closed—35 per cent. Target—greater than 25 per cent.

Family Public Law (PSA 4)

Percentage cases completed within 40 weeks

2005-06 Care Centre—53.1 per cent. Local target 59.4 per cent.

2005-06 Family Proceedings Court—56 per cent. Local target 52.8 per cent.

Family Private Law

2005-06 County—76 per cent. Target 70 per cent.

Adoptions

2005-06 County—70.6 per cent. Target 70 per cent.

County Court Small Claims

2005-06 88.7 per cent. Target 80.5 per cent.

County Court Fast Track

2005-06 82.1 per cent. Target 78 per cent.

County Court Multi Track

2005-06 78.7 per cent. Target 78 per cent.

Court Statistics

Dr. Vis: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many black and minority ethnic people were *(a)* sentenced and *(b)* remanded by each court in (i) 2003 and (ii) 2004. [68216]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have been asked to reply.

Information relating to the number of black and minority ethnic people sentenced and remanded for 2003 is available at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/s95race04.pdf. Data relating to 2004 is not yet available.

Courthouses

Bob Russell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer of 9 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 147W, if she will list *(a)* the locations of the new private finance initiative courthouses and *(b)* the companies who provided them. [72409]

Ms Harman: The 15 PFI courthouses built and the companies that provided them are as follows:

1. Hereford, Kidderminster, Worcester and Redditch[1] magistrates courts in 2001—Hereford and Worcester Courts Ltd. (equity held by Babcock & Brown Properties Ltd.)

2. Hull, Beverly and Bridlington magistrates courts in 2001—Modern Courts Humberside Ltd. (equity held by Mowlems plc and Innisfree)

3. Derby and Chesterfield magistrates courts in 2003—Derbyshire Courts Ltd. (equity held by Babcock & Brown Properties Ltd.)

4. Manchester magistrates court in 2004—UK Courts Services (Manchester) Ltd. (a consortium of Group 4 now GSL, Carillion and Societe Generale).

5. Exeter Combined courts in 2004—Enterprise Civil Buildings Ltd. (a consortium of HSBC Ltd., Alfred McAlpine Ltd. and Sodexho Ltd.)

6. Ipswich and Cambridge Crown courts in 2004—Modern Courts Holdings (East Anglia) Ltd. (equity held by Mowlems plc).

7. Sheffield Family Hearing Centre in 2004—Palecastle Ltd.

8. North Somerset (Worle) magistrates courthouse in April 2006—Services Support (Avon and Somerset) Ltd. (a consortium of Amey, Equion and Bank of Scotland).

[1] Redditch magistrates court was a refurbishment.

Departmental Legislation

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list those *(a)* Acts and *(b)* parts of Acts which received Royal Assent between 1976 and 2006 for which her Department has policy responsibility and which remain in force. [70086]

Bridget Prentice: The information requested for the period of time covered by the question can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Electoral Fraud

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many incidents of postal vote fraud were recorded in Coventry South on 4 May 2006. [71753]

Bridget Prentice: I am not aware of any such incidents. Any allegations of electoral fraud should be reported to the returning officer and the police, who will make the appropriate investigations into them.

European Parliamentary and Local Elections (Pilots) Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the operation of the European Parliamentary and Local Elections (Pilots) Act 2004; and what recent representations she has received about the operation of this Act. [71957]

Bridget Prentice: The European Parliamentary and Local Elections (Pilots) Act 2004 (EPLE(P) Act) provided for the piloting of all-postal voting in four electoral regions at the 2004 combined European and local elections. The Electoral Commission published evaluations of each region's pilot in August 2004. At the same time, they also published an overarching report "Delivering Democracy? The future of postal voting". All of the Commission's reports are available on its website: www.electoralcommission.org.uk.

The Government published its response to "Delivering Democracy?" in December 2004 (Cm 6436).

All-postal voting in general, including the operation of the EPLE(P) Act 2004, has been debated in both Houses as the Electoral Administration Bill has progressed through Parliament. Aside from this I have received no recent representations on the operation of the Act.

Financial Review

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many applications for financial review have been made in each year since 1990; how many cases the High Court agreed to hear in each year; and in how many cases it found against the Government. [68423]

Ms Harman: The number of applications for permission/leave to apply for judicial review are set out in the following table which also shows the number of applications in which permission/leave was granted in the relevant year. As to whether the cases were against the Government and the results of those cases, this information can be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Judicial review civil and criminal—Applications for permission

	Received	*Granted*
1990	2,129	902
1991	2,089	923
1992	2,439	1,123
1993	2,886	1,049
1994	3,208	1,260
1995	3,604	1,393
1996	3,901	1,257
1997	3,739	1,278
1998	4,539	1,020
1999	4,959	1,373
2000	4,247	1,464
2001	4,732	1,400
2002	5,377	1,124
2003	5,949	1,440

Judicial review civil and criminal—Applications for permission

	Received	Granted
2004	4,207	1,036
2005	5,381	744

Free Air Miles

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many free air miles have been accrued by senior civil servants in her Department on official business in each of the last three years; and how they were used. [70517]

Vera Baird: The Department can provide the information requested only at disproportionate cost.

Inquests (Armed Forces)

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many inquests into the deaths of members of the armed forces as a result of military duties in Iraq have been carried out by *(a)* the Oxfordshire coroner, *(b)* the Fairford coroner, *(c)* the Lyneham coroner and *(d)* other coroners since 2003. [72151]

Ms Harman: I understand that the number of inquests opened in relation to members of the armed forces who died as a result of military duties in Iraq since 2003 are as follows:

(a) Oxfordshire coroner: 86;

(b) Gloucestershire coroner (for Fairford): 0;

(c) Wiltshire and Swindon coroner (for Lyncham) 11; and

(d) other coroners: 2 (West London and Powys).

Concluded inquests as of 15 May 2006 are

(a) Oxfordshire coroner: 29

(b) Gloucestershire coroner (for Fairford) 0

(c) Wiltshire and Swindon Coroner (for Lyneham): 0

(d) Other coroners: 1 (Powys).

Northern Ireland Legal Services

Lady Hermon: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the strategy for merging the Northern Ireland Tribunal Service and the Northern Ireland Court Service; and when she expects the merger to be completed. [72561]

Bridget Prentice: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland announced on 21 March that the Northern Ireland Court Service will assume administrative responsibility for Northern Ireland departmental tribunals as part of a new Courts and Tribunals Service. A Tribunals Service planning group has been established and will enter into discussions with the relevant Northern Ireland sponsor departments to agree a timescale for the transfer of responsibility of the various tribunals through a staged process which is likely to take several years.

At the same time, the Court Service will be responsible for establishing any new tribunals which are required including the proposed Rating Valuation Tribunal for Northern Ireland.

Parliamentary Boundaries

Mr. Steen: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when she will lay the order transferring responsibility for parliamentary boundaries from the Boundary Commissions to the Electoral Commission; and if she will make a statement. [72327]

Bridget Prentice: Section 16 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 outlines the arrangements for the transfer of the functions of the Parliamentary Boundary Commissions to the Electoral Commission. The Government are still considering the timings for the transfer to take place. As the functions of the Electoral Commission are currently subject to a review Committee on Standards in Public Life, the Government will wish to take into account the findings of that review before it reaches any decisions in the timings of the transfers.

Party Funding

Lady Hermon: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list leaders of political parties represented at Westminster to whom the Lord Chancellor has written seeking views on elements of a reporting regime of loans received further to the Lord Chancellor's statement in the House of Lords on 20 March. [68781]

Bridget Prentice *[pursuant to the reply, 8 May 2006, Official Report, c. 124W]:* My previous answer provided a list of those to whom the Lord Chancellor had written on 20 March seeking views on elements of a reporting regime for loans. While the Lord Chancellor did write to Lord Rogan, I incorrectly referred to him as the Leader of the Ulster Unionist Party. The Leader of the Ulster Unionist Party is Sir Reg Empey.

Postal and Proxy Voting

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what representations she has received regarding *(a)* postal voting and *(b)* proxy voting in London following the local elections. [71844]

Bridget Prentice: In relation to the recent local elections in London, I have received two representations regarding postal voting and no representations regarding proxy voting. Following on from an oral parliamentary question to me on postal voting fraud from the hon. Member for Congleton (Ann Winterton) on 9 May, the hon. Member for Huntingdon (Mr. Djanogly) referred to postal voting allegations in the recent election in the London borough of Tower Hamlets. More recently, I have received a parliamentary question from the hon. Member for Ribble Valley (Mr. Evans), which also refers to the allegations in Tower Hamlets.

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what percentage of her private office staff are *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled. [69031]

Vera Baird: On 31 December 2005, there were 66 permanent members of staff in the Private Office Directorate of the Department for Constitutional Affairs. This figure includes the Permanent Secretary, Special Advisers and Crown Office staff but does not include temporary staff from agencies.

Of these 66 staff:

(a) 35 were male (53.03 per cent.);

(b) 31 were female (46.97 per cent.);

(c) Under the Disability Discrimination Act, departmental records of disabled staff are solely based on voluntary declaration of disability and not connected in any way to a formal register of disability.

In accordance with civil service policy, information concerning the disability status (or the ethnic origin) of individuals may not be disclosed where the number of staff in a particular category is less than five. This is to ensure that individuals cannot be identified.

Of the 66 staff in post in Private Office Directorate on the 31 December 2006, some staff had declared themselves as disabled, some as non-disabled and others had opted to remain undeclared in respect of whether or not they had a disability.

Promotion Boards

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many promotion boards have been held in her Department in each of the last five years. [70512]

Vera Baird: The Department for Constitutional Affairs does not operate a promotion board system. All posts are advertised and staff apply under our job specific selection procedures. This allows staff to apply for posts on promotion or level transfer. This system has operated in the DCA for over five years and we would incur disproportionate costs to provide figures on staff promoted under these procedures.

For posts within the senior civil service applicants who are invited to attend an interview for a senior civil service post attend an assessment centre prior to a panel interview.

Property Rights

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will bring forward proposals to amend current legislation to give a spouse an absolute right to an equal share with their husband or wife in property even where his or her name does not appear on the deeds. [72298]

Ms Harman: The Government have no plans to bring forward proposals to give a spouse an absolute equal right to property. The ownership of matrimonial property is most often an issue in divorce proceedings. The Matrimonial Causes Act 1973 governs the division of property on divorce and sets out a number of factors to be taken into account by the courts when considering that division. The prime consideration is the welfare of any children. Other factors include the contribution, both financial and other, that each spouse has made and the length of the marriage. The courts often make property adjustment orders as part of an assessment based on the future needs of the divorcing spouses and the needs of any children involved. Every marriage is different and circumstances vary so much that it would not be equitable in many cases to impose an automatic equal right.

Racial Abuse Complaints

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many complaints of racial abuse have been *(a)* investigated and *(b)* upheld in her Department in each of the last five years. [70514]

Vera Baird: The numbers of these types of complaints investigated by the Department over the last five financial years is less than five in each of those years. The breakdown by number is therefore not disclosed on grounds of confidentiality.

The Department has an equality and diversity grievance procedure in place to deal with such complaints and trained investigating officers are appointed to investigate the allegations. The equality and diversity grievance procedure is made available to staff in the employee manual and on the intranet.

Voter Registration

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what estimate the Electoral Commission has made of the level of voter registration for local elections in England in each year since it was created. [70657]

Peter Viggers: I have agreed to reply as the question relates to the work of the Electoral Commission.

The Commission informs me that it does not make estimates of the level of voter registration for the local elections in England. However, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) collects and publishes annually information on the number of people registered to vote in such local elections.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Accidents at Work

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people were involved in an accident at work in each of the last 20 years; and what percentage of the workforce this represented in each year. [72587]

Mrs. McGuire: The number or reported injuries to workers in Great Britain 1986-87 to 2004-05 is as follows:

	Number of injuries	*Percentage of workforce*
1986-87	181,832	[1]—
1987-88	182,390	[1]—
1988-89	186,327	[1]—
1989-90	189,290	[1]—
1990-91	184,543	0.72
1991-92	173,404	0.70
1992-93	161,675	0.67
1993-94	155,734	0.64
1994-95	160,844	0.66
1995-96	150,968	0.61
1996-97	159,175	0.62
1997-98	166,049	0.63
1998-99	162,450	0.61
1999-2000	165,648	0.59
2000-01	163,266	0.58
2001-02	159,763	0.56
2002-03	158,554	0.55
2003-04	164,339	0.56
2004-05[2]	153,160	0.52

[1] Employment data for workers not available for these years.
[2] Provisional.

Notes:
1. Data for 1986-87 to 1995-96 reported under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1985; data from 1996-97 reported under RIDDOR 1995. Injuries comprise fatal, major and over three-day injuries to workers.
2. The annual basis is the planning year from 1 April to 31 March.
3. RIDDOR statistics are those reported by employers and others to all enforcing authorities.
4. Estimates of work-related injuries have also been available from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) since 1994-95. Comparing LFS estimates with the injuries reported suggests that not all non-fatal accidents are reported, and that the level of reporting by employers has varied between 41 per cent. and 48 per cent. However, Health and Safety Executive (HSE) does know about all fatal injuries at work.

We are pleased to note that these figures reflect a steady downward trend in the percentage of the workforce injured while at work.

We continue to deliver the HSC's risk-based strategy to improve Great Britain's health and safety performance through a targeted programme of interventions that concentrates our resources on the highest areas of incidence and the poorest performers.

Action Teams

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the areas served by action teams. [69908]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 16 May 2006]:* The information is in the tables.

Jobcentre Plus action teams

Region/county	*District*	*Action team*
London	Central London	Islington
	City and East London	Hackney
	Lambeth, Southwark and Wandsworth	Lambeth
	North and North East London	Waltham Forest
	South and South East London	Greenwich
	South and South East London	Lewisham
South East	Kent	Thanet
North East	Northumbria and Gateshead	Newcastle[1]
	Northumbria and Gateshead	Wansbeck
	South Tyne, Sunderland and Durham	Chester le Street
	South Tyne, Sunderland and Durham	Easington
	South Tyne, Sunderland and Durham	South Tyneside
	South Tyne, Sunderland and Durham	Sunderland
	South Tyne, Sunderland and Durham	Wear Valley
	Tees Valley	Hartlepool
	Tees Valley	Stockton
North West	East Lancashire	Blackburn with Darwen
	Greater Mersey	Halton
	Greater Mersey	Knowsley
	Greater Manchester Central	Manchester Central
	Greater Manchester Central	Manchester North
	Greater Manchester Central	Manchester South
	Greater Manchester Central	Salford
	Liverpool and Wirral	St. Helens
	Liverpool and Wirral	Wirral
	Cumbria	Barrow in Furness
Scotland	Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway	East Ayrshire
	Forth Valley, Fife and Tayside	Dundee
	Highlars, Islands, Clydesd Grampian	Highlands and Islands
	Highlars, Islands, Clydesd Grampian	West Dunbartonshire
	Lanarkshire and East Dunbarton	North Lanarkshire
South West	Devon and Cornwall	Cornwall
Wales	Bridgend and Eastern Valleys	Bridgend[1]
	Bridgend and Eastern Valleys	Rhondda Cynon Taff
	South East Wales, Cardiff and Vale	Torfaen[1]
	Swansea and Eastern Valleys	Swansea[1]
	Swansea and West Wales	Carmarthen[1]
	Swansea and West Wales	Ceredigion[1]
	Swansea and West Wales	Neath Port Talbot
	Swansea and West Wales	Pembrokeshire
West Midlands	Black Country	Wolverhampton
Yorkshire and Humberside	South Yorkshire	Barnsley and Rotherham
	North and East Yorkshire	Hull
	South Yorkshire	Sheffield

[1] Teams that are part of Wales Objective One Action Team.
Source:
Jobcentre Plus Products Division.

Private sector led action teams

Region/county	*District*	*Action team*
London	Brent, Harrow, Hillingdon and West London	Brent
	North and North East London	Haringey
	City and East London	Newham
	Lambeth, Southwark and Wandsworth	Southwark
	City and East London	Tower Hamlets
South East	Surrey and Sussex	Brighton and Hove
North East	Tees Valley	Middlesbrough
	Tees Valley	Redcar and Cleveland
North West	Liverpool and Wirral	Liverpool Central
	Liverpool and Wirral	Liverpool North
	Liverpool and Wirral	Liverpool South
	Greater Mersey	Sefton
Scotland	Glasgow	Glasgow Central and East
	Glasgow	Glasgow North
	Glasgow	Glasgow South
	Glasgow	Glasgow West
South West	Devon and Cornwall	Plymouth
Wales	Bridgend and Eastern Valleys	Blaenau Gwent
	Bridgend and Eastern Valleys	Caerphilly
	Bridgend and Eastern Valleys	Merthyr Tydfil
	North West Wales and Wrexham	North West Wales
West Midlands	Birmingham and Solihull	Birmingham North
	Birmingham and Solihull	Birmingham South
Yorkshire and Humberside	South Yorkshire	Doncaster

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Products Division.

Asbestos-related Deaths

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have died from asbestos-related conditions in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [69687]

Mrs. McGuire: The number of deaths from mesothelioma and asbestosis combined in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years for which data are available is given in the following table:

	1994	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*[1]	*2003*[1]
England	1,119	1,154	1,194	1,236	1,383	1,462	1,482	1,700	1,715	1,729
Scotland	129	158	144	138	166	163	151	166	182	179
Wales	51	53	53	57	52	51	70	77	78	76
Northern Ireland	34	39	38	43	48	53	45	66	54	57

[1] Provisional

Sources:
Health & Safety Executive British mesothelioma and asbestosis registers, Health & Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) and Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)

The number of asbestos-related lung cancer deaths cannot be directly enumerated, since asbestos-related lung cancers are clinically indistinguishable from lung cancers due to other causes. Current evidence suggests that the number of asbestos-related lung cancer deaths is similar to the number of deaths due to mesothelioma. Therefore, since mesothelioma deaths account for the vast majority in the table, the total number of deaths due to asbestos is approximately double those given in the table.

Benefit/Allowance Claim Forms

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department spent, excluding staff costs, on administering *(a)* disability living allowance, *(b)* attendance allowance, *(c)* carers' allowance and *(d)* incapacity benefit claim forms in the latest period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [72528]

Mrs. McGuire: Information is not available in the format requested. The Department now accounts for its administration and benefit expenditure by Strategic Objective, as set out in its public service agreements (PSA), and by individual Requests for Resources (RfRs), as set out in the Departmental estimates and accounts.

Benefits

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 1 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 795W, on benefits, what the reasons are for the variations between the budgeted expenditure for council tax benefit in the answer and the outturn figures for expenditure on council tax benefit set out in table 8 of the pre-Budget report 2005. [66056]

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Na h-Eileanan an Iar (Mr. MacNeil), 1 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 796W, on benefits, for what

reasons the budgeted expenditure for council tax benefit varies from the outturn figures for expenditure on council tax benefit set out in table 8 of the pre-Budget report 2005. [70388]

Mr. Plaskitt: The budgeted amounts given in my reply of 1 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 795W, are derived from departmental reports and reflect the provision made for expenditure in the relevant years. The figures in the outturn expenditure tables, which are consistent with pre-Budget reports, provide details of adjusted expenditure. The two sets of figures are not directly comparable.

Cold Weather Payments

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how the monitoring of cold weather temperatures for cold weather payments is carried out in each English region. [72145]

Mr. Plaskitt: Under the current cold weather payment scheme every residential postcode is linked to one of 74 weather stations, 44 of which cover England. Cold weather payments are made to all eligible customers when the average daily temperature is recorded as, or forecast to be, zero degrees Celsius or below over seven consecutive days at the weather station linked to their postcode.

Correspondence

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will take steps to ensure that the hon. Member for Walsall, North is sent a reply to his letter of 20 April 2006 to the manager of the Works and Pensions Office, St. Nicholas Street, Hereford, on bereavement benefit for a constituent. [72438]

Mr. Plaskitt: A reply to my hon. Friend's letter of 20 April was sent on 16 May.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the Disability Carers Service will reply to the hon. Member for Edinburgh, West's letter of 8 February 2006 with regard to his constituent, Mrs. Elaine Fordyce. [64411]

Mrs. McGuire: Terry Moran, Chief Executive of the Disability and Carers Service, replied to the hon. Member on 5 May 2006. The letter of 8 February appeared not to have been received by DCS.

Letter from Terry Moran, dated 5 May 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when you would receive a reply to your letter of 8 February 2006 about entitlement to Carer's Allowance (CA) for Mrs Elaine Fordyce of 10 Springfield Crescent, South Queensferry, West Lothian, EH30 9SB. I am sorry that your letter was not replied to but I do not appear to have received the original and only became aware you had written after you raised your concerns in the House of Commons.

The circumstances surrounding Mrs Fordyce's claim for CA have been carefully and sympathetically reconsidered but regrettably I can only confirm that her award cannot be backdated to 27 July 2004. We have considered all statutory means with which to backdate the claim but the rules governing this are clear and cannot be relaxed or varied no matter how compelling an individual's circumstances might be.

As you know we also considered whether a special payment should be made because Mrs Fordyce has lost out on entitlement to benefit as a direct result of a clear and unambiguous error made by the department. It is appreciated that without a record of the conversation held between Mrs Fordyce and the Benefit Enquiry Line it is difficult to confirm what was actually said. However, as explained, our advisors are fully conversant with the rules for claiming CA and deal with a great number of enquiries on this very issue on a daily basis. I am confident, therefore, that they would have provided the correct advice to Mrs Fordyce. In view of this a special payment could not be made.

Despite the fact that it is clearly stated on the DLA claim pack that if carer's want to claim CA they should do so straightaway, we were aware that some carers chose to wait for a decision on DLA before claiming. With new legislation, brought in from 10 April 2006, there is no longer the need to claim both benefits at the same time. As long as the claim for CA is made within three months of the decision being made on the claim to DLA the carer can request backdating to the start of the DLA award date. Although this will not help Mrs Fordyce it should ensure that this situation does not reoccur and affect other carers.

If Mrs Fordyce needs any further information or assistance in connection with her CA Nicola Moorby, the Team Leader responsible for her claim, will be pleased to help. She can be contacted by writing to The Carer's Allowance Unit, Palatine House, Lancaster Road, Preston, PR1 1ZW or by telephoning 01772 899915.

If Mrs Fordyce is unhappy with the way her complaint has been dealt with and wants to take the matter further, she can, within six months of the date at the top of this letter, contact the Independent Case Examiner (ICE) for the Disability and Carers Service who will consider complaints about our service, though not matters of law or Government policy. ICE can be contacted in writing at PO Box 155, Chester CH99 9SA, by telephone 0845 6060777 or by e-mail ice@ukgov.demon.co.uk.

I am sorry that this will be a disappointing reply for Mrs Fordyce but I can assure you that everything has been done to backdate her claim.

Departmental Bills (Amendments)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the occasions when an amendment has been moved by *(a)* a Labour backbencher, *(b)* an Opposition backbencher and *(c)* an Opposition front bench spokesman to a Bill sponsored by his Department that has been accepted by his Department during the current session; and if he will make a statement. [72108]

Mrs. McGuire: There has been no such occasion.

Graveyard Safety

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate the Health and Safety Executive has made of the number of headstones removed for safety reasons in the last 12 months. [70658]

Mrs. McGuire: Neither HSE nor the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) has central records of the number of headstones removed for safety reasons. The Government are committed to finding a way forward on this difficult issue, which strikes a balance between safety and the sensitivities of relatives. A cross-departmental group has started work on new guidance to help burial authorities with the problem.

Housing Benefit (War Veterans)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which local authorities in England and Wales allow a discretionary award for *(a)* veterans disabled during the second world war and *(b)* their widows in the assessment of housing benefit; and if he will make a statement. [70766]

Mr. Plaskitt: Currently, all local authorities in England and Wales allow discretionary disregards for war disablement pensioners and war widows' pensioners above the statutory £10.00 disregard. All these disregards apply regardless of when the disability occurred.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the Government target of reducing the overall number of incapacity benefit claimants by 1 million over the next decade takes account of the number of new claimants eligible in this time span. [72944]

Mrs. McGuire: Our aspiration of a million fewer people claiming incapacity benefits over a decade does indeed take account of the volume of people making a new claim for the benefit and the number of people leaving the benefit. That is why our ambitious proposals outlined in the Welfare Reform Green Paper encompass helping people to retain the jobs they have; get back into employment where they do not have one; and help them stay in work when they get a job.

Our measures are already working, reversing a trend which saw an additional 1.7 million more people claiming incapacity benefits between 1979 and 1997.

While it is difficult to model the precise impact of our proposed measures at this early stage, the Green Paper sets out our aspiration to see a million fewer claimants of incapacity benefits over the course of a decade through the combined efforts of the Government, employers, local authorities and health professionals.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many people received incapacity benefit in each year since 1991, broken down by the condition that enables them to claim this benefit; [68863]

(2) how many incapacity benefit recipients experienced *(a)* mental and *(b)* behavioural disorder in each year since 1992, broken down by the type of disorder. [68864]

Mrs. McGuire: Information about incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance claimants broken down by their primary diagnosis is available from 1995. The available information has been placed in the Library.

Jobcentre Plus

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many disability employment officers there are; where they are located; what criteria are used in deciding on their location; and whether account is taken of the number of disabled people in a particular area in determining locations. [69478]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 9 May 2006]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking how many disability employment officers there are; where they are located; what criteria are used in deciding on their location; and whether account is taken of the number of disabled people in a particular area in determining locations. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus currently has 570 Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs) nationally. A regional breakdown of where they are located is set out in the table.

Disability Employment Advisers

	Number
East Midlands	29
East of England	37
London	73
North East	45
North West	85
Scotland	49
South East	48
South West	46
Wales	41
West Midlands	62
Yorkshire and Humberside	55
Total	570

Local managers have the maximum flexibility in deciding where to locate DEAs. Their decisions take into account local factors, such as the number of disabled people, so that resources are deployed to best meet their customers' needs.

Not all disabled people need to see a DEA. Specialist incapacity benefit personal advisers (SIBPAs) also work with such customers. Jobcentre Plus currently has 595 SIBPAs nationally. A regional breakdown of where they are located is set out in the following table.

Specialist incapacity benefit personal advisers

	Number
East Midlands	56
East of England	74
London	25
North East	63
North West	61
Scotland	89
South East	16
South West	76
Wales	51
West Midlands	33
Yorkshire and Humberside	51
Total	595

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what training *(a)* disability employment advisers and *(b)* other Jobcentre Plus staff receive on awareness of the needs of (i) visually impaired people and (ii) other groups with impairments. [68317]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking what training (a) disability employment advisers and (b) other Jobcentre Plus staff receive on awareness of the needs of (i) visually impaired people and (ii) other groups with impairments. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

A "Working with customers with a Health Condition or Disability" learning module forms a core part of training for all customer facing staff. All advisers who specialise in interviewing people with a disability or health condition, including disability employment advisers (DEAs), receive specialist training which includes this module.

The module provides an overview of health conditions and disabilities and raises staff awareness of various impairments. It looks at attitudes towards disability and suggests the appropriate approach to take in supporting our customers with disabilities. The content of this module includes specific advice on how best to help those people with visual impairments.

Since April 2006, DEAs have had to complete the generic Adviser Skills training of around 22 days, followed by the specialist DEA training.

The approach for DEA training has moved away from focussing on any specific disabilities towards giving advisers the skills to help the individual to recognise their abilities and think through their barriers to work. DEAs also have access to Work Psychologists if they need additional help and advice to assist people with specific impairments.

I hope this is helpful.

Kvaerner Pension Fund

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the implication for pensions protection of the decision of the Pensions Regulator in the case of the Kvaerner Pension Fund; and if he will make a statement. [68396]

James Purnell: This is a matter for the Pensions Regulator who has investigated the circumstances of the case.

The action taken by the regulator is in line with its statutory objective to reduce the risk of situations arising that may lead to claims for compensation from the Pension Protection Fund.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the Pension Regulator's decision to give clearance to the Kvaerner Pension Fund ceasing to be a sponsoring employer. [71170]

James Purnell *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* No. This is a matter for the Pensions Regulator.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the Kvaerner Pension Fund is eligible to enter the Pension Protection Fund at a future date. [71171]

James Purnell: The criteria for eligibility to the Pension Protection Fund (PPF) are set out in the Pensions Act 2004 and accompanying regulations. The eligibility of the Kvaerner scheme at any particular time would depend on whether it met those requirements at that time.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he has been informed of an application by the Kvaerner Pension Fund to seek entry into the Pension Protection Fund; and if he will make a statement. [71172]

James Purnell *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* Scheme entry to a Pension Protection Fund (PPF) assessment period is triggered by the occurrence of a qualifying insolvency event. The PPF has received no approach regarding entry of the Kvaerner pension scheme to the Fund.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the application by the Kvaerner Pension Fund to the Pensions Regulator to cease its responsibilities as a sponsoring employer. [71374]

James Purnell: *[holding answer 16 May 2006]:* None. This is a matter for the Pensions Regulator.

Mental Illness

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have received benefits on the basis of mental illness in each of the last five years; and what the cost was. [69979]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available in the format requested. Information on the key benefits paid to people with a primary diagnosis within the mental and behavioural disorders or mental health or learning difficulties diagnoses groups is in the tables.

The estimates of benefit expenditure provided understates the true costs of benefit spending on those with the stated conditions, as they do not include any additional income-related benefits which may be in payment. The expenditure figures provided do not include any costs associated with administering the specified benefits.

Numbers receiving specified benefits with mental and behavioural disorders or mental health or learning difficulties, 2000-01 to 2004-05

Thousand

	Incapacity benefit	*Severe disablement allowance*	*Attendance allowance*	*Disability living allowance*
2000-01	752	144	132	466
2001-02	807	142	131	506
2002-03	871	129	124	551

Numbers receiving specified benefits with mental and behavioural disorders or mental health or learning difficulties, 2000-01 to 2004-05

Thousand

	Incapacity benefit	*Severe disablement allowance*	*Attendance allowance*	*Disability living allowance*
2003-04	917	125	124	598
2004-05	956	121	126	643

Notes:
1. Figures for incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance relate to cases that have been diagnosed as having a mental and behavioural disorder. Diagnoses are based on the International Classification of Diseases. For attendance allowance and disability living allowance cases relate to primary diagnosis of mental health problems or learning difficulties.
2. All figures are in thousands, rounded to the nearest thousand.
3. All figures relate to financial years and are based on averages of underlying quarterly data.
4. Figures for attendance allowance and disability living allowance are consistent with Table 1.1a of the published Quarterly Statistical Enquiry, which take account of late terminations and provide a comparable series over time. Figures are subject to a degree of sampling variation.
Source:
Information for incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance is based on DWP Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study. Information for attendance allowance and disability living allowance is based on DWP Quarterly Statistical Enquiry, 5 per cent. sample data.

Estimated total benefit expenditure, for specified benefits, for those with mental and behavioural disorders or mental health or learning difficulties, 2000-01 to 2004-05

£ million, 2006-07 prices

	Incapacity benefit	*Severe disablement allowance*	*Attendance allowance*	*Disability living allowance*
2000-01	1,909	455	370	1,329
2001-02	1,985	464	369	1,465
2002-03	2,070	415	351	1,562
2003-04	2,121	401	351	1,705
2004-05	2,155	390	356	1,833

Notes:
1. All figures are estimates of expenditure by main diagnosis.
2. Figures for incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance relate to cases that have been diagnosed as having a mental and behavioural disorder. Diagnoses are based on the International Classification of Diseases. For attendance allowance and disability living allowance cases relate to primary diagnosis of mental health problems or learning difficulties.
3. All figures are consistent with the historical outturn expenditure figures published in the DWP's Benefit Expenditure which can be found on the Department for Work and Pensions website at: http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure. asp.
4. All figures are in real terms, calculated using the latest GDP deflator.
5. All figures are rounded to the nearest million pounds.
Source:
Information for incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance is based on DWP Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study. Information for attendance allowance and disability living allowance is based on DWP Quarterly Statistical Enquiry, 5 per cent. sample data.

Ministerial Cars (Fuel Costs)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the fuel costs were for ministerial cars used by the Department in each of the last five years. [67006]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1226W, by my hon. Friend, the Minister of State for Transport (Dr. Ladyman).

Pathways to Work

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many individuals in *(a)* West Suffolk constituency and *(b)* the East of England are participating in the Pathways to Work programme. [72537]

Mrs. McGuire: Our successful Pathways to Work pilots have been acknowledged internationally as the best way of helping people on incapacity benefits back into work quickly. They have resulted in 21,400 Pathways job entries, including over 3,360 from voluntary customers.

West Suffolk constituency is currently not covered by the programme, but our Welfare Reform Green Paper, "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work", sets out our plans to roll out the programme across the whole country by 2008.

Pathways to Work pilots were rolled out in Essex, part of the East of England region, in April 2004. There have been 31,180 starts on the Pathways to Work programme in Essex.

Pension Age

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his estimate is of the cost savings from raising the state pension age to *(a)* 66 years by 2030 and *(b)* 67 years by 2040; and if he will make a statement. [70292]

James Purnell: If state pension age was raised from 65 to 66 in 2030 the estimated net savings for that year would be £5 billion. If state pension age increased from 65 to 67 in 2040 the estimated net savings for that year would be £11 billion. Figures are quoted in 2006-07 prices, rounded to the nearest £100 million, and are based on current policy.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the annual savings from raising the women's pension age from 60 to 65 years are in each year from 2010 to 2030; and if he will make a statement. [70293]

James Purnell: The information is in the table.

United Kingdom, 2006-07 prices

	Net savings in pensioner spending (£ billion)
2010	0.4
2011	1.4
2012	2.2
2013	3.2
2014	4.1
2015	5.1
2016	6.0
2017	7.0
2018	8.0
2019	9.0
2020	9.6
2021	9.9
2022	10.3
2023	10.6
2024	10,9
2025	11.2
2026	11.4
2027	11.5
2028	11.7
2029	11.8
2030	12.0

Notes:

1. All figures are given in 2006-07 prices and are based on current policy.
2. Figures are given in £billion, rounded to one decimal place.
3. The figures assume that an increase in the state retirement pension age for women would correspondingly increase the qualifying age for benefits such as pension credit, housing benefits and winter fuel payments. However, there would also be extra costs arising from working age benefits such as incapacity benefit, income support, jobseeker's allowance, bereavement benefits, and housing benefits. The net effect of these changes is shown in the table.
4. The figures cover expenditure on the bigger spending benefits only. Administrative costs, and any revenue effects, have not been considered.

Source:

The figures are based on DWP long-term projections of United Kingdom benefit spend consistent with the budget report 2006.

Pension Credit

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners have received telephone calls since September 2003 from *(a)* the Pension Service and *(b)* another agency for which his Department is responsible inviting them to explore the possibility that they may be eligible for pension credit, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [64519]

James Purnell: The information is not available in the format requested.

During September 2003 and March 2006, a total of 738,000 calls were made by the Pension Service inviting customers to apply for pension credit.

Note:

Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what elements of *(a)* service charges and *(b)* management fees payable by pensioners living in leasehold flats are excluded for pension credit purposes. [68321]

James Purnell: The elements of service charges and management fees payable by pensioners living in leasehold flats that are excluded for pension credit purposes are charges for:

day-to-day living expenses, including in particular the provision of meals, laundry, leisure items, cleaning of rooms and windows (except the cleaning of communal areas or the exterior windows where the claimant or any member of their household is unable to clean them) and transport;

the acquisition of household equipment and the use of such items where the items will become the property of the claimant under an agreement with the landlord;

the provision of an emergency alarm system;

the provision of nursing care or personal care (including assistance at meal times or with personal appearance or hygiene);

general counselling or any other support services;

any services not specified which are not connected with the provision of adequate accommodation; and

charges that are eligible to be met from the claimant's housing benefit.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many residents in each electoral ward in Bassetlaw receive pension credit. [69802]

James Purnell: The most recent period for which figures are available are in the following table.

Pensions credit: Individual beneficiaries for wards in Bassetlaw, November 2005

Ward name	*Individual beneficiaries*[1]
Beckingham	130
Blyth	120
Carlton	380
Clayworth	60
Everton	90
Harworth	525
Langold	185
Misterton	140
Rampton	75
Ranskill	125
Sturton	85
Sutton[2]	105
Welbeck[3]	165

Pensions credit: Individual beneficiaries for wards in Bassetlaw, November 2005

Ward name	*Individual beneficiaries*[1]
Worksop East	575
Worksop North	340
Workshop North East	360
Workshop North West	370
Worksop South	220
Worksop South East	730
Birklands	420
Meden	360
Bassetlaw total	5,440

[1] The number of individual beneficiaries includes both claimants and their partners.
[2] Welbeck Ward falls into both Bassetlaw and Mansfield parliamentary constituencies.
[3] Ward totals do not sum to Bassetlaw parliamentary constituency total due to two wards crossing parliamentary constituency boundaries.
Notes:
1. Number of individual beneficiaries are rounded to a multiple of five.
2. Sutton Ward falls into both Bassetlaw and Newark parliamentary constituencies
3. Pension credit (PC) replaced minimum income guarantee (MIG) on 6 October 2003. Existing MIG recipients were automatically converted onto pension credit on that date (assuming they still met the eligibility criteria).
Source: Information Directorate Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have been employed in all forms of the administration of pension credit, savings credit and guarantee credit in each year since 2001-02; and if he will make a statement. [70308]

James Purnell: The information is not available.

Staff employed in the Pension Service administer a range of entitlements, including state pension, over 80 pensions, graduated retirement pension, state earnings-related pension, state second pension, pension credit and winter fuel payments.

Pensions

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his estimate is of the number of females of pension age in the UK who will be in receipt of a full basic state pension in 2006-07; how many were so entitled in *(a)* 2004-05 and *(b)* 2005-06; and if he will make a statement. [70287]

James Purnell: The information is provided in the following table:

	Number of females of state pension age with a full basic state pension (million)
2004-05	3.2
2005-06	3.2
2006 -07	3.2

Notes:
1. The figures include category B pension paid to widows based on husbands' contributions.
2. Figures are for Great Britain.
3. The full basic state pension as at April 2004 was £79.60 per week. The full basic state pension as at April 2005 was £82.05 per week and the full basic state pension as at April 2006 is £84.25 per week.
4. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100,000.
Sources:
1. Figures for 2004-05 are derived from March 2005 five per cent. sample.
2. Figurers for March 2005-06 and 2006-07 are derived from the DWP micro- simulation model.

Mr. Newmark: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the cost of raising the addition to the basic state pension for those aged 80 years or over from 25p to *(a)* £2.50 per week, *(b)* £5 per week and *(c)* £10 per week, assuming no change in the thresholds for means-tested benefits. [70768]

James Purnell: The information requested is in the following table:

Weekly rate of age addition	*Gross annual cost (£ million)*	*Net annual cost (£ million)*
£2.50	310	220
£5.00	660	460
£10.00	1,360	940

Note:
The costs:
(a) are in 2006-07 price terms for a 2007-08 policy change and are rounded to the nearest £10 million;
(b) have been estimated using the Government Actuary's Department Retirement Pension Model with income related benefit and tax offsets for net costs calculated using the DWP policy simulation model and;
(c) are based on the assumption that the increased amounts are flat rate and payable in full to all eligible pensioners in GB and overseas.

Perfluorooctane Sulphonate

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what guidance the Health and Safety Executive has issued on the use of perfluorooctane sulphonate. [70659]

Mrs. McGuire: The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in conjunction with the Surface Engineering Association has issued guidance on the use of perfluorooctane sulphonate in chromic acid plating tanks to prevent the formation of mist containing chromium (VI). This is important for occupational health, because chromium (VI) is an established human carcinogen. Presently no practical alternative mist suppressants are available. The guidance is available on HSE's website.

Post Office Card Account

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* pensioners and *(b)* other benefits recipients in the Rhondda draw their benefits through a post office card account. [71414]

Mr. Plaskitt: Information showing the number of DWP benefit and pension payment accounts paid by Direct Payment into a post office card account for each parliamentary constituency has been placed in the Library

Post Office Closures

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on the effect on benefit recipients of changes to the obligation on Post Office Ltd. to prevent avoidable post office closures. [72932]

Mr. Plaskitt: The policy of preventing avoidable closures of post offices in rural areas has now been extended until autumn 2006.

I have regular discussions with Trade and Industry Ministers about access to cash and the post office network.

The Government will make announcements on the future of the post office network in due course.

Poverty

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many black and minority ethnic children are living in poverty in the UK. [71232]

Mrs. McGuire: Information on the UK is not held. The available information for Great Britain is in the table.

Number of children in Great Britain living in households below 60 per cent. median income

Million

Ethnic group	*Before housing costs*	*After housing costs*
White	1.9	2.7
Asian or Asian British	0.3	0.4
Black or Black British	0.1	0.2
Other ethnic group	0.1	0.1
Total	2.4	3.4

Source:
Family Resources Survey 2004-05

Public Service Agreements

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many public service agreement targets *(a)* exclusive to his Department and *(b)* held jointly between his and other Departments (i) have been met, (ii) are on course, (iii) are subject to slippage and (iv) have not yet been assessed. [72236]

Mrs. McGuire: The information requested can be found in Figure 1 (Summary of performance towards all PSA targets) on pages 27 to 30 of the Departmental report published on 11 May 2006 which is available in the Library.

Remploy

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what level of Government funding was provided to Remploy in each of the last three years for which figures are available; and what level of funding will be provided to Remploy in *(a)* 2006-07 and *(b)* 2007-08. [69879]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 16 May 2006]:* Remploy is funded through both commercial activity and a grant in aid from the Department for Work and Pensions, which is to help meet the additional costs associated with supporting large numbers of disabled people. The level of Government funding therefore is linked to the commercial performance of Remploy.

Remploy's actual grant in aid in 2003-04 was £115 million, in 2004-05 it was £116 million and in 2005-06 it was £119 million. In each of these years the final grant in aid exceeded the original allocation reflecting the worsening trading conditions that Remploy have and are likely to continue to experience. For this year (2006-07) and next year (2007-08) the allocated grant in aid for Remploy is £111 million per year pending the outcome of the independent strategic review.

Single Parents

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many single parents in Tamworth constituency were in receipt of income support in each year between 2001 and 2005; and if he will make a statement. [71230]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the following table:

Lone parents in receipt of income support in the Tamworth parliamentary constituency: each November 2001 to 2005

	Number of lone parents
2001	1,210
2002	1,120
2003	1,050
2004	1,010
2005	970

Notes:
1. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
2. Single parents are defined as single claimants with dependants aged under 60 and not receiving Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance.

Source:
Information Directorate Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS)

Social Fund

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to change the funding available to the social fund funeral scheme. [70261]

Mr. Plaskitt: The regulated social fund of which the funeral payment scheme is a part is not cash limited or subject to budgetary constraints.

Funeral payments from the social fund cover the cost of certain necessary charges in full; these include fees levied by burial authorities and crematoria. An additional sum of up to £700 is allowed for other funeral expenses, which give the person arranging the funeral the freedom to select items or services they consider appropriate. Although there are no plans to make changes to the funeral payment scheme at this time the level of help is kept under review.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Alcohol Misuse

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much funding Bournemouth police was allocated from the Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign. [71714]

Mr. Byrne: Bournemouth Division of Dorset police was allocated £10,000 by the Police Standards Unit for the third national Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign (AMEC 3), which ran from 14 November 2005 until the end of that year. For the fourth Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign (AMEC 4), which is running from 8 May until 8 June 2006, the Division has been allocated a further £10,000.

Anore Mohammed

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects Anore Mohammed of Banbury, date of birth 5 May 1982, will be notified of his application for leave to remain. [69474]

Mr. McNulty: I wrote to the hon. Member on 8 May 2006.

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals have breached their antisocial behaviour orders in Suffolk since 1 January 2004. [72533]

Mr. Byrne: Antisocial behaviour order (ASBO) breach data are currently available from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003 for ASBOs issued since 1 June 2000. During this period nine persons are recorded as having breached their ASBO on one or more occasions in Suffolk.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued for *(a)* antisocial behaviour in or around shopping areas and *(b)* behaviour involving the abuse of shop workers in each year since their inception, broken down by local authority area. [71044]

Mr. Byrne: Data collated centrally for statistical purposes does not identify the circumstances that led to the issuing of an antisocial behaviour order.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many 10 to 17-year-olds have been issued with antisocial behaviour orders, broken down by ethnic group. [71236]

Mr. Byrne: The number of antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) issued at all courts, to persons aged 10 to 17, as notified to the Home Office from 1 June 2000 to 30 September 2005 (latest available) is 3,135. Prior to 1 June 2000 ASBO data were collected on aggregate numbers only by police force area.

Ethnicity data are not collected centrally as part of the statistical collection of ASBOs issued.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders were issued in *(a)* Lancashire, *(b)* Blackpool and *(c)* Lancaster and Wyre in each year since 2002. [71493]

Mr. Byrne: Data on antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) are available at criminal justice system area and local government authority (LGA) area level only. A table giving annual data on the number of ASBOs issued at all courts, as reported to the Home Office, up to 30 September 2005 (latest available), broken down by the LGA area in which restrictions are imposed is available on the Crime Reduction website at www.crimereduction.gov.uk

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals in Cambridgeshire have breached their antisocial behaviour orders in the period since 1 January 2004; and if he will make a statement. [72092]

Mr. Byrne: Antisocial behaviour order (ASBO) breach data are currently available from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003 for ASBOs issued since 1 June 2000. During this period eight persons are recorded as having breached their ASBO on one or more occasions in Cambridgeshire.

Application Processing Times

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average application processing time in the *(a)* immigration and nationality directorate, *(b)* national asylum support service, *(c)* identity and passport service and *(d)* UK visas was in the most recent period for which figures are available. [71694]

Mr. McNulty: The information is as follows:

(a) Immigration and nationality directorate (IND) does not hold general statistics on average process times for applications. For some workstreams, target service standards and performance against them are published on the IND website.

(b) The national asylum support service does not hold statistics on average process times for applications.

(c) For the most recent week (ending 14 May 2006) the average processing time for the identity and passport service was as follows:

4.2 working days for straightforward properly completed passport applications.

5.7 working days for all passport applications, including applications that were not properly completed by the applicant and required further identity and passport service contact.

(d) UK visas does not hold statistics on overall average processing time for applications.

Arrests

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many arrests were made in the six months *(a)* prior to and *(b)* since November 2005 in (i) Bournemouth and (ii) Dorset. [71715]

Mr. Byrne: The main arrests collection covers persons arrested for recorded crime (notifiable offences) by police force area only. Information is collected on a quarterly basis and 2005-06 data for Dorset police force area will be available in the autumn 2006.

Information for 2004-05 (latest available) can be found in the Home Office Statistical Bulletin, "Arrests for Recorded Crime (notifiable offences) and the Operation of Certain Police Powers under PACE, England and Wales", which is available on the Research and Development Statistics website:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pubsstatistical

Copies are also available in the Library.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many arrests were made in Shrewsbury and Atcham in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005. [72520]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not available centrally.

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many unaccompanied asylum seeking children are being looked after by local authorities, broken down by *(a)* ethnic group and *(b)* local authority. [71237]

Mr. McNulty: Local authorities have reported that a total of 5,521 unaccompanied asylum seeking children were receiving support under the provisions of the Children Act as at the end of February 2006. The overall number may be slightly higher as a few local authorities have still to submit reports. It is not possible to provide a breakdown by ethnic group as authorities are not asked to provide this information. A breakdown by individual authority is set out in the following table.

Local authorities	*Number of UASC*
Barking and Dagenham	97
Barnet	41
Barnsley	11
Bedfordshire	19
Bexley	22
Birmingham	141
Blackpool	1
Bolton	12
Bournemouth	6
Bracknell Forest	1
Bradford	19
Brent	48
Brighton and Hove	21
Bristol City	16
Bromley	14
Buckinghamshire	6
Calderdale	2
Cambridgeshire	83
Camden	73
Cardiff	35
Cheshire	8
City of Edinburgh	12
City of Newcastle	43
Corporation of London	26
Coventry	12
Croydon	346
Derbyshire	3
Denbighshire county	1
Derby	14
Devon	1
Doncaster	3
Dorset	4
Dudley	1
Durham	2
Ealing	45
East Riding of Yorkshire	6
East Sussex	4
Enfield	37
Essex	71
Gateshead	1
Glasgow city council	52
Gloucestershire	14
Greenwich	84
Hackney	74
Halton	1
Hammersmith and Fulham	89
Haringey	185
Harrow	40
Havering	18
Hertfordshire	38
Hillingdon	436
Hounslow	63
North Somerset	1
Islington	108
Kensington and Chelsea	63
Kent	350
Kingston upon Hull	13
Kingston upon Thames	40
Kirklees	12
Lambeth	152
Leeds	71
Leicester	21

Local authorities	Number of UASC
Leicestershire	34
Lewisham	84
Lincolnshire	9
Liverpool	246
Luton	25
Manchester	204
Merton	13
Milton Keynes	34
Neath Port Talbot	4
Newham	103
Newport city council	23
Norfolk	30
North East Lincolnshire	26
North Lanarkshire	1
North Lincolnshire	1
Northamptonshire	46
Nottingham	40
Oxfordshire	102
Pembrokeshire	2
Plymouth	10
Poole	8
Portsmouth	11
Reading	21
Redbridge	33
Redcar and Cleveland	2
Rhondda Cynon Taf	1
Richmond upon Thames	26
Rochdale	11
Rotherham	8
Oldham	3
Salford	7
Sandwell	10
Sheffield	89
Shropshire	4
Slough	27
Solihull	137
Southampton	11
Southend on Sea	20
Southwark	122
St. Helens	2
Staffordshire	28
Stockton on Tees	3
Stoke on Trent	11
Suffolk	14
Sunderland	2
Surrey	56
Sutton	30
Swansea city and county	1
Swindon	21
Tameside	1
Telford and Wrekin	3
Thurrock	26
Tower Hamlets	39
Trafford	2
Vale of Glamorgan	1
Wakefield	18
Waltham Forest	65
Wandsworth	38
Warwickshire	89
West Berkshire	36
West Sussex	92
Westminster	57
Wigan	2
Wiltshire	14
Windsor and Maidenhead	6
Wirral	1
Wolverhampton	6
Worcestershire	35
York	1

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many unaccompanied children have sought asylum in the UK since 2001, broken down by ethnic group; and how many such applicants are *(a)* successful and *(b)* refused. [71238]

Mr. McNulty: The number of applications from unaccompanied children who seek asylum in the UK is published on a quarterly and annual basis, broken down by nationality. The number of initial decisions on unaccompanied minors who seek asylum in the UK is published on an annual basis, broken down by nationality and decision outcome. Figures for 2001 are not available. Figures broken down by ethnic group are also unavailable. The next quarterly publication covering the first quarter of 2006 will be published on 23 May 2006. The next annual publication covering 2005 will be published on 22 August. Both publications will be available on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics website at:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers there are in Bexley borough. [71316]

Mr. McNulty: Statistics are available on the number of asylum seekers who are in receipt of support from the national asylum support service (NASS) and published on a quarterly and annual basis, broken down by local authority.

The most recent publication covering the fourth quarter of 2005 and further historical publications are available on the Home Office research development and statistics website at:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is the policy of his Department to share asylum application files of failed asylum seekers with the authorities in their country of origin. [71415]

Mr. McNulty: The Asylum Policy Instruction (API) on the "Disclosure and Confidentiality of Information in Asylum Cases", which is published on the Immigration and Nationality Directorate's website, makes it very clear that information provided by an asylum claimant will be treated in confidence. Details about the asylum claim will not be disclosed to the authorities in the country of origin without the explicit consent of the claimant.

All claimants are informed, however, that in the event their claim is unsuccessful it might be necessary for the Immigration and Nationality Directorate to contact the authorities in the country of origin to

obtain an emergency travel document for their journey home. Disclosure in these circumstances is limited to that which is necessary for re-documentation purposes, such as basic information about the claimant's identity, as well as fingerprints, photographs.

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how his Department assesses whether a country is safe enough to repatriate failed asylum seekers; and how often such assessments take place. [71416]

Mr. McNulty: The Home Office continuously monitors the situation in all asylum intake countries taking into account information from a wide range of recognised and respected governmental and non-governmental organisation sources as well as current news reports. Asylum decision-makers take into account the situation in the country of origin as it affects each asylum applicant when making a decision on an asylum claim. The Home Office enforce the return of an individual only where it is satisfied that the person concerned will not be at risk and has been unsuccessful in any appeals against the decision in their particular case.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will instruct his officials to meet officials of Peterborough city council to discuss future funding of the invest to save project in respect of asylum seekers and economic migrants; and if he will make a statement. [71941]

Mr. McNulty: The Peterborough Asylum and Migration project is funded by the Treasury Invest to Save Budget and is strictly time-limited to a three year allocation. As sponsor department, officials in the Home Office have been in frequent contact with officials in Peterborough city council, and will be discussing with them the sustainability and exit strategy for the project.

British Transport Police

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many members of the British Transport Police have transferred to the Metropolitan police force; and how many remain to be transferred. [68130]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Burglary

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many mandatory three year prison sentences for burglary were handed down in each of the last five years. [69737]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information requested is published in Table 2.7 of "Sentencing Statistics, England and Wales, 2004" (page 28). This publication can be found in the Library and also on the Home Office website, as follows:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb1505.pdf

Capita Group

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many tenders *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries has submitted to his Department in each of the last three years; and how many tenders were successful. [61463]

Mr. Byrne: The information is not held centrally and could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate cost.

Care Homes

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people applying for positions within residential care and nursing homes in *(a)* Tamworth constituency, *(b)* the Staffordshire police area and *(c)* England are awaiting clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau. [71241]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information sought by the hon. Member for Tamworth is not available. The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) is unable to provide information on Disclosure applications based on specific employment sectors and geographical areas.

The CRB aims to complete Disclosure applications across all sectors within the shortest time possible. Its published service standards are to issue 93 per cent. of Standard Disclosures within two weeks and 90 per cent. of Enhanced Disclosures within four weeks for all applications.

CCTV

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what further steps he is *(a)* taking and *(b)* plans to take to promote the effectiveness of closed circuit television footage in combating crime and terrorism; and if he will make a statement. [72033]

Mr. Byrne: CCTV can be an important tool in the fight against crime and disorder. However, evidence shows that its potential has not been fully realised and that a national strategy is needed. The Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers are undertaking a joint review of CCTV to determine how it may be used more effectively in reducing and detecting crime and terrorism.

The review's findings will be known in the autumn, and will include recommendations on the infrastructure and future use of CCTV.

Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of members of the Principal Civil Service pension scheme in his Department joined the scheme before the age of *(a)* 20, *(b)* 25, *(c)* 30, *(d)* 35, *(e)* 40, *(f)* 45 and *(g)* over 45-years-old. [61999]

Mr. Byrne: The information could be supplied only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his Department's employer contribution rates to the principal civil service pension scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [62000]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to him by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy), on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1030W.

Community Service

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many hours a week must be worked by offenders sentenced to undertake a community service order. [69845]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The National Standards for the probation service require that offenders sentenced to unpaid work undertake a minimum average of six hours work per week.

Conflict Management Vehicles

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what training is provided for those employed in the use of police conflict management vehicles; and if he will make a statement. [71646]

Mr. Byrne: All police officers wishing to become authorised firearms officers go through a rigorous assessment and training programme following the National Police Firearms Training Curriculum produced by the Association of Chief Police Officers.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what national guidelines are issued to police forces in England and Wales on the deployment of conflict management vehicles; and if he will make a statement. [71648]

Mr. Byrne: Guidance on the deployment of armed response vehicles in England and Wales is governed by Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) national guidelines. These guidelines can be found on the ACPO website (www.acpo.police.uk).

Correspondence

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when his Department will reply to the letter of 6 February from the hon. Member for Aylesbury to the Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality about the case of Mr. P. C. (reference C1142200; CTS reference M24806/5) and the National Spinal Injuries Centre at Stoke Mandeville hospital. [70147]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* I replied to the hon. Member for Aylesbury on 11 May 2006.

Crime (Sentences) Act 1997

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the operation of section *(a)* 28, *(b)* 29, *(c)* 30, *(d)* 31 and *(e)* 32 of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997; and what recent representations he has received about the operation of these sections. [69639]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Sections 28, 31 and 32 of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997 [as amended by the Criminal Justice Act 2003] relate to the Parole Board's powers to direct the release of life sentence prisoners and those offenders sentenced to Imprisonment for Public Protection and the licence conditions and recall to prison of such prisoners. Section 29 was repealed by the Criminal Justice Act 2003. Section 30 allows for release in exceptional circumstances on compassionate grounds.

The main purpose of these sections is to ensure the protection of the public. There has been no indication or representations to the effect that the operation of these sections is inconsistent with this objective. The main criterion governing the Parole Board's consideration is the risk of serious harm that the lifer may be to others. The Parole Board is required to direct the release of any tariff-expired life sentence prisoner if it is satisfied that

"it is no longer necessary for the protection of the public that the prisoner should be confined".

The Board plays a key role in the wider public protection arena. I am satisfied that it continues to discharge its responsibilities diligently and in line with the relevant directions and rules to which it operates. I am also satisfied that the Board recognises the need to continually improve the standards of its risk assessments and decisions in this important area.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of claims made to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority have been processed within *(a)* six months, *(b)* 12 months, *(c)* 18 months and *(d)* over 18 months in each of the last five years. [40795]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information requested is set out in the following table. It relates to the time from the receipt of an application to the issue of a decision by CICA to the claimant.

Time from receipt of application to issue of decision at claims assessment stage

Percentage

Year decision issued	*Less than 6 months*	*6-12 months*	*12-18 months*	*More than 18 months*
2005-06	22	44	21	13
2004-05	30	40	18	12
2003-04	34	38	16	12
2002-03	33	40	16	11
2001-02	32	43	16	9

Departmental Expenditure

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was spent on *(a)* advertising, *(b)* refreshments, *(c)* travel for Ministers and *(d)* stationery by the Home Office in each year since 1997. [31799]

John Reid: The information is as follows:

(a) The information on Home Office expenditure on advertising since 1997 is given in the following table.

(b) The information on Home Office expenditure on refreshments since 1997 is given in the following table.

(c) The information requested for travel for Ministers is not held centrally and to provide it would incur disproportionate costs. All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of overseas journeys undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These report information for the financial years 1995-96 to 2004-05. Information for 2005-06 will be published as soon as it is ready after the end of the current financial year.

(d) The information on Home Office expenditure on stationery is given in the following table.

(a)

Financial year	*Advertising expenditure (£ million)*
1997-98	1.4
1998-99	1.8
1999-2000	5.65
2000-01	28.36
2001-02	14.4
2002-03	9.9
2003-04	12.487
2004-05	10.203

(b)

Financial year	*Refreshments expenditure (£)*
1997-98	409,973
1998-99	180,130
1999-2000	623,687
2000-01	792,313
2001-02	827,683
2002-03	1,103,558
2003-04	1,816,708
2004-05	1,484,967

Note:
Refreshment expenditure includes hospitality and working lunches

(d)

	Stationery expenditure (£)
1997 to 2001	Unavailable
2002	4,419,777
2003	4,974,960
2004	4,931,657
2005	3,483,976

Note:
Expenditure excludes paper, computer consumables and office supplies

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total value is of *(a)* catering and *(b)* entertainment contracts let by his Department; and what value of such contracts has been let in each nation and region of the UK, including London. [37481]

John Reid: Catering services for staff in the Department's official staff restaurants are provided by the Department's facilities management contractors. The costs of meals and refreshments provided to staff are recovered through sales.

The total costs of catering, other than catering services for staff, and entertainment (including refreshments at meetings, working lunches and hospitality) for the Home Office in 2004-05 was £1,484,967. Working lunches and refreshments are offered as a normal courtesy to visitors or made available to facilitate the efficient management of meetings.

Expenditure figures for each nation and region of the UK are not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Diabetic Drivers

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to provide high-energy glucose tablets to police officers to enable them to assist diabetic drivers; when he will make such provision; what estimate he has made of the cost; and if he will make a statement. [71553]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 18 May 2006]:* Provision of such items is an operational matter for individual chief officers of police. The responsibility for managing their diabetes and driving safely rests firmly with individual drivers. On issuing licences to insulin-treated drivers, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency advises them by letter that they should make sure they have an emergency supply of carbohydrate-like glucose tablets in their car.

Domestic Violence

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans the Government have to improve the services offered to women seeking refuge from domestic violence in Kingston upon Hull, North. [69777]

Mr. Byrne: The provision for women seeking refuge for Kingston upon Hull North is the provision for Hull.

Hull had one of the first Women's Aid refuges (1972) and a purpose built hostel was opened in 1976 which is owned by North British Housing. The rent is paid by Hull city council via Supporting People monies which also provide the workers within the refuge.

There are currently 18 bed spaces within a dedicated refuge facility and protected houses scheme. In addition to this there is the 'own home initiative' where the victim and family have a choice to remain in their family home with extra security measures put in place. The manager from Women's Aid is currently on a secondment to manage the new Hull Domestic Abuse Partnership (DAP) which is working to improve the services to victims of domestic violence.

Hull DAP is a multi-agency team including police officers, a health practitioner, a social worker and a housing support worker. The team works within the same office to provide a one stop service for women in the city seeking refuge from domestic violence.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of reported cases of domestic violence in *(a)* England, *(b)* each English region and *(c)* the Tees Valley involved (i) women in a same-sex relationship, (ii) men in a same-sex relationship and (iii) children in each year since 1997. [71082]

Mr. Byrne: The Home Office does not collect this information.

Drug or Alcohol Rehabilitation Courses

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders took part in a drug or alcohol rehabilitation course in 2005-06 as an alternative to a custodial sentence. [69361]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The National Probation Service has available two substance misuse offending behaviour programmes: Addressing Substance Related Offending (ASRO) and the Offender Substance Abuse Programme (OSAP) and the Drink Impaired Drivers (DID) programme. The number of offenders who started on the ASRO, OSAP or DID programmes last year as a requirement of a community sentence or as a condition of a licence upon release from custody is shown in the following table.

It is not possible to say how many of these offenders on community sentences were considered by the courts for a custodial sentence.

Programme type	*Number of commencements*[1]
Addressing Substance Related Offending (ASRO)	2,943
Offender Substance Abuse Programme (OSAP)	928
Drink Impaired Drivers (DID)	4,665

[1] January to December 2005.

Electoral Fraud

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were convicted of electoral fraud in each of the last 10 years. [70062]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Data held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of people convicted for electoral fraud offences under the Representation of the People Act 1983, in England and Wales, 1995-2004 are shown in the table.

Data for 2005 will be available in the autumn.

Number of defendants convicted of electoral fraud under the Representation of the People Act 1983,1995 - 2004, England and Wales

Defendants

	Bribery, treating and undue influence	*Personation*	*Total*
1995	3	11	14
1996	?	?	?
1997	?	5	5
1998	?	6	6
1999	1	2	3
2000	1	?	1
2001	?	10	10
2002	?	?	?
2003	1	1	2
2004	2	1	3

Note: Figures are for principal offences.
Source:
Court Proceedings Database, Office for Criminal Justice Reform

Electronic Monitoring

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the *(a)* electronic tagging and *(b)* satellite tracking of offenders. [58274]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Since 1999, over 250,000 people have been subject to electronic tagging, in the vast majority of cases without incident. It is an effective means of monitoring compliance with curfew requirements, and is an integral part of our strategy for managing offenders in the community.

Pilots of satellite tracking have been operating in Greater Manchester, Hampshire and the West Midlands since September 2004, and are currently being evaluated by an external research team. Over 400 offenders, mostly prolific offenders, have been tracked in the pilots so far.

Firearms

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what types of firearms are permitted for use by those who work in the agricultural industry; and if he will make a statement. [71740]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* There are no specified types of firearm for use by people in the agricultural industry. In applying to the police for a

firearms certificate, they will need to establish a good reason for possessing each individual firearm they wish to possess. In the case of somebody wishing to possess a shot gun, the police will not grant a certificate if they are satisfied that the applicant does not have a good reason for having one or would represent a danger to public safety or to the peace.

Fireworks

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many penalty notices have been issued to *(a)* males and *(b)* females in relation to the illegal use of fireworks in (i) Southend and (ii) Essex since the relevant legislation was introduced. [62873]

Mr. Byrne: Data from the Penalty Notices for Disorder database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform showing the number of males and females issued with penalty notices for fireworks in Essex police force area 2004, as well as provisional data for 2005, are provided in the following table.

It is not possible to identify the number of penalty notices issued in Southend as the data are broken down by police force area only and are not available at that level of detail.

Number of penalty notices for disorder issued for fireworks offences, by sex, Essex police force area, 2004 and 2005[1]

	Throwing fireworks	*Breach of fireworks curfew*	*Possession of a Category 4 firework*	*Possession by an under-18-year-old of adult firework*
2004				
Males	2	1	1	2
Females	—	—	—	—
Total	2	1	1	2
2005[1]	13	—	—	1
Males	—	—	—	—
Total	13	—	—	1

[1] Provisional data.

Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform.

Foreign Prisoners

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whose responsibility it is to ensure that the Prison Service communicates with the Immigration and Nationality Directorate about foreign nationals leaving prison. [67456]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is the responsibility of governors and directors, as set out in Prisoner Service Order 4630, to ensure that procedures are in place within their establishment to inform the Immigration and Nationality Directorate of all the foreign national prisoners held within their prison. I have placed a copy of the Order in the House of Commons Library.

Gurkhas

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what basis the UK has refused to grant indefinite leave to enter the UK to Gurkha personnel who had completed over four years of Crown service prior to 1 July 1997. [72136]

Mr. McNulty: 1 July 1997 represents the date that the Brigade of Gurkhas moved their headquarters from Hong Kong to the UK. Indefinite leave (settlement) is normally granted on the basis of residence in the UK. Therefore, in order to remain consistent with other settlement categories in the Immigration Rules, it was considered appropriate to enable all those discharged on or after 1 July 1997 to be able to apply for settlement in the UK.

However, in respect of applications from former Gurkhas discharged before 1 July 1997, and who would have developed close physical ties with the UK through being posted here, visa issuing posts abroad, in appropriate cases, can exercise discretion outside the Immigration Rules to grant indefinite leave to enter the UK.

Hand Guns

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to publish a list of those categories of people that have lawful access to hand guns. [72760]

Mr. Byrne: The possession of all types of firearms is governed by the provisions of the Firearms Acts. Comprehensive guidance has already been published and is available on the Home Office website under Firearms Law.

Human Rights

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to amend UK law to enable the prosecution of individuals suspected of carrying out human rights abuses abroad; and what representations he has received on this issue. [70016]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Human Rights abuses committed abroad can be prosecuted in the UK under a variety of legislation. Breaches of the Geneva Conventions can

be prosecuted under the Geneva Conventions Act 1957. Genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes can be prosecuted under the International Criminal Court Act 2001. Offences of torture can be prosecuted under the Criminal Justice Act 1988. Criminals can also be extradited to stand trial abroad. We have received no recent representations on the issue.

Immigration Service

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals have been processed at and removed via the UK Immigration Service Centre at St. Ives in Cambridgeshire in each year since 2001; and if he will make a statement. [72091]

Mr. McNulty: The Local Enforcement Office in St. Ives was opened in June 2004, since then our records show that St. Ives Local Enforcement Unit removed:

	Number of individuals removed
2004 (July to December)	70
2005	252
2006 (January to April)	72

Imprisoned Parents

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many single parents with custody of dependent children have been imprisoned in each of the last five years. [69384]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Information on the family responsibilities of prisoners is not collated centrally.

Some information is available from a survey of prisoners undertaken in 2003. In this survey prisoners nearing discharge were asked about factors associated with resettlement, including family ties. The surveys were representative of prisoners nearing release in England and Wales.

In the survey 18 per cent. of female prisoners said that they were single and living with dependent children (including step-children) aged 17 or under. The equivalent figure for male prisoners was 3.5 per cent.

International Arrest Warrants

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the Answer of 10th May 2006 to Question 69808, on international arrest warrants, if he will set out the guidelines on publishing representations received from foreign governments which have been applied in this case; and to which other bodies such guidelines apply. [71394]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 16 May 2006]:* Disclosure would normally be subject to consideration of whether the public interest in disclosure outweighed that of respecting the confidence of the foreign government, taking account of the prejudice which disclosure may cause to our relations with that government. This would apply equally to international organisations or international courts.

Internet (Prisons)

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what mechanisms are in place to ensure appropriate use of internet facilities within the prison estate; and if he will make a statement. [58221]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Prisoners do not have routine unfettered access to the internet. The only exception is in the area of education where prisoners gain National Vocational Qualifications to support their rehabilitation on release. Prisoner access to the internet is subject to detailed risk assessment by prison staff and is limited to pre-approved sites and prison staff closely monitor their use of these facilities. If abuse of internet access is identified prisoner access will be withdrawn.

Juvenile Crime

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many crimes were committed by juvenile offenders in *(a)* Peterborough constituency and *(b)* the Cambridgeshire area in each quarter in 2005; how many cautions were issued in relation to such cases; and how many children in the Peterborough city council area (i) were convicted, (ii) were in local authority care, (iii) received a reprimand, (iv) received a final warning and (v) were found guilty in each quarter. [72090]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to identify the number of crimes committed by juvenile offenders since details of the alleged offender are not identified within recorded crime data.

The most recent available data on court proceedings and cautions are for 2004, data for 2005 will be available in autumn 2006.

Legislation

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the operation of section *(a)* 1, *(b)* 2 and *(c)* 3 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997; what recent representations he has received about the operation of this Act; what amendments have been made to the Act; and whether he has plans to amend this Act. [70375]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government are satisfied that these provisions operate effectively to protect people from harassment and fear of violence. Since its introduction, the Protection from Harassment Act has been amended and strengthened:

(with effect from 1 August 2001) by the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 to make clear that the legal sanctions that apply to a campaign of harassment by an individual against another also apply to a campaign of collective harassment by two or more people;

(with effect from a date to be appointed) by the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 to extend the use of restraining orders; and

(with effect from 1 July 2005) by the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 to protect people from harassment by animal rights (or other) extremists.

The more recent amendments were made in response to representations from victims of domestic violence and those working for or connected in some way to companies involved in the use of animals for scientific research. In addition to these specific representations, we receive regular requests for information about the Act from members of the public who are on the receiving end of behaviour that may constitute harassment or who have been accused of harassment. There are no current plans to amend the Act further.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the operation of section 36 of the Data Protection Act 1998; what recent representations he has received about the operation of this Act; what amendments have been made to the Act; and whether he has plans to amend this Act. [70377]

Bridget Prentice: I have been asked to reply.

The responsibility for monitoring the working of the Data Protection Act 1998 lies with the Information Commissioner, who has a statutory duty to promote good practice and to give advice to any person (including the Government) as to the operation of the Act. Section 36 of the Data Protection Act (DPA) exempts personal data from many of the Act's requirements where personal data is processed by an individual only for the purposes of that individual's personal, family or household affairs (including recreational purposes). However the Information Commissioner retains his powers of investigation and enforcement where someone appears to have exceeded the scope of the exemption.

My Department receives correspondence from a range of individuals and organisations on the day-to-day operation of the Act.

The DPA has been amended by numerous pieces of legislation. The last amendment was by the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005.

We have no immediate plans for amending the legislation, but my Department, together with the Home Office, is currently considering whether custodial sentences would be an appropriate sanction for unauthorised disclosure of personal information.

Migrant Workers

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many migrant worker work permits were applied for by farmers in Bassetlaw in each of the last six years; and how many were granted. [69824]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* Approvals for individuals to work in the UK agricultural sector are granted under the Work Permit Scheme, the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) and the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS). Please see following tables for the approval information on for each of the schemes.

Work Permit Scheme

	Approved	*Refused*
2000	0	0
2001	0	0
2002	0	0
2003	0	0
2004	1	0
2005	1	1

Worker Registration Scheme[1]

	Approved	*Refused*
2004	23	0
2005	58	0

[1] The Worker Registration Scheme has operated only from 1 May 2004.

Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme

Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme applicants are recruited by Home Office contracted operators and information is collated only for those workers registered on the scheme. Some of those who apply may not be successful and therefore will not be registered on the scheme. Previous to 2004, records were not collected as to which area of the country the workers were deployed to and therefore information is available only for the Bassetlaw area as from that date.

Total 2004: 24

Total 2005: 35

These data are not provided under National Statistics Protocols. It has been derived from local management information and is therefore provisional and subject to change.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for Ministers of State in his Department on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [68962]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested could not be provided within disproportionate cost. Under the terms of the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, when travelling on official business Ministers are expected to make efficient and cost-effective travel arrangements.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions Ministers of State in his Department stayed overnight in *(a)* five star, *(b)* four star and *(c)* three star hotels on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [68963]

Mr. Byrne: The information could not be provided without disproportionate cost. Under the terms of the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, when travelling on official business Ministers are expected to make efficient and cost-effective travel arrangements.

National Offender Management Information System

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information will be held on the National Offender Management Information System; and what steps will be taken to ensure confidentiality of that data. [24449]

Mr. Sutcliffe: C-NOMIS will contain data on offender demographics (including nationality, ethnicity, education, employment, disability, addresses, and other relevant personal data), their court proceedings, offences, sentences, licences, risks, interventions on which they are placed, their attendances, performance and progress on their sentences including enforcement and breach of community sentences and licences. Data will also be held on prisoner movements, incidents, adjudications, cell locations, activities and finances (including prisoner earnings). C-NOMIS will also contain data on visitors to prisoners to enable the management of visits and visiting orders.

C-NOMIS is classified as a "restricted" system under the Government Protective Marking Scheme, and the data held within it will not exceed this classification. Access is on a "need to know" basis, while also facilitating the effective sharing of information in support of end-to-end offender management.

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of the total Prison Service budget was allocated to the administration of the National Offender Management Service in *(a)* 2004-05 and *(b)* 2005-06. [46579]

Mr. Sutcliffe: None. The Prison Services' budget is allocated from the overall budget for the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), and not the other way round.

In 2005-06 the proportion of the NOMS resource budget allocated to the Prison Service is 44 per cent. This excludes certain former Prison Service HQ functions, notably Estates, Property, IT, and Prisoner Escort and Custody Service, which have transferred to NOMS HQ from the beginning of 2005-06.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the ratio is of National Offender Management staff to prisoners in England and Wales in each year since its inception. [46582]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Information on the ratio of all staff within the public sector Prison Service against public sector prisoners since 2004 is contained in the table. The information relates to average headcount over the year against average number of prisoners. The ratio includes all staff employed by the public sector Prison Service, including Headquarters and other non-operational staff.

Equivalent information for the contracted prison estate, is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

	2004	*2005*
Average staff in post	48,385	48,429
Average population	67,772	68,713
All public sector staff to prisoner ratio	1:1.40	1:1.42

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* full-time, *(b)* full-time equivalent and *(c)* part-time staff are employed by the National Offender Management Service; and how many are employed at salaries in band *(a)* £10,000 to £20,000, *(b)* £20,001 to £30,000, *(c)* £30,001 to £40,000, *(d)* £40,001 to £50,000, *(e)* £50,001 to £60,000, *(f)* £60,001 to £70,000, *(g)* £70,001 to £80,000 and *(h)* £90,000 and above. [55089]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The National Offender Management Service consists of NOMS HQ, HM Prison Service and the National Probation Service. Each of these three organisations compiles their own data and statistics. In order to answer this question, the response is broken down into three component parts representing the three organisations in the following table.

NOMS HQ held on, or in process of migration to, ADELPHI

Salary band	*Full-time*	*Part-time*	*Total*	*Full-time equivalent*
Salary unavailable[1]	66	7	73	70.49
£5,001-£9,999	0	0	0	0
£10,000-£20,000	333	19	352	343
£20,000-£30,000	373	30	403	394
£30,000-£40,000	260	20	280	273
£40,000-£50,000	78	2	80	79
£50,000-£60,000	251	23	274	270
£60,000-£70,000	71	12	83	80
£70,000-£80,000	9	0	9	9
£80,000-£90,000	4	0	4	4
£90,000 +	8	0	8	8
Total	1,309	104	1,413	1,380

[1] Where possible payroll values have been used, and where this has proved impossible target rates for the grades at 1 July 2005 have been assigned. However in some case it has not been possible to provide salary banded information without excessive cost. Payroll salary is the basic salary excluding allowances.

Official Cars

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Walsall, North (Mr. Winnick) of 16 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 2412W, on official cars, if he will name the three former Ministers to whom he referred. [70318]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 12 May 2006]:* No. From time to time former Ministers are provided with cars as part of protection measures necessary as a result of the Government positions that they previously held. Where these measures are taken on security grounds, it would not be appropriate to disclose the identity of the former Ministers.

Operation Pentameter

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many separate investigations have been carried out in Cumbria under Operation Pentameter; and how many individuals of Eastern European origin have been found during the operation. [71268]

Mr. Coaker: Cumbria police have visited three premises as part of the operation. So far no individuals of Eastern European origin have been found.

Passports

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of adults in Bexley borough who do not have a passport. [71317]

Joan Ryan: The Identity and Passport Service collects address information at the time of applying for a passport. The adult passport has a 10-year validity period during which time the holder may move residence a number of times. As such, we cannot reliably identify the number of passport holders within any given area.

Penal Policy

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the costs to public funds of re-offending by criminals after release from prison in each of the last five years. [59310]

Mr. Sutcliffe: This information is not routinely collected.

Information on the estimated costs of offences against individuals and households for 2003-04 and 2000 are published in Home Office Online Report 30/05, "The Economic and Social Costs of Crime Against Individuals and Households 2003/04". A wider range of offences is considered in Home Office Research Study 217, "The Economic and Social Costs of Crime" (for 2000). Estimates have not been calculated for other years.

Information is routinely published on prisoners reconvicted within two years of discharge from prison and the principal offence on first reconviction. This is published in Table 11.2 of Home Office Statistical Bulletin number 17/05, "Offender Management and Caseload Statistics 2004". The latest year for which estimates have been published relates to prisoners discharged in 2001.

Police

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers there were in Bexley in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2001 and *(c)* 2005. [70808]

Mr. Byrne: Figures have only been collected by Basic Command Unit since March 2002. The London borough of Bexley Operational Command Unit had 316 police officers in March 2002 and 383 in March 2005. This is an increase of 21 per cent. (67 officers) over the period.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many copies of the police complaints authority annual report 2003-04 were distributed by his Department; if he will list those who were sent copies; at what cost; how many copies were printed; at what cost; who was awarded the contract to undertake the printing; how *(a)* hon. Members, *(b)* Members of the House of Lords and *(c)* members of the public may obtain a copy; at what cost; when he expects the 2004-05 edition of the independent police complaints commission annual report to be published; and if he will make a statement. [70871]

Mr. Byrne: A total of 640 copies of the police complaints authority's (PCA) annual report 2003-04 were distributed to police authorities and police forces, former PCA members and current IPCC commissioners, statutory bodies such as Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Centrex and other interested organisations and individuals including Liberty, INQUEST and academics in the field of police oversight.

The cost of printing and publication were borne by the stationery office (TSO) which aims to recover it from sales revenue. The contract was awarded by TSO after competitive tendering. The approximate cost for distribution was £4,214.

The cost per copy is £14.75.

Hon. Members may obtain copies from the vote offices in the House of Commons.

Members of the House of Lords may obtain copies from the printed paper office in the House of Lords.

Members of the public may obtain copies from TSO's bookshops in London, Edinburgh, Belfast, Cardiff, Manchester and Birmingham and from TSO agents in the principal cities. Copies can also be ordered by telephone or mail order from TSO or by internet from TSO's online bookshop (www.tso.co.uk/bookshop). Orders will also be processed by booksellers and via Amazon.

The PCA annual report 2003-04 is also available on the IPCC website at http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/pca_a_r03-04.pdf.

The IPCC annual report 2004-05 was published on 23 November 2005. Both the report and a summary leaflet are available on the IPCC's website at: http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/index/resources/evidence_reports/corp_reports-plans.htm.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria are used in deciding to deploy *(a)* armed response units and *(b)* specialist firearms officers; and if he will make a statement. [71599]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 16 May 2006]:* The use of firearms by police officers is governed by Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) guidelines. These guidelines can be found on the ACPO website (www.acpo.police.uk).

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times *(a)* armed response units and *(b)* specialist firearms officers have been deployed in Bedfordshire in each year since 1997, broken down by police division; and if he will make a statement. [71600]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 17 May 2006]:* This information is not collected centrally.

Kitty Ussher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what average length of time was taken by the police professional standards department to conduct an internal inquiry into the conduct of a police officer in the last period for which figures are available. [71632]

Mr. Byrne: Statistical information on the average length of time taken by police professional standards departments to conduct internal inquiries is not held centrally.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what purposes police helicopters are used; when police in Essex have purchased a helicopter in the last five years; at what cost in each case; and if he will make a statement. [71964]

Mr. Byrne: The principle use of police helicopters is to support police officers on the ground. The main reasons for deployment are searching for missing persons, locating people absconding from crime scenes, vehicle crime, supporting firearms and terrorist operations, evidential photographing and videoing, and crowd control.

Essex police purchased a helicopter in June 2003 at a cost of £3.1 million. The Home Office provided funding of £612,000 grant and £588,000 supplementary credit approval to support the purchase.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which police forces are below strength; by how many persons; and if he will make a statement. [71965]

Mr. Byrne: Information on vacancy levels in police forces is not collected. It is for chief officers of police in consultation with their police authorities to determine the work force mix that is employed to deliver policing.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions firearms were issued to policemen in each of the police authorities in England and Wales in each of the last seven years for which information is available; and on how many occasions they were used. [71966]

Mr. Byrne: The number of operations in which firearms were issued since 1996-97 for each force in England and Wales is shown in the table. The number of incidents when the police opened fire using conventional firearms is also shown in the following table.

Number of incidents where conventional firearms were used

	Incidents
1996-97	5
1997-98	3
1998-99	5
1999-2000	7
2000-01	9
2001-02	11
2002-03	10
2003-04	4
2004-05	5

Number of operations in which firearms were authorised

	1996-97	*1997-98*	*1998-99*	*1999-2000*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Total	12,379	11,842	10,928	10,915	11,109	13,991	14,827	16,657	15,981
Avon and Somerset	312	139	88	90	65	195	262	311	333
Bedfordshire	345	323	260	190	294	237	301	442	475
Cambridgeshire	54	96	43	75	71	114	57	104	241
Cheshire	288	216	299	386	545	419	451	397	358
Cleveland	1,026	103	35	76	28	37	170	453	530
City of London	308	307	147	125	3	40	131	364	404
Cumbria	72	68	52	24	30	71	77	72	152
Derbyshire	109	147	176	178	167	275	401	369	287
Devon and Cornwall	160	133	61	65	151	101	96	112	71
Dorset	36	54	69	79	174	184	193	231	223
Durham	131	103	114	114	40	89	83	156	144
Essex	331	505	590	497	435	323	312	275	296
Gloucestershire	41	51	52	52	48	165	185	127	176
Greater Manchester	214	165	160	224	357	580	518	507	461
Hampshire	245	217	129	103	114	198	162	208	237
Hertfordshire	96	82	75	73	86	112	172	195	185
Humberside	291	472	317	193	158	297	187	183	206
Kent	236	423	92	85	83	115	137	207	163
Lancashire	333	338	616	267	242	232	238	318	241
Leicestershire	155	89	109	222	217	300	268	295	260
Lincolnshire	58	52	57	155	336	477	392	386	294
Merseyside	671	675	484	489	825	1020	628	751	733

Number of operations in which firearms were authorised

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Metropolitan	2,439	2,578	2,742	2,862	1,862	2,447	3,199	3,563	2,964
Norfolk	166	128	185	239	226	175	200	178	195
Northamptonshire	64	73	51	57	58	43	138	148	158
Northumbria	1,360	823	683	465	708	1,440	1,275	1,140	977
North Yorkshire	65	102	69	612	72	92	100	147	185
Nottinghamshire	84	306	266	255	233	384	452	459	408
South Yorkshire	155	302	135	237	127	258	463	484	546
Staffordshire	257	240	209	174	203	232	281	255	216
Suffolk	180	193	174	165	176	163	270	251	153
Surrey	133	87	60	143	221	245	247	203	151
Sussex	235	330	123	185	353	248	204	280	187
Thames Valley	215	227	158	110	153	179	167	195	289
Warwickshire	97	152	291	194	233	130	149	164	124
West Mercia	106	132	130	110	36	117	91	197	162
West Midlands	270	227	305	362	485	822	902	1,377	1264
West Yorkshire	617	630	662	813	822	757	604	575	853
Wiltshire	26	26	24	19	66	45	58	63	88
Dyfed Powys	17	27	38	37	18	28	29	28	51
Gwent	89	86	64	39	30	20	37	40	81
North Wales	233	310	386	371	195	302	259	197	223
South Wales	59	101	148	255	363	283	281	250	236

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to issue guidance to police forces in England and Wales on the powers available under section 52 of the Police Reform Act 2002 for the seizure of mini-motorbikes; and if he will make a statement. [72095]

Mr. Byrne: Section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002 empowers the police to seize vehicles, including mini-motorbikes, being driven inconsiderately or carelessly on road contrary to section three of the Road Traffic Act 1988, or off-road without authority, contrary to sections 34 of the Act if at the same time they are being driven in such a manner as to cause or be likely to cause alarm, distress or annoyance to members of the public.

The Home Office issued on 1 November 2005 additional guidance to the police on their power to seize vehicles being used in an anti-social manner. This included examples of best practice where the police were working with the local authority to make effective use of the powers available to the two agencies. The Home Office has organised a number of Action Days with anti-social behaviour practitioners to share best practice around the topic of anti-social use of vehicles and has provided guidance specifically on mini-motorbike misuse through the TOGETHER website: www.together.gov.uk

Where mini-motorbike nuisance has been identified as a problem locally we would expect the local crime and disorder strategy to address it making use of the guidance issued as appropriate.

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the starting salary was of a police officer in the Cleveland police area in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2005. [72594]

Mr. Byrne: The starting salary for a police constable in Cleveland on appointment and prior to the completion of initial training was *(a)* £15,438 from September 1997 and *(b)* £20,397 from September 2005.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much funding was made available to the Shropshire Division of West Mercia police for the Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign. [72389]

Mr. Byrne: Shropshire Division of West Mercia police was allocated £3,000 by the Police Standards Unit for the third national Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign (AMEC 3), which ran from 14 November 2005 until the end of that year. The division did not submit a bid for funding for the fourth Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign, which is taking place from 8 May to 8 June 2006.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what training is given to telephone call handlers in police call centres; and if he will make a statement. [71579]

Mr. Byrne: Forces currently provide extensive induction training to call handling staff lasting approximately four to six weeks. Training varies from force to force, but mainly consists of modules around basic call handling skills, questioning skills, caller expectation settings and also includes IT systems training, policy and procedures, minimal law training and in some forces self-care and stress management.

The National Call-handling Standard (NCHS), currently being introduced to forces, includes the provision of a detailed training package.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were employed in *(a)* armed response units and *(b)* specialist firearms officers teams in Bedfordshire police force in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [71577]

Mr. Byrne: The number of authorised firearms officers in Bedfordshire police since 1996-97 are shown in the table. We do not hold information on whether these officers are in armed response units or specialist firearms officers' teams.

Authorised Firearms Officers (AFOs), Bedfordshire

	Number
1996-97	46
1997-98	42
1998-99	50
1999-2000	46
2000-01	45
2001-02	48
2002-03	53
2003-04	58
2004-05	56

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what national guidelines are issued to *(a)* police firearms units and *(b)* specialist firearms officers teams on handling incidents; and if he will make a statement. [71582]

Mr. Byrne: National guidance on the handling of firearms incidents is contained within the association of chief police officers (ACPO) manual of guidance on police use of firearms available on the ACPO website (www.acpo.police.co.uk).

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times the use of firearms was authorised in operations in each police force in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [71594]

Mr. Byrne: The number of operations in which firearms were authorised in each police force in England and Wales is shown in the table.

Number of operations in which firearms were authorised

	1996-97	*1997-98*	*1998-99*	*1999-00*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Total	12,379	11,842	10,928	10,915	11,109	13,991	14,827	16,657	15,981
Avon and Somerset	312	139	88	90	65	195	262	311	333
Bedfordshire	345	323	260	190	294	237	301	442	475
Cambridgeshire	54	96	43	75	71	114	57	104	241
Cheshire	288	216	299	386	545	419	451	397	358
Cleveland	1,026	103	35	76	28	37	170	453	530
City of London	308	307	147	125	3	40	131	364	404
Cumbria	72	68	52	24	30	71	77	72	152
Derbyshire	109	147	176	178	167	275	401	369	287
Devon and Cornwall	160	133	61	65	151	101	96	112	71
Dorset	36	54	69	79	174	184	193	231	223
Durham	131	103	114	114	40	89	83	156	144
Essex	331	505	590	497	435	323	312	275	296
Gloucestershire	41	51	52	52	48	165	185	127	176
Gtr Manchester	214	165	160	224	357	580	518	507	461
Hampshire	245	217	129	103	114	198	162	208	237
Hertfordshire	96	82	75	73	86	112	172	195	185
Humberside	291	472	317	193	158	297	187	183	206
Kent	236	423	92	85	83	115	137	207	163
Lancashire	333	338	616	267	242	232	238	318	241
Leicestershire	155	89	109	222	217	300	268	295	260
Lincolnshire	58	52	57	155	336	477	392	386	294
Merseyside	671	675	484	489	825	1,020	628	751	733
Metropolitan	2,439	2,578	2,742	2,862	1,862	2,447	3,199	3,563	2,964
Norfolk	166	128	185	239	226	175	200	178	195
Northamptonshire	64	77	51	57	58	43	138	148	158
Northumbria	1,360	823	683	465	708	1,440	1,275	1,140	977
North Yorkshire	65	102	69	612	72	92	100	147	185
Nottinghamshire	84	306	266	255	233	384	452	459	408
South Yorkshire	155	302	135	237	127	258	463	484	546
Staffordshire	257	240	209	174	203	232	281	255	216
Suffolk	180	193	174	165	176	163	270	251	153
Surrey	133	87	60	143	221	245	247	203	151
Sussex	235	330	123	185	353	248	204	280	187
Thames Valley	215	[illegible]	158	110	153	179	167	195	289
Warwickshire	97	[illegible]	291	194	233	130	149	164	124
West Mercia	106	[illegible]	130	110	36	117	91	197	162
West Midlands	270	[illegible]	305	362	485	822	902	1,377	1,264
West Yorkshire	617	[illegible]	662	813	822	757	604	575	853
Wiltshire	26	[illegible]	24	19	66	45	58	63	88

Number of operations in which firearms were authorised

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Dyfed Powys	17	27	38	37	18	28	29	28	51
Gwent	89	86	64	39	30	20	37	40	81
North Wales	233	310	386	371	195	302	259	197	223
South Wales	59	101	148	255	363	283	281	250	236

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made of the impact of the proposed restructuring of police forces on the provision of *(a)* armed response units and *(b)* specialist firearms officers teams; and if he will make a statement. [71595]

Mr. Byrne: The assessment found that the resources providing the armed response function were required to be dual-function, providing other services such as roads policing. Clearly, this caused difficulties in trying to respond to simultaneous incidents. In addition, many smaller forces did not provide their own (expensive) specialist firearms services but looked to neighbouring forces to assist them as and when incidents occurred, relying on goodwill and building in a delay to what is often an urgent requirement.

The impact of restructuring will be that new forces will have sufficient resilience to provide armed response units dedicated solely to this function. This will allow them to gain greater skills and experience and have sufficient capacity to focus on not just responding to firearms incidents but also preventative work. Forces will be of sufficient size to allow them to develop their own dedicated, specialist firearms services, improving their training, expertise and experience of incidents as well as negating their reliance upon others for those services.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many training courses have been provided by Bedfordshire police in *(a)* initial firearms, *(b)* armed response vehicles, *(c)* specialist firearms officers, *(d)* national firearms instructors, *(e)* tactical refreshers for authorised firearms officers and *(f)* firearms incident command training; and if he will make a statement. [71644]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not held centrally. Training police officers in the use of firearms is an operational matter for individual chief officers.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received on the deployment of *(a)* armed response units and *(b)* specialist firearms officers in Bedfordshire; and if he will make a statement. [71645]

Mr. Byrne: We have received no representations about the deployment of firearms officers by Bedfordshire police. The deployment of police officers is an operational matter for chief officers.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were employed in *(a)* armed response units and *(b)* specialist firearms officers teams in each police force in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [71649]

Mr. Byrne: The number of Authorised Firearms Officers in each force in England and Wales since 1996-97 is shown in the table. We do not hold information on whether these officers are in armed response units or specialist firearms officers' teams.

Number of authorised firearms officers (AFOs)

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Total	6,738	6,585	6,308	6,262	6,064	5,776	5,763	6,096	6,243
Avon and Somerset	165	161	153	150	135	116	84	122	118
Bedfordshire	46	42	50	46	45	48	53	58	56
Cambridgeshire	90	80	80	77	73	56	71	60	60
Cheshire	70	82	70	75	74	81	89	75	76
Cleveland	86	84	78	80	75	85	80	95	100
City of London	88	81	55	73	74	73	72	86	89
Cumbria	108	122	98	98	94	92	87	89	90
Derbyshire	110	100	87	77	81	80	69	70	74
Devon and Cornwall	151	147	82	119	100	108	115	132	123
Dorset	74	72	72	66	67	57	59	60	64
Durham	138	144	96	101	101	86	102	97	103
Essex	228	217	235	228	195	180	184	186	202
Gloucestershire	82j	84	79	77	72	71	80	82	93
Gtr Manchester	209	182	217	218	240	219	202	205	187
Hampshire	106	112	110	111	100	87	94	94	92
Hertfordshire	42	41	43	52	44	46	47	50	53
Humberside	90	102	102	97	102	96	96	96	101
Kent	150	150	130	136	136	113	93	90	94
Lancashire	132	125	132	143	132	138	129	122	115
Leicestershire	104	94	90	90	85	69	68	51	53
Lincolnshire	82	85	75	78	80	91	87	78	86

Number of authorised firearms officers (AFOs)

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Merseyside	147	165	121	96	103	78	84	94	93
Metropolitan	2,035	1,971	1,951	1,977	1,940	1,805	1,823	2,060	2,134
Norfolk	98	102	109	110	114	104	109	114	125
Northamptonshire	92	92	92	75	77	51	56	52	50
Northumbria	173	126	123	114	109	125	99	90	93
North Yorkshire	108	95	83	59	66	66	64	60	56
Nottinghamshire	128	129	120	116	137	136	131	138	138
South Yorkshire	110	108	90	100	98	92	100	98	122
Staffordshire	78	86	92	81	67	71	63	67	76
Suffolk	82	96	101	98	90	90	80	96	88
Surrey	76	61	69	71	72	62	48	53	49
Sussex	180	146	156	131	118	120	141	134	130
Thames Valley	185	194	179	187	185	156	180	172	176
Warwickshire	41	38	44	54	45	50	51	46	53
West Mercia	155	159	139	129	130	125	131	139	141
West Midlands	88	95	92	93	83	111	110	124	134
West Yorkshire	131	114	128	110	117	116	132	140	130
Wiltshire	134	105	88	89	71	71	78	80	74
Dyfed Powys	70	71	67	65	61	77	62	58	79
Gwent	70	59	64	68	66	57	60	71	74
North Wales	72	90	97	92	67	83	75	73	65
South Wales	134	176	169	155	143	138	125	139	134

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was spent on training for members of *(a)* armed response units and *(b)* specialist firearms officers teams in each police force in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [71651]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not collected centrally. It is a matter for individual chief officers of police to decide how many trained authorised firearms officers are needed within their force, based on a thorough threat and risk assessment.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* average pay and *(b)* average yearly percentage change in pay was of a (i) police constable, (ii) police sergeant, (iii) police inspector and (iv) chief constable in each of the last 20 years in real terms at current prices. [56210]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 22 May 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question to ask what the *(a)* average pay and *(b)* average yearly percentage change in pay was of a (i) police constable, (ii) police sergeant, (iii) police inspector and (iv) chief constable in each of the last 20 years in real terms at current prices. I am replying in her absence. (56210).

Average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for full time employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work. Earlier estimates are from the New Earnings Survey (NES) which used a similar definition for earnings estimates.

I attach tables showing Average Gross Weekly Earnings and growth in pay, by occupation for the years 1986 to 2005. Estimates of changes between years are subject to sampling variations. In particular some changes prior to the introduction of ASHE in 1997 should be treated with caution. The occupational classification used for ASHE have only two levels of classification relating to police officers, which are given in the attached tables. Current prices refer to figures expressed in terms of the prices that were current for the period. Consequently figures for 2000 are in terms of prices that were current in 2000 and figure for 1990 are in terms of prices that were current in 1990.

The ASHE and its predecessor NES, carried out in April of each year, are the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. They are based on a one per cent. sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Gross weekly (£) pay for full time employee jobs [1] by occupation

	Police officers (inspectors and above) [2]			
	Media	Growth	Mean	Growth
1986	355	—	373	—
1987	386	8.7	400	7.1
1988	424	40.0	446	11.6
1989	439	3.6	462	3.6
1990	456	3.8	490	6.1
1991	528	15.7	565	15.2
1992	554	5.0	590	4.4
1993	600	8.4	631	7.0
1994	577	3.9	634	0.6
1995	627	8.7	646	1.8
1996	655	4.5	679	5.1
1997 [3]	671	2.4	684	0.9
1997	671	—	685	—
1998	707	5.4	721	52
1999	707	0.1	743	3.1
2000	716	1.2	775	4.3
2001	743	3.8	814	5.1
2002	752	1.1	831	2.1

Gross weekly (£) pay for full time employee jobs [1] by occupation

Police officers (inspectors and above) [2]

	Media	Growth	Mean	Growth
2003	801	6.6	864	4.0
2004	825	2.9	903	4.4
2004 [4]	836	—	903	—
2005	922	[5]—	1,017	[5]—

Police officers (sergeant and below) [2]

	Median	Growth	Mean	Growth
1986	235	—	247	—
1987	250	6.2	263	6.1
1988	272	8.9	286	8.8
1989	291	6.7	303	6.2
1990	329	13.4	340	12.0
1991	361	9.5	377	11.1
1992	405	12.2	412	9.1
1993	410	1.2	424	3.0
1994	413	0.9	428	0.8
1995	426	3.0	440	2.9
1996	445	4.7	463	5.2
1997 [3]	460	3.2	471	1.7
1997	466	—	479	—
1998	483	3.7	495	3.5
1999	503	4.1	514	3.7
2000	523	4.0	535	4.1
2001	542	3.7	564	5.4
2002	559	3.1	582	3.2
2003	586	4.9	612	5.3
2004	599	2.1	627	2.5
2004 [4]	605	—	632	—
2005	660	[5]—	677	[5]—

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.

[2] Discontinuities exist within NES and ASHE data over time, these have been reflected within the above time series.

[3] From 1985-97 estimates are based on the New Earnings Survey. From 1997-2005 estimates are based on the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.

[4] In 2004 additional supplementary surveys were introduced to improve the coverage of the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings. Figures are presented both excluding and including the additional surveys for comparison purposes.

[5] Figures for average gross weekly earnings are discontinuous for these occupations in 2005 due to a change in the ASHE questionnaire. Figures for 2005 include allowances that were not previously included. Growths can be estimated from figures for basic pay excluding those allowances for both years.

2005 growth in basic pay:

Police officers (inspectors and above): Median: 2.6; Mean: 2.4

Police officers (sergeant and below): Median: 3.0; Mean: 2.8

Guide to quality:

The Coefficient of Variation (CV) indicates the quality of a figure, the smaller the CV value the higher the quality.

The true value is likely to lie within +/- twice the CV e.g. for an average of 200 with a CV of 5 per cent. we would expect the population average to be within the range 180 to 220.

The above estimates have a CV of less than 5 per cent.

The median replaces the mean as the heading statistic. The weighted mean is the sum of the weighted values divided by the sum of the weights. The median is the value below which 50 per cent. of employees fall. It is preferred over the mean for earnings data as it is influenced less by extreme values and because of the skewed distribution of earnings data.

Source:

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received on an all-Wales police force; and how many of those representations were *(a)* in favour of and *(b)* opposed to such a force. [66024]

Mr. Byrne: The four Welsh police authorities submitted business cases in December, but at that point were unable to indicate a preferred option. They all recognise that a single strategic force for Wales is operationally viable, although they share some concerns. We have received various other representations, including from the forces, the Welsh Assembly and local authorities.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many students are taking part in policing foundation degree courses; what the cost of the programme will be in 2006-07; if he will list the forces that have opted into the project; and if he will make a statement. [70900]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 16 May 2006]:* We do not have figures as to the numbers who are taking part in foundation degrees in these or other forces.

The Government are providing forces in 2006-07 and 2007-08 with funding for the initial police learning and development programme (IPLDP) of £3,000 per police officer recruit, up to a level of recruitment that maintains officer numbers at the level that they reached at 31 March 2005. This is a national programme that provides forces with flexibility to tailor their initial police training to local needs.

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police there are in the Metropolitan police force. [68132]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is available in the "Police Service Strength publication as at 30 September 2005". This report was published on 23 January 2006 and is available in the Library of the House and on: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/hosb0106.pdf

Prison

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners were released on licence during each of the last eight financial years. [48789]

Mr. Sutcliffe: For an indication of the number released since 1997, see Table 7.1 of the "Home Office Statistical Bulletin: Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2004", a copy of which can be found in the House of Commons Library. This table shows the number of receptions into prison establishments in each year since 1994. Chapter 10 of the same publication explains release arrangements for prisoners.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the earliest stage is in the criminal procedure at which evidence of an individual's nationality is requested; in what written form such information is *(a)* requested and *(b)* maintained; and on how many occasions and at what cost a translator has been used in such circumstances in each year since 1997. [69518]

Mr. Byrne: Section seven of the PACE Code on Practice on Detention, treatment and questioning of persons by police officers (Code C) requires that any person held in police detention who is a citizen of an independent Commonwealth country or a national of a foreign country, including the Republic of Ireland, may communicate at any time with the appropriate high commission, embassy or consulate. If the detainee is a citizen of a country with which a bilateral consular convention or agreement is in force requiring notification of arrest the appropriate high commission, embassy or consulate shall be informed as soon as practicable.

Establishing the nationality of a person suspected of involvement in an offence prior to this stage is not requested or required unless it is considered relevant to an offence. The information will be recorded on the person's custody record in accordance with section two of PACE Code C. Information is not held centrally on the number of such detainees or the cost of translators.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisons run remedial programmes for inmates with personality disorders. [51917]

Mr. Sutcliffe: HMP Dovegate and HMP Grendon run large therapeutic communities while HMP Gartree, HMP Blundeston and HMYOI Aylesbury run smaller therapeutic communities. A new women's therapeutic community is being developed at HMP Send. These communities offer long term residential treatment programmes where emotional and psychological needs are addressed together with risk factors relating to offending behaviour.

For prisoners with dangerous and severe personality disorder, there are units at HMP Frankland and HMP Whitemoor. There is also a prison-based specialist in-reach service for up to 12 women who are dangerous as a result of a personality disorder which has recently opened at HMP Low Newton.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* juvenile inmates have been diagnosed with (i) one, (ii) two and (iii) more than two mental health disorders; and if he will make a statement. [58211]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information is not available in the form requested. The information available, from a survey of psychiatric morbidity among prisoners in England and Wales in 1997, by the Office for National Statistics, is shown in the following table.

Percentage of mental disorders by prisoner type

Number of mental disorders	*Male*	*Female*	*Young offenders*
One	20	19	16
Two	28	28	25
Two plus	44	42	54

Source:
Psychiatric Morbidity Amongst Prisoners in England and Wales (ONS, 1998)

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 7 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1318W, on prisoners, what information his Department collects on prisoners who have Sky TV in their cells. [60351]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Prisoners' access to Sky television in-cell is based on a quarterly Incentives and Earned Privileges assessment, which incorporates records of recent behaviour and achievement. While the public sector Prison Service records relevant information on all prisoners, including their offence history and prison record, this information is not linked to records of prisoners who have access to Sky television.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 7 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1318W, on prisoners, what the cost to the Prison Service is of prisoners receiving Sky TV in their cells. [60352]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Sky television subscriptions in the four public sector prisons where it is available to some prisoners in cell cost £1,533.38 a month. However, 665 of the prisoners with access to Sky TV in cell are held in contracted-out prisons where the cost of the facility is not borne by the Prison Service.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the staff turnover rates were in prisons operated by the *(a)* public sector and *(b)* private sector in each of the last five years; what assessment he has made of the two figures; and if he will make a statement. [57760]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Information on the turnover rate of permanent staff, including retirements, within public sector Prison Service establishments is detailed in the following table. Information on staffing turnover in the contracted estate is not routinely collected and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Percentage

	Staff turnover in public sector prisons
2001	7.7
2002	7.4
2003	8.0
2004	7.7
2005	7.7

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many mobile telephones have been recovered at each prison in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available; how many of these telephones were recovered *(a)* as a result of mobile telephone detectors and *(b)* after analysis of recovered handsets; and if he will make a statement. [48422]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information is as follows:

(a) Mobile phone detectors are now being used more readily across the prison estate although the data of these finds is not recorded centrally.

From 1 September 2005 the National Dog and Technical Support Group has been recording details of mobile phones and SIM cards that prisons have passed to them for specialist investigation. Data obtained cannot be broken down to identify those mobile phones and SIM cards found as a result of detectors.

(b) Data on the number of mobile phones found as a result of analysis of handsets is not recorded.

Mobile phone and SIM card interrogation fiscal year record

Establishment	*September 2005*	*October 2005*	*November 2005*	*December 2005*	*January 2006*
Ashwell	—	—	—	—	7
Aylesbury	—	—	2	—	—
Bedford	—	4	6	2	5
Bristol	2	9	2	5	5
Brixton	1	—	—	—	—
Blundeston	6	6	1	9	6
Brinsford	—	—	—	1	—
Bullingdon	—	—	1	—	2
Bullwood Hall	—	—	1	—	—
Blakenhurst	—	—	1	8	1
Canterbury	—	—	—	3	1
Chelmsford	1	1	1	—	4
Cookham Wood	—	—	—	—	2
Doncaster	1	—	—	—	—
Dorchester	1	1	—	—	—
Deerbolt	—	2	—	—	—
Dartmoor	—	1	—	—	—
Drake Hall	—	—	—	1	—
Edmund Hill	1	—	—	—	—
Elmley	—	—	—	2	—
Erlestoke	2	—	6	—	—
Exeter	—	—	—	—	1
Feltham	5	—	—	—	—
Featherstone	3	—	—	—	—
Full Sutton	1	—	6	4	1
Ford	1	1	—	1	6
Forrest Bank	—	—	—	—	1
Garth	7	1	13	13	5
Glen Parva	—	1	—	—	—
Gloucester	—	—	—	—	1
Hatfield	—	1	—	—	—
Highdown	—	—	1	—	—
Hindley	—	—	1	—	1
Highpoint	29	20	15	3	7
Hull	1	2	—	—	1
Haverigg	1	4	3	4	4
Holme House	—	1	1	2	—
Kirkham	2	3	3	2	2
Kirklevington	—	—	—	1	—
Kingstone	—	—	1	—	—
Leeds	2	5	2	6	3
Long Lartin	3	—	1	6	12
Leicester	2	—	—	—	—
Lewes	—	7	2	—	7
Leyhill	—	—	—	—	3
Liverpool	—	—	—	12	4
Little Hey	—	—	3	1	—
Morton Hall	—	1	—	—	—
Maidstone	2	3	1	—	—
Manchester	—	11	—	—	—
Moorland	—	—	3	—	3
North Sea Camp	4	2	1	6	5
Nottingham	3	—	—	—	—

Mobile phone and SIM card interrogation fiscal year record

Establishment	*September 2005*	*October 2005*	*November 2005*	*December 2005*	*January 2006*
Northallerton	2	—	1	1	—
Norwich	1	3	3	1	4
Onley	1	—	—	—	1
Parkhurst	2	—	—	—	4
Peterborough	—	1	—	1	—
Risley	2	—	—	—	—
Reading	—	1	—	—	—
Springhill	—	—	—	6	13
Stocken	—	—	—	4	3
Sudbury	—	—	—	3	1
Swansea	2	1	—	—	1
Swaleside	—	—	—	4	8
Swinfen Hall	1	2	—	1	1
Stafford	—	7	4	—	—
The Mount	—	—	—	—	7
Usk	—	1	—	—	—
Verne	1	—	—	1	2
Wakefield	—	—	—	—	1
Wayland	4	—	5	—	—
Wandsworth	39	8	—	—	—
Wealstun	—	6	—	1	—
Wellingborough	—	—	—	—	1
Wymott	—	3	—	3	—
Wolds	—	1	—	—	—
Woodhill	—	2	—	1	1
Total	136	123	91	119	148

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance *(a)* Ministers, *(b)* departmental officials and *(c)* the Prison Service have issued over the last 12 months regarding the role of the police in investigating the supply of contraband within the prison estate; on what date the guidance was issued; and if he will make a statement. [48423]

Mr. Sutcliffe: On 6 December 2005, the Director of Operations wrote to all governing governors of public sector prisons, reminding them that the police must be contacted whenever visitors or staff were found in possession of classified drugs. Where governors believed that referral to the police was not appropriate, the case had to be considered by a director at Prison Service headquarters.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many prison governors have faced investigation into drugs-related offences at each establishment in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement; [48431]

(2) how many prison officers at each prison establishment have been investigated for drugs-related offences in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [48499]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information requested was not held in a form that enables a distinction between grade or by year. Investigations are registered under the main category of offence being investigated. Between 1 July 2000 and 1 February 2006, there were three investigations registered under significant drug find and 82 under trafficking.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on the provision of visitors' facilities at adult prisons and young offender institutions in England and Wales; and what the Prison Service budget is for such provision. [55076]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government recognise the importance of family and community ties to resettlement and the wider reducing reoffending strategy. Contact between prisoners and their friends and families is supported in a number of ways.

Facilities for visitors vary across the prison estate, depending on the location and type of prison. They include visitors' centres, play areas in visitors' centres and visits halls, family and children's visits, and family contact workers. The specific provision at each establishment, including financing, is a matter for individual governors.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time (i) chaplains, (ii) rabbis, (iii) imams and (iv) clerics of other religions are employed by the Prison Service in England and Wales. [55077]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table details the number of directly employed chaplains within the public sector Prison Service and is broken down by the religion of the chaplain. There are no directly employed rabbis recorded as Jewish. In addition to directly employed chaplains, a large number of chaplains also work for the Prison Service on a sessional (fee paid) basis but the numbers are not recorded centrally.

Number of directly employed chaplains within the public sector Prison Service

Denomination	Full-time	Part-time	Total
Christian	170	99	269
Muslim	26	13	39
Hindu	1	—	1
Total	197	112	309

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding his Department is making available for building new prisons to replace ageing buildings in the prison estate. [55481]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I refer the hon. Member to my answer published in *Hansard* on 1 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 581.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the need for step-down facilities at HM Prison Grendon for prisoners who have completed their course; and what steps are being taken by his Department to increase access and funding for step-down facilities at the prison. [55491]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Following a recommendation in her most recent inspection report, the Chief Inspector made a recommendation that there should be specific planning to assist prisoners at Grendon reintegrate into the mainstream prison system, including follow-up support for prisoners after they move to other prisons.

A review was completed, and such an initiative would be welcome, but funding is not currently available.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the proportion of prisons that keep food premises *(a)* clean, *(b)* pest free and *(c)* in good repair. [60719]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Catering standards in prisons are audited by the Service's Standard Audit Unit on a two-year cycle. In 2005-06, 16 per cent. of audits against the baseline for food premises being clean, pest free and in good repair, were fully compliant. A further 44 per cent. of audits during the same period show that minor action was needed to fully meet the requirements. Action plans are agreed to correct all deficiencies identified following each audit.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of transfers of inmates between prison establishments for each year since 1997, broken down by prison establishment. [62135]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Figures on the transfer of prisoners between establishments have been centrally recorded since 2003. Details of transfers in the last three years are set out in the following table.

Prisoner transfers by prison and year

	Transfers out		
Prisons	2003	2004	2005
Acklington	335	322	330
Albany	125	111	48
Altcourse	1,808	1,881	1,719
Ashfield	516	158	171
Ashwell	477	493	540
Askham Grange	40	45	40
Aylesbury	164	192	151
Bedford	1,624	1,462	1,571
Belmarsh	1,908	1,865	1,952
Birmingham	2,374	1,968	2,810
Blakenhurst	2,995	3,019	2,349
B'antyre House	35	16	34
Blundeston	379	339	381
Brinsford	1,190	1,285	1,128
Bristol	2,050	2,068	1,767
Brixton	1,985	2,143	2,130
Brockhill	976	832	506
Bronzefield	—	372	1199
Buckley Hall	261	221	284
Bullingdon	1,447	1,173	1,277
Bullwood Hall	100	87	85
Camp Hill	289	354	388
Canterbury	375	253	257
Cardiff	846	951	790
Castington	760	583	563
Channings Wood	228	307	301
Chelmsford	1,648	1,857	2,060
Coldingley	313	270	348
Cookham Wood	132	208	91
Dartmoor	354	292	385
Deerbolt	225	273	163
Doncaster	2,694	2,451	2,143
Dorchester	1,054	939	995
Dovegate	466	475	289
Dover	21	11	6
Downview	176	152	150
Drake Hall	103	115	69
Durham	1,738	1,476	1,179
East Sutton Park	15	27	30
Eastwood Park	887	567	255
Edmunds Hill	452	505	163
Elmley	2,095	1,976	2,210
Erlestoke	302	355	363
Everthorpe	209	296	263
Exeter	1,101	1,143	1,172
Featherstone	414	383	366
Feltham	2,241	2,262	2,182
Ford	279	277	262
Forest Bank	1,752	1,976	1,851
Foston Hall	324	254	348
Frankland	158	174	145
Full Sutton	290	302	253
Garth	361	352	430
Gartree	105	119	121
Glen Parva	994	855	903
Gloucester	1,251	1,373	1,225
Grendon	112	116	125
Guys Marsh	411	436	449
Haslar	27	5	1
Haverigg	756	699	714

Prisoner transfers by prison and year

Prisons	Transfers out 2003	2004	2005
Hewell Grange	91	122	119
Highdown	1,965	1,895	2,139
Highpoint	445	490	585
Hindley	595	561	523
Hollesley Bay	178	247	213
Holloway	2,261	1,827	988
Holme House	1,229	924	722
Hull	2,145	1,906	2,028
Huntercombe	134	162	140
Kingston	92	36	42
Kirkham	423	494	376
Kirklevington	49	66	68
Lancaster	137	171	172
Lancaster Farms	1,293	1,713	1,622
Latchmere House	45	30	39
Leeds	1,952	2,144	2,386
Leicester	1,764	1,645	1,619
Lewes	1,206	1,123	1,083
Leyhill	276	334	272
Lincoln	852	1280	1193
Lindholme	568	476	447
Littlehey	314	287	273
Liverpool	1,382	1,469	1,678
Long Lartin	267	269	220
Low Newton	258	138	91
Lowdham Grange	329	375	328
Maidstone	533	282	225
Manchester	2,100	1,747	1,747
Moorland	550	539	501
Moorland Open	212	230	228
Morton Hall	103	133	69
Mount	553	604	463
New Hall	899	863	395
North Sea Camp	178	178	144
Northallerton	255	106	127
Norwich	1,162	1,190	1,309
Nottingham	2,362	2,284	2,153
Onley	459	427	280
Pare	627	745	494
Parkhurst	332	255	234
Pentonville	2,589	2,437	3,080
Peterborough	—	—	587
Portland	290	354	229
Prescoed	63	88	57
Preston	2,000	1,781	1,852
Ranby	515	592	677
Reading	589	658	689
Risley	734	824	817
Rochester	92	190	228
Rye Hill	324	374	329
Send	151	161	60
Shepton Mallet	78	82	74
Shrewsbury	1,395	1,007	971
Spring Hill	163	214	177
Stafford	509	316	341
Standford Hill	380	354	328
Stocken	366	390	444
Stoke Heath	521	899	843
Styal	907	648	584

Prisoner transfers by prison and year

Prisons	Transfers out 2003	2004	2005
Sudbury	245	274	285
Swaleside	320	312	290
Swansea	578	637	621
Swinfen Hall	136	115	130
Thorn Cross	294	252	257
Usk	59	62	50
Verne	282	410	289
Wakefield	137	160	157
Wandsworth	2,136	2,252	2,410
Wayland	406	439	438
Wealstun	428	328	281
Weare	306	326	178
Wellingborough	355	372	405
Werrington	106	87	100
Wetherby	321	251	162
Whatton	68	98	81
Whitemoor	180	167	136
Winchester	1,765	1,808	1,561
Wolds	245	220	172
Woodhill	1,770	1,988	2,278
Wormwood Scrubs	1,921	2,049	2,465
Wymott	290	412	495
Total	101,467	99,788	97,975

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how data is collected on the hours spent by prisoners undertaking purposeful activity; and what estimate he has made of the time prison officers spent collecting this information in the last period for which figures are available. [69900]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Data for purposeful activity is collected electronically from establishments. Every week each prison reports information on the number of prisoners undertaking a range of activities defined as purposeful. Specific software is available to prisons for reporting this data.

Data is not available on the amount of time spent collecting this information. This could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners have escaped from prison in England and Wales in each of the last 20 years. [70065]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table shows the total number of prisoners who have escaped in the last 10 calendar years and this year to date. The table contains the total number of Key Performance Indicator (KPI) escapes from prisons. A KPI escape is one where (a) the prisoner is not captured within 15 minutes or (b) the prisoner is recaptured within 15 minutes but has committed an offence other than escape before recapture. Once a prisoner is unlawfully at large the matter passes into the hands of the police.

Number of escapes from prisons in England and Wales since 1996 to date

	Total escapes from establishments	Total KPI escapes
1996	28	42
1997	23	23
1998	63	24
1999	32	32
2000	15	12
2001	13	14
2002	8	9
2003	12	11
2004	10	10
2005	3	3
2006 to date	2	2

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the 10 most common offences are for which women are sent to prison in England and Wales, broken down by age group. [70083]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information requested is contained in the following table:

Women sentenced to immediate custody at all courts in England and Wales in 2004—top 10 offences
Number of women sentenced to immediate custody

Offence	Aged 10-17	Aged 18-20	Aged 21 and over	All ages
Theft from shops	35	172	2,139	2,346
Other wounding etc[1]	89	85	344	518
Production, supply and possession with intent to supply a class A drug	8	40	437	485
'Other' fraud[2]	6	22	429	457
Failing to surrender to bail	3	42	408	453
Robbery	79	57	217	353
Burglary in a dwelling	26	28	267	321
Driving whilst disqualified	4	12	300	316
Common assault	48	50	210	308
Assault on a constable	23	44	221	288
All Offences	444	819	7,491	8,754

[1] Mostly wounding or inflicting GBH (without intent) [2] Mostly obtaining property by deception. *Source:* RDS-NOMS, Home Office

Roger Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the expenditure was on prisoner education in each of the last two years. [70983]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department for Education and Skills had a ring-fenced budget for offenders' learning and skills of £136 million in 2004-05 and £151 million in 2005-06. This covers learning and skills provision in prisons as well as for offenders in the community.

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when work commenced on the rebuilding and refurbishment programme at HMP Chelmsford; when the work ceased due to financial problems; when work is expected to recommence; and if he will make a statement. [48371]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* The project partnering agreement that allowed the constructor to commence detailed design work was signed in March 2005. Some preliminary site set-up activities commenced in March and the actual pre-commencement activity started on 31 May 2005. This involved refurbishment of the existing old healthcare building, detailed design of the project and site preparation (fencing) for construction of the new houseblock.

No building work started on the new houseblock, visits and workshop as the costs of these works were found to be above the budget when the constructor's detailed tender costs were submitted in August 2005. The estate planning committee (the governance authority) agreed the increased budget cost of £5.5 million on 27 September 2005 and the project was authorised to continue. The finalised contract value of £26.5 million for a new houseblock, workshop and visits building together with major refurbishments of the gatehouse, old healthcare and old visits buildings was submitted by the constructor and the full commencement agreement was signed on 10 October 2005 and work fully re-commenced immediately.

The new houseblock and visits are expected to be available in December 2006 with all the elements of the project finally completing in April 2007.

Probation

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders on probation under a community service order have been the subject of a recommendation by the Probation Service that they should be returned to prison in the last five years; and how many were subsequently returned to prison as a result of the recommendation. [69736]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The readily available information, which relates to the number of persons breaching community orders and those sentenced to immediate custody as a result, is published in Table 4.13 of "Sentencing Statistics, England and Wales, 2004" (page 92). This publication can be found in the Library and also on the Home Office website, as follows: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb1505.pdf

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what complaints his Department has received from *(a)* individuals and *(b)* groups regarding the workings of the probation services in each of the last five years. [45863]

Mr. Sutcliffe: A National Complaints Procedure, agreed by the Secretary of State, enables local probation areas to handle complaints. Complaints must however, be from individuals. Each probation area will maintain their own record of complaints received and the outcome of these cases. Unresolved local complaints are escalated to the independent Prison and Probation Ombudsman.

General correspondence from individuals or groups complaining about the probation service received from people who are ineligible to complain under the procedure above, will have been answered by the appropriate unit but the Department does not collect the information in the form requested.

	Number received	*Number eligible*
September 2001-March 2002	83	5
April 2002-March 2003	191	31
April 2003-March 2004	279	28
April 2004-March 2005	307	41

Public Order

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders were found guilty of *(a)* drunken and disorderly behaviour and *(b)* drunken and aggravated disorderly behaviour in (i) England and (ii) Kingston upon Hull, North in each year since 1997. [69774]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Data held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform showing the number of offenders convicted at all courts for 'simple drunkenness' and 'drunkenness with aggravation' in Kingston upon Hull petty sessional area and England, 1997-2004 are provided in the first table. It is not possible to separately identify convictions in Kingston upon Hull, North as the data are not collected at that level of detail.

Statistics for 2005 court proceedings will be available in the autumn of 2006.

Some drunkenness offences are now dealt with by penalty notice for disorder. Previously, such cases would have either gone to court or been dealt with by caution or informal warning. The penalty notice for disorder scheme (PND) was brought into effect in all police forces in England and Wales during 2004. Under the scheme the police are able to issue persons committing specified minor offences with a fixed penalty notice.

No admission of guilt is required and payment of the penalty discharges all liability for the offence. Data on the number of PNDs for offences related to drunkenness for 2004 and provisional data for 2005 are provided in the second table. Offences related to aggravated drunken behaviour are not included in the scheme.

Number of offenders found guilty at all courts for offences related to drunkenness, Kingston upon Hull petty sessional area and England, 1997 to 2004

	Kingston upon Hull		*England*	
	Drunkenness, simple	*Drunkenness with aggravation*	*Drunkenness, simple*	*Drunkenness with aggravation*
1997	5	60	3,333	22,474
1998	4	51	3,710	23,864
1999	3	65	3,134	22,764
2000	—	40	2,579	22,078
2001	2	23	2,424	21,468
2002	1	19	2,201	22,741
2003	2	19	1,999	23,893
2004	—	20	1,674	17,550

Note:
These data are provided on the principal offence basis
Source: RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform

Number of penalty notices for disorder issued in for offences related to drunkenness, England, 2004 and 2005 (provisional data).

	Total	*DA06 drunk and disorderly*	*DB05 drunk in a highway*	*DB07 consumption of alcohol in public place*
2004	28,455	25,591	2,387	477
2005 (provisional)	37,742	34,220	2,873	649

Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform.

Recruitment

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on recruitment, search and selection agencies in each of the last five years. [68339]

John Reid: The information requested cannot be provided except at disproportionate cost.

Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list recommendations from the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure which were *(a)* accepted, *(b)* implemented in legislation and *(c)* rejected; and if he will make a statement. [71982]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure was established in 1977 and published its final report in January 1981 (Cm 8092). The Commission made a wide range of recommendations. For example, its report is known to have influenced legislation governing police powers in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and also the establishment of an independent Crown Prosecution Service in the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985. There does not appear to have been a formal published Government response to the recommendations in the report and it is not possible to supply the detailed information requested. In the 25 years since the report was published there have been a number of other enquiries, most recently, Sir Robin Auld's Review of the Criminal Courts of England and Wales in 2001.

Rural Crime

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government are taking to reduce crime in rural areas; and if he will make a statement. [71596]

Mr. Byrne: Effective and responsive policing at neighbourhood level as well as robust partnership working are both essential parts of our strategy to tackle crime and to sustain the confidence and trust of the public in all parts of the country.

We introduced the Rural Policing Fund in 2000-01 specifically to enhance the visibility and accessibility of policing in rural areas. 31 police authorities with the most widespread populations have benefited from this additional funding. The annual allocation is £30 million. As part of the police funding settlement for 2006-07 and 2007-08, we have consolidated four specific grants, including the Rural Policing Fund, into a single provision for each police authority to give them more control over how they may be used. However, we expect authorities to honour commitments and agreed policy initiatives to build on the outstanding successes achieved by, for example, the Rural Policing Fund that has enhanced the visibility and accessibility of policing in rural areas.

We have invested in the police right across the country, and there are now more officers on the streets than there have ever been before. Bedfordshire police employed 121 more officers in March 2005 than it did in March 1997. Across England and Wales there were 14,072 extra officers in the same period, giving a record total of 141,230. We have also made a commitment that by April 2007, Neighbourhood Policing will have been introduced to every area in England and Wales.

There is a wide programme of work under way nationally to reduce violent crime, in both rural and urban areas. We have introduced the Violent Crime Reduction Bill, which contains new measures to ensure that police and local communities have the powers they need to tackle guns, knives and alcohol-related violence.

Three national Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaigns have taken place, with a fourth due to start before the football World Cup. Police operations targeting hotspots of alcohol-related disorder have included the use of fixed penalty notices, confiscation of alcohol and test purchases to address under-age sales. Bedfordshire police have taken part in these campaigns.

In Bedfordshire, a number of police operations have targeted violent crime and antisocial behaviour. Operation Coriander has seen high visibility police patrols targeting violence and antisocial behaviour in Flitwick with extra resources at peak times. Operation Lead has taken a similar approach to reducing violence in the night-time economy in several Bedfordshire towns. Additionally, alcohol exclusion zones and dispersal zones have been set up and are being enforced in several locations across the force area.

Violent crime as measured by British Crime Survey (BCS), considered to be the most reliable measure of violent crime in England and Wales, has fallen significantly in recent years. According to the BCS it has nearly halved (fallen by 43 per cent.) since a peak in 1995, an estimated 1.8 million fewer incidents. It has fallen by 34 per cent. since 1997, by 11 per cent. since 2003-04 and by 5 per cent. since 2004-05.

Security Industry Authority

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the cost of the Security Industry Authority to date. [58969]

Mr. Coaker: The Security Industry Authority (SIA) is required to be self-financing from the licence fee income but it was always anticipated that the SIA would not break even in its first couple of years, because of the gradual introduction of licensing which will eventually meet all the SIA's running costs. The deficit in the first year, 2003-04, was £7.1 million as the SIA had no licence income. In 2004-05, the deficit was £13 million, and the estimated deficit for 2005-06 is about £3.5 million.

Sex Trafficking

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the answer of 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 465-7W to the hon. Member for Richmond Park (Susan Kramer), on sex trafficking, what progress has been made on taking forward the necessary steps to ratify the UN convention against transnational organised crime and the related Palermo protocol. [71165]

Mr. Coaker: We recently ratified the Convention and its protocols on smuggling and trafficking, having put in place all the legislative requirements to bring our law into compliance with these instruments. The UK ratified the Convention and protocols on 9 February 2006 with an effective date of 11 March 2006.

Tagging Orders

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders have been found guilty of damaging their electronic tag while subject to a tagging order. [69367]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Between 1 April 2005, the start date of the new electronic monitoring contracts, and 30 April 2006, a total of 2,695 subjects breached their curfew requirements by maliciously damaging their tag.

The system is designed to ensure that any attempt to remove a tag within the curfew address automatically registers as a tamper at the electronic monitoring service provider's control centre.

Unsolicited Mail (Fraud)

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions of individuals using unsolicited mail to carry out fraudulent acts there were in the most recent year for which figures are available. [71575]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Data from the Court Proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of persons using unsolicited mail to carry out fraudulent acts is not available.

US Immigration Authorities

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the names of people arrested in England and Wales are reported to US immigration authorities by *(a)* the police and *(b)* other Government bodies. [70417]

Mr. Byrne: There are no arrangements for routinely supplying arrest details to US immigration authorities by either the police or other Government bodies. However, information may be shared between agencies during joint criminal investigations.

Witness Intimidation

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been convicted of intimidating witnesses in each of the last five years. [69744]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Data from the court proceedings database held by the office for criminal justice reform for the number of people convicted of intimidating witnesses in England and Wales for the years 2000 to 2004 can be found in the following table.

Data for 2005 will be available in the autumn of 2006.

Number of people convicted at all courts for offences relating to intimidating in England and Wales 2000 to 2004[1]

Principal statute	*Offence description*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*Year 2004*
Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, Sec. 51(1)	Intimidating a juror or witness or person assisting in investigation of offenders	364	348	415	467	523
Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, Sec. 51(2)	Harming or threatening to harm a juror, witness or a person assisting in investigation of offences	66	76	65	76	113
Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 S39	Intimidating or intending to intimidate a witness	0	0	3	2	10
Criminal Justice and Police Act S40	Harming or intending to harm a witness	0	0	1	2	2
	Total	430	424	484	547	648

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis

Workers Registration Scheme

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people from EU accession countries have registered on the Workers Registration Scheme in each year since its inception. [71687]

Mr. McNulty: 329,090 applicants to the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) were issued with WRS registration certificates and cards since the scheme's inception on 1 May 2004 to December 2005. This is made up of 125,870 for 2004 and 203,220 for 2005.

The figures quoted are for applicants rather than the number of applications made. The figures do not include multiple applications, where an individual is undertaking more than one job simultaneously, nor re-registrations, where an individual has changed employers. In addition, an individual who has registered to work and who leaves employment is not required to de-register, therefore some of those counted will have left the employment for which they registered and some are likely to have left the UK.

HEALTH

Abortions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she has plans to review the Abortion Act 1967; and if she will make a statement. [70408]

Caroline Flint: The Government have no plans to review the Abortion Act. It is accepted parliamentary practice that proposals for changes in the law on abortion have come from hon. and right hon. Members on the back benches and that decisions are made on the basis of free votes. In addition, key organisations in the medical profession are not pressing for a review of this area, for example, both the British Medical Association and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists have said that they do not believe there is a case for changing the time limits for an abortion.

Abuse by Health Staff

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many inquiries into abuse by health staff were ordered by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* NHS trusts

and strategic health authorities in the last five years; what the status of each inquiry was; whether the data from each inquiry have been brought together; and what plans for action were made as a result of each inquiry. [70813]

Andy Burnham: The investigation of any adverse incident involving healthcare staff is primarily a matter for the local national health service community. Where professional conduct issues are raised then the Department would also expect the relevant professional and regulatory body to be involved. In cases where there are wider concerns about the failure of the systems in place to prevent such incidents, NHS trusts and strategic health authorities may set up independent investigations but information on these is not collected centrally.

The independent Healthcare Commission and Commission for Social Care Inspection also investigate serious failures in the provision of health and social care which may also involve abuse by healthcare staff.

Since May 2001, the Department has set up the following independent investigations following concerns about healthcare professionals.

Date set up	*Inquiry*	*Date reported*
July 2001	An independent investigation into how the NHS handled allegations about the conduct of Clifford Ayling (a former Kent general practitioner) under section two of the NHS Act 1977	September 2004
July 2001	An independent investigation into how the NHS handled allegations about the performance and conduct of Richard Neale, a gynaecologist who practised in Yorkshire	September 2004
July 2001	An independent investigation into how the NHS handled allegations of about the conduct of two psychiatrists, William Kerr and Michael Haslam under section two of the NHS Act 1977	July 2005
November 2001	An independent review of paediatric neurology services at University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust	October 2003

The Government are awaiting the recommendations of a review by the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of certain aspects of medical regulation, including the revalidation of doctors. The CMO is currently finalising his report and will be reporting to Ministers in the near future. Once Ministers have considered the CMO's recommendations, the Government will publish a comprehensive action programme responding to the recommendations in the Ayling, Neale and Kerr/Haslam inquiries as well as the outstanding recommendations of the Shipman Inquiry.

Both the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust and the Department have produced detailed action plans to follow up the recommendations of the review of paediatric neurology services at Leicester effectively in order to minimise the risk of similar future occurrences.

Accident and Emergency Services

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which NHS hospitals had *(a)* a 24 hour accident and emergency department and *(b)* another accident and emergency facility in (i) 1996 and (ii) 2006; and in which NHS hospitals with 24 hour provision there are confirmed plans to end such provision. [67862]

Ms Rosie Winterton: National health service trusts self-report the number of accident and emergency (A and E) services they provide against definitions set by the Department for the three types of A and E. The information available is shown in the following table and this was the position at the end of December 2005.

Number of departments (England)

	Number
Type 1 (major) A and E departments	204
Type 2 (single specialty) A and E departments	85
Type 3 A and E departments (minor injury and illness services including minor injury units, including walk-in centres)	321

Source:
OMAE

Prior to 2000-01, statistics provided a count of the number of trusts providing the three different A and E services, rather than the number of each type of service. This pre-2000-01 trust data is available on the Department's website at: www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity

The Department does not routinely collect and hold centrally operational management information on proposals to close wards or capacity.

Advertising

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to take a decision on the criteria that will be used in determining whether sufficient change has taken place in the nature and balance of food advertising to obviate the need for legislation. [67952]

Caroline Flint: A range of factors will be taken into account when deciding in 2007 on the need for legislation. As announced at the food and drink advertising and promotion forum on 26 April, my concerns are focused on protecting primary school aged children. We want to see a change in the nature and balance of food and drink advertising and promotion of foods to children so that the foods advertised better represent a balanced diet. We will be building on this further, including the establishment of a baseline against which we can assess what progress has been made.

Alcohol-related Conditions

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what proportion of people were admitted to acute hospitals in each of the regions where the primary or secondary diagnosis was an alcohol-related condition in each of the last three years for which data are available; and what percentage this was of the population of each region. [69208]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not held centrally. However, data is available on the number of patients with alcohol related conditions admitted into acute hospitals as a percentage of the total patients admitted in the last three years which is shown in the table.

Government office region of residence	*Patients with alcohol related conditions admitted into acute hospitals*	*Total number of patients for all diagnoses in 2002-03*	*Total number of patients with alcohol related conditions admitted into acute hospitals as a percentage of the total patients 2002-03*
North East	7,546	403,474	0.3
North West	17,479	1,040,178	0.26
Yorkshire and the Humber	9,483	753,903	0.19
East Midlands	6,544	57,794	0.15
West Midlands	7,811	720,637	0.15
East of England	5,958	699,663	0.11
London	10,418	905,038	0.14
South East	9,763	993,230	0.12
South West	8,176	715,324	0.16
Other	2,935	538,477	—

Government office region of residence	*Total number of patients with alcohol related conditions admitted into acute hospitals 2003-04*	*Total number of patients for all diagnoses in 2003-04*	*Total number of patients with alcohol related conditions admitted into acute hospitals as a percentage of the total patients 2003-04*
North East	8,228	411,347	0.32
North West	21,804	1,062,229	0.32
Yorkshire and the Humber	10,463	761,419	0.21
East Midlands	7,680	586,614	0.18
West Midlands	10,065	734,082	0.19
East of England	6,320	731,147	0.12
London	12,127	944,826	0.16
South East	12,175	1,038,816	0.15
South West	9,494	733,213	0.19
Other	3,666	542,457	—

Government office region of residence	*Total number of patients with alcohol related conditions admitted into acute hospitals 2004-05*	*Total number of patients for all diagnoses in 2004-05*	*Total number of patients with alcohol related conditions admitted into acute hospitals as a percentage of the total patients 2004-05*
North East	9,163	411,289	0.36
North West	24,589	1,049,578	0.36
Yorkshire and the Humber	11,671	760,500	0.23
East Midlands	8,625	598,954	0.2
West Midlands	10,792	737,583	0.2
East of England	8,169	741,965	0.15
London	14,290	959,481	0.19
South East	14,139	1,053,092	0.17
South West	11,201	745,148	0.22
Other	4,934	563,291	—

Notes:
1. Finished consultant episode (FCE)
An FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that the figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.
2. Ungrossed data—Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data, that is the data is ungrossed.
3. OPCS-4 codes used F10 (Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol) K70 (Alcoholic liver disease) T51 (Toxic effect of alcohol).
Source:
Hospital episode statistics, the Information Centre for health and social care

Avian Influenza

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures are in place at British ports of entry to identify those with the H5N1 virus seeking entry to Britain in the event of a major outbreak overseas. [65758]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Regulation 12 of the Public Health (Aircraft) Regulations 1979, regulation 13 of the Public Health (Ships) Regulations 1979 and regulation 8 of the Public Health (International Trains) Regulations 1994 place a duty on conveyance operators to notify the authorities if they become aware that there is a sick person on board an incoming conveyance. The regulations also provide powers for the authorities to take certain actions: for example, to examine or question persons on incoming conveyances where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that they are suffering from or have been exposed to an infectious disease (aircraft regulation 8, ships regulation 9, trains regulation 9). These regulations apply in England and Wales, and their application in Wales is overseen by the National Assembly for Wales; Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own regulations.

The Government keeps under review the measures that might be required in the event of a flu pandemic among humans. Currently the advice from the World Health Organisation is that H5N1 is a disease of birds and there is not efficient or sustained transmission from one human to another.

Blood Samples

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate has been made of the average level among the UK population of *(a)* n-heptane and *(b)* polybrominated biphenyl in (i) blood samples and (ii) fat biopsies. [71310]

Caroline Flint: No assessments have been made of average levels of n-heptane or polybrominated biphenyls in the United Kingdom population, either in blood or fat biopsies.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate has been made of the average level among the UK population of *(a)* free cell DNA in ug DNA per litre of plasma, *(b)* nickel DNA adducts in ng/ml and *(c)* beryllium DNA adducts in ng/ml. [71323]

Caroline Flint: No estimates have been made of the average levels in the United Kingdom population of free cell deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) in microgram DNA per litre of plasma, nor of nickel DNA adducts or beryllium DNA adducts in plasma.

Bournemouth Teaching Primary Care Trust

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the revenue allocation made by her Department to Bournemouth teaching primary care trust was in *(a)* 2005-06 and *(b)* 2006-07; [70267]

(2) what the level of growth funding received by Bournemouth teaching primary care trust was in 2006-07, expressed *(a)* in financial terms and *(b)* as a percentage of its total funding allocation; [70268]

(3) how much was allocated to Bournemouth teaching primary care trust in *(a)* 2005-06 and *(b)* 2006-07; and how much and what percentage of such funding was growth funding in 2006-07. [70785]

Caroline Flint: The data requested for Bournemouth teaching primary care trust (PCT) is shown in the tables:

2005-06 revenue allocations

	Bournemouth Teaching PCT
Allocation (£000)	180,054
Increase (£000)	15,132
Increase (percentage)	9.2

2006-07 revenue allocations

	Bournemouth Teaching PCT
Allocation (£000)	212,879
Increase (£000)	16,656
Increase (percentage)	8.5

Note:
Comparisons can not be made between the 2005-06 and the 2006-07 allocations for the following reasons:
changes are made to the weighted capitation formula for each allocations round, therefore, comparisons would not be on a like with like basis; and
2006-07 is the first year that primary medical services were incorporated into revenue allocations.

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what proportion of Bournemouth Primary Care Trust's allocation for 2006-07 is being held *(a)* in its reserve and *(b)* by the strategic health authority; [70269]

(2) what proportion of Bournemouth Primary Care Trust's allocation for 2006-07 is currently being held in its reserve by the relevant strategic health authority. [70786]

Caroline Flint: The agreement of strategic health authority reserves form part of the 2006-07 financial planning process, which is not yet complete.

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the level of funding excluding the market forces factor was made available by Bournemouth Primary Care Trust to the Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust as part of its legally binding contract for 2005-06; [70277]

(2) what funding was allocated by Bournemouth Primary Care Trust to the Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust as part of its contract for 2005-6; and what amount will be allocated for 2006-07. [70788]

Caroline Flint: The Department does not collect information from national health service foundation trusts. The total amount of expenditure made in 2005-06 by Bournemouth Teaching Primary Care Trust to the Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust will be available in the autumn from the PCT audited summarisation schedules.

However, the precise nature of this expenditure and whether it covers just contract expenditure will not be identifiable.

Figures for 2004-05, before the trust became a foundation trust, showed Bournemouth Teaching PCT reported £121,614,000 expenditure with Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Trust and the trust reported £121,583,000 income from the PCT.

Cancer Plan

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to develop a new Cancer Plan to replace the current plan in 2010. [71273]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 16 May 2006]:* The need to publish a further update or a second cancer plan is kept under review and as yet no decision has been taken.

Care Homes

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment her Department has made of changes in care home fees in the last five years; [70661]

(2) what assessment she has made of the reasons underlying increases above inflation in care home fees in the last five years. [70733]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: According to the independent social care sector analysts Laing and Buisson, in its annual "Care of Elderly People UK Market Survey 2005", in the five years up to 31 March 2005 care home fees went up as follows:

Percentage

	Residential care homes	*Nursing homes*
2000-01	3.8	3.5
2001-02	6.1	6.0
2002-03	8.0	7.8
2003-04	7.4	7.4
2004-05	8.3	7.4

There are a number of possible causes for the rise in fees. This includes the level of fees paid by local authorities and the national health service, which together pay 68 per cent. of the cost of residential care.

We increased total resources available for social services by an average of six per cent. a year in real terms over the three years 2003-04 to 2005-06. These increases follow a 20 per cent. increase in the level of funding for social services between 1996-97 and 2002-03. This enables local councils to purchase the services to meet their residents' needs. In its annual "Care of the Elderly: UK Market Survey's" Laing and Buisson has reported increases in the fees paid to care homes by social services of around 3 to 4 per cent. a year since 2000-01, with some authorities increasing fees by over 10 per cent.

Child Care

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many child care places are provided by the NHS for NHS employees; [72737]

(2) which hospital trusts provide child care places for employees. [72738]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A survey of child care provision in 2004 by the information centre for health and social care found national health service employers provide 11,700 nursery places for children under five years. In addition, NHS employers provide their staff with a range of child care support, including access to holiday playschemes, after school clubs and access to child care co-ordinators.

Information on hospital trusts providing child care places for employees is not collected centrally. However, of the 571 organisations who responded to the survey, 97 per cent. provided access to a child care co-ordinator.

Choose and Book System

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 24 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 954W, on the Choose and Book System, when she expects the trusts listed will implement fully compliant systems. [69650]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department expects that the exempt trusts will implement fully compliant systems once they have access to an economically viable compliant patient administration system (PAS). This matter is under consideration and will be determined on a case-by-case basis with the individual trusts during 2006, when planning dates will be agreed.

Trusts are currently exempt from having a compliant PAS by December 2006 for two reasons. Firstly, for it not being technically possible for them to upgrade their existing PAS to be compliant and their PAS replacement not being planned until after December 2006. Secondly, for it not being financially viable to upgrade their existing PAS, for example their PAS has a single installation base and the cost to upgrade this versus the benefit to operate this for a finite period is not viable, and their replacement PAS not being planned until after December 2006.

The number of trusts exempt from operating compliant PAS by December 2006 is fluid and may go up or down slightly, as compliant PAS roll-out plans are finalised between now and the end of the year.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many patients in each primary care trust in Hampshire have been diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases in each of the last five years. [71217]

(2) which primary trusts in Hampshire make available continuous positive airway pressure machines when requested by their specialist to those whose chest conditions make sleeping difficult; and which occasionally refuse a clinician's request. [71219]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not held centrally.

Combined Contraceptive Pill

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what mortality rates are attributed to the use of combined oestrogen-progesterone contraceptive pill among women *(a)* in the United Kingdom, *(b)* in other member European Union countries and *(c)* in other World Health Organisation nations; and if she will make a statement; [72035]

(2) what mortality rates are attributed to the use of the intra-uterine device as a contraceptive among women in *(a)* the United Kingdom, *(b)* other member European Union countries and *(c)* other World Health Organisation nations; and if she will make a statement; [72188]

(3) what mortality rates are attributed to the use of the drug Depo-Provera as a contraceptive among women in *(a)* the United Kingdom, *(b)* other member European Union countries and *(c)* other World Health Organisation nations; and if she will make a statement; [72189]

(4) what the mortality rates directly attributed to the use as a contraceptive of the progesterone-only pill were in the latest period for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [72286]

Andy Burnham: Mortality rates directly attributed to the use of different methods of contraception in different countries are not available.

The yellow card scheme collects reports of suspected adverse drug reactions associated with medicines occurring in the United Kingdom. This data cannot be used to calculate mortality rates attributed to medicines for a number of reasons. Importantly, not all adverse reactions are reported and the level of underreporting differs between medicines. Furthermore, doctors are asked to report suspected adverse reactions regardless of any doubts about a causal association with a medicine. Therefore, a report of a particular adverse reaction on the yellow card database does not necessarily mean that the drug caused it, and other factors such as an underlying or new medical condition may have played a role. Any comparison between products is invalid as the usage of these products and the other factors which affect the level of reporting of suspected adverse drug reactions vary greatly between products.

The table contains the number of reports of suspected adverse drug reactions, and the number of fatal reports, received by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency during 2005 in association with the following: Mirena—an intrauterine device (IUD) that contains progesterone; non-hormonal IUDs; Depo-Provera; the progesterone-only pill; and the combined oral contraceptive. These figures should be viewed in the context of the extensive usage of the contraceptive devices and medicines.

Contraceptive	*Total reports*	*Fatal reports*
Mirena	78	0
Non-hormonal IUDs	2	0
Depo-Provera	71	2
Progesterone only pills	80	0
Combined oral contraceptives	99	2

The majority of reports with a fatal outcome relate to venous thromboembolism. An increased risk of venous thromboembolism is well recognised in association with combined hormonal contraceptives and extensive information is provided in the product information for doctors and women.

Healthcare professionals providing contraceptive services should provide accurate information about the possible side effects of each method to allow women to make informed choices as to the most appropriate method for them. This information is also included in the patient information leaflet. The benefits associated with modern contraceptive use far outweigh the side effects.

Modern methods of contraception are safe for the vast majority of women who use them and are not only highly effective in preventing pregnancy, but are also associated with other health benefits. The pill for example can reduce menstrual blood loss and relieve painful menstruation. It may also reduce the incidence of ovarian and endometrial cancer.

Dentistry

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists have left the NHS to work in private practice in each year since 1997. [64034]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data on the destination of dentists leaving the general dental services (GDS) or personal dental services (PDS) are not held centrally.

The table, however, provides the numbers of national health service dentists who have left the GDS or PDS in England, in each year since 1997.

General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS): Number of dentists who have left the GDS or PDS in England for the 12 months ending 30 September each year

	Number
1997	947
1998	972
1999	1,037
2000	1,206
2001	1,207
2002	1,352
2003	1,236
2004	1,224
2005	1,097

Notes:

1. Leavers indicate that the dentist had an open GDS or PDS contract in September of the previous year but no GDS or PDS contract in September of the specified year.
2. Data include all notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS, received by the Business Services Authority, up to 8 November 2005. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period, for example data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists leaving the GDS or PDS.
3. A dentist with a GDS or PDS contract may provide as little or as much NHS treatment as he or she chooses or has agreed with the primary care trust. Information concerning the amount of time dedicated to NHS work by individual GDS or PDS dentists are not centrally available.
4. Dentists consist of principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts have been excluded.

Sources:

Information Centre for health and social care
Business Services Authority

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what procedures are in place to ensure that primary care trusts are given clear guidance on the transitional arrangements underpinning the transfer to the new dental contract. [72337]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has made a wide range of guidance available to primary care trusts to support the transition to local commissioning of primary dental care services and the introduction of new contracts. This has included a fact sheet on 'Understanding the transitional provisions order', which explained how dentists would transfer to the new contracts. This and other fact sheets are available on the Department website at: www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HealthAndSocialCareTopics/Dental. NHS primary care contracting has provided a range of other guidance and support to primary care trusts in implementing the new contracts, both through its website at: www.primarycarecontracting.nhs.uk/89.php and through learning events and a dental helpdesk.

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding has been provided to enable primary care trusts to provide maternity payments to dentists during the transition to the new dental contract. [72437]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Primary care trusts have been given funding allocations for national health service dentistry based on previous levels of expenditure during the reference period of October 2004 to September 2005. This included all dental expenditure in that period including any maternity, paternity or sick pay given to qualifying dentists. In dentistry, as in any other areas of NHS provision, maternity payments will vary over time but allowing for such variation is a normal part of a PCT's funding role.

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether a dentist who was pregnant before the new dental contract was introduced on 1 April 2006 is able to claim maternity pay at the levels prescribed in the old dental contract. [72568]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Under the former general dental services contract, the level of maternity pay for a principal dentist providing NHS general dental services was based on the principal's earnings during a 12-month test period (beginning 21 months before the expected period of confinement). Under the new GDS contract that came into effect from 1 April 2006, any dentist (be they the contract holder, a partner or a practice employee) performing dental services under a national health service contract is entitled to payments in respect of a period of maternity leave. The level of the payment is based on the dentist's pensionable earnings immediately before the period of maternity leave begins.

Under the transitional arrangements, a principal dentist who was entitled to NHS maternity pay under the former GDS contract and who began her maternity leave before 1 April is entitled to continue receiving the same level of payment as before (based on the earlier test period), if this is higher than payments calculated on the basis of her most recent pensionable earnings.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of *(a)* adults and *(b)* children were registered with an NHS dentist in each primary care trust in Devon in (i) 1998 and (ii) 2000. [72970]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Below is the number of adults and children registered with a national health service dentist in each primary care trust (PCT) in Devon in the specified years. The percentage of those registered is not available as population figures were not collected at PCT level prior to 2001.

	1998		*2000*	
	Adults registered	*Children registered*	*Adults registered*	*Children registered*
East Devon	36,422	11,489	41,547	13,538
Exeter	55,930	20,290	57,101	21,017
Mid Devon	25,356	11,556	32,087	13,798
North Devon	45,468	21,147	58,004	23,220
Plymouth Teaching	84,912	38,133	82,881	38,845
South Hams and West Devon	28,132	14,668	29,269	16,283
Teignbridge	34,323	12,110	36,234	12,685
Torbay	52,252	17,563	53,913	19,218

Notes:
1. The areas have been defined using practice postcodes within the PCT, not the patient's home address.
2. Prison contracts have not been included in this analysis.
3. Children are deemed as 17 years or under and adults as 18 years or over.

Sources:
The Information Centre for health and social care.
Business Services Authority.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in her Department have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* dismissed for (i) inappropriate use of the internet while at work and (ii) using work telephones to access premium rate numbers in each of the last five years. [67983]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information is shown in the table.

Type of misuse	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Total
Internet	0	3	3	27	20	53
Telephone	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of cases	0	3	3	27	20	53
Action taken						
No further action	0	0	0	7	9	16
Disciplinary action	0	2	2	15	9	28
Dismissal	0	1	1	5	2	9

Source:
Department of Health IT Security Unit

All office phones are blocked from accessing premium rate numbers. There is management discretion to lift this ban in individual cases based on need. There have been no recorded cases of disciplinary action relating to access to premium line numbers in the last five years.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in her Department have been enabled to work from home in each of the last three years; and if she will make a statement. [67984]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has a formal home-working scheme under which employees may request that home is the place of work for all or some of the working week. The current number of the Department's official home workers over the last three years is shown in the table.

	Official home worker
2003-04	6
2004-05	7
2005-06	5

The Department also provides a wide variety of arrangements which allow staff to work flexibly. These include initiatives such as a flexitime, part-time working, job sharing, part year appointments, compressed hours and special leave arrangements to cope with a variety of circumstances.

The Department also allows staff to work at home on an occasional basis at management discretion. This is becoming more widespread with the greater use of information technology.

Diagnostic Scans

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many diagnostic scans were carried out by Alliance Medical Ltd. in the NHS in County Durham *(a)* in each of the last 12 months and *(b)* in each of the previous five years. [70810]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* Alliance Medical Limited (AML) has not provided any diagnostic scans from within County Durham. An AML mobile unit does operate a service from the James Cook University Hospital in Middlesbrough. The unit has visited the hospital on eight occasions since contract commencement in July 2004. The total number of scans are shown in the table. The number referred from specific local areas is not held centrally.

Month/year	Number of scans
September 2004	65
November 2004	82
December 2004	182
January 2005	65
July 2005	119
November 2005	165
January 2006	149
March 2006	133
Total	960

Source:
Department of Health

Doctors

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many doctors employed by the NHS are from non-EU countries. [65678]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of doctors employed in the national health service who qualified in non-European Union countries is shown in the following table.

General and personal medical services and hospital, community health services (HCHS): All doctors by specified country of primary qualification group[1,2,3]—England as at 30 September 2005

	All countries of qualification	EU countries	Number (headcount) Non-EU countries
All doctors	119,017	85,984	33,033
All HCHS medical staff[2,3]	83,073	55,702	27,371
All general practitioners (GPs)[3]	35,944	30,282	5,662
of which:			
GPs (excluding retainers and registrars)	32,738	27,979	4,759
GP registrars	2,564	1,682	882

[1] All practitioners includes contracted GPs, GMS others, PMS others, GP registrars and GP retainers.
[2] Excludes medical hospital practitioners and medical clinical assistants, most of whom are GPs working part time in hospitals.
[3] Excludes all dental staff. Information about country of qualification is derived from the General Medical Council. For staff in dental specialties, with a General Dental Council registration, the country of qualification is therefore unknown.
Source:
The Information Centre for health and social care medical and dental workforce census. The Information Centre for health and social care general and personal medical services statistics.

Electromagnetic Fields

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate she has made of the number of children who are exposed to potentially unsafe levels of overhead electricity cables; [69950]

(2) when she will publish the findings of the stakeholder advisory group on the links between electromagnetic fields and child health. [69951]

Caroline Flint: In 2004, the National Radiological Protection Board (now the Health Protection Agency radiation protection division (HPA-RPD)) recommended the adoption of international electromagnetic field (EMF) exposure guidelines. The supporting review of scientific evidence stated that there is no scientific consensus that exposures to EMFs at levels below currently accepted exposure restrictions cause cancer or any other disease. However, it is their view that

"the totality of scientific data and uncertainty in knowledge and/or other relevant factors indicate that consideration should be given as to whether further precautionary measures are needed"

in respect of extremely low frequency (ELF) EMF.

A subsequent study by the HPA has investigated sources of residential magnetic field exposures (www.hpa.org.uk/radiation/publications/hpa_rpd_reports/2005/hpa_rpd_005.htm). Another study, published in June 2005 by Dr. Draper and colleagues, has estimated the number of children living within certain distance of overhead power lines in England and Wales (bmj.bmjjournals.com/cgi/reprint). Responding to the Draper study, the HPA noted that the majority of raised ELF magnetic fields in homes are due to variations in the electricity supply and distribution system, the presence of substations and equipment in the home rather than proximity to power lines. The HPA response statement is available on its website at: www.hpa.org.uk/hpa/news/articles/press_releases/2005/050603_childhood_cancer_voltage.htm.

In response to the HPA advice in 2004, the stakeholder advisory group on ELF EMF (SAGE) was set up to explore the implications for a precautionary approach and make practical recommendations for precautionary measures. SAGE is currently developing its advice and is expected to report later this year. Details of this process can be found on its website at www.rkpartnership.co.uk/sage.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will place in the Library copies of the *(a)* minutes and *(b)* reports on overhead power lines produced by the stakeholder advisory group on extremely low frequency electromagnetic fields. [70660]

Caroline Flint: The stakeholder advisory group on extremely low frequency electromagnetic fields (SAGE) is currently developing its first report. It is expected that the report will be published and presented to Government later this year. Details of the SAGE process can be found on the website of the independent facilitation company R K Partnership Ltd. at www.rkpartnership.org.uk/sage.

Emergency Contraception

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many girls under the age of 16 years have been prescribed the morning-after pill in each of the last five years; [69354]

(2) how many morning after pills were prescribed to girls under 16 years by pharmacies without medical supervision in 2005-06. [69946]

Caroline Flint: The information available is shown in the following table.

Occasions on which hormonal post-coital contraceptives dispensed at family planning clinics in England to girls aged under 16, 2000-01 to 2004-05

	Number (Thousand)
2000-01	25.3
2001-02	25.8
2002-03	26.8
2003-04	26.7
2004-05	24.4

Source:
The Information Centre for health and social care return KT31

Data on how many girls under 16 have been prescribed emergency hormonal contraception by general practice are not held centrally.

Emergency hormonal contraception can be legally supplied to girls under the age of 16 as a prescription-only medicine by general practitioners and also by nurses and pharmacists working under a patient group direction (PGD). A PGD is where a doctor has delegated authority and the supply will therefore always be under medical supervision.

Data on emergency hormonal contraception supplied under a patient group direction (PGD) by pharmacists and nurses are not held centrally.

Evidence-based Information

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to develop evidence-based information for both patients and clinicians. [66048]

Andy Burnham: To support choice at referral, we produced booklets tailored to each primary care trust and enhanced the nhs.uk website to give patients and clinicians information on choice and national health service provider performance taken from Healthcare Commission indicators.

We will be working with clinical leaders and key stakeholders to develop robust measures of clinical quality across all providers of NHS care. We will be building on tools such as the National Joint Registry and the new Heart Surgery in Great Britain websites at: www.njrcentre.org.uk and http://heartsurgery.healthcarecommission.org.uk/Survival.aspx.

We are also piloting patient reported outcome measures for routine elective care procedures, the results of which will be available this autumn.

In addition, the recent White Paper announced a review of the provision of health and social care information for patients and users. The outcome of the review will enable the Department to provide an information service that better meets the needs of patients and the public.

Foster Review

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will announce her response to the Foster review of non-medical healthcare professions. [72657]

Andy Burnham: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 17 May 2006.

Funding (Northamptonshire)

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the NHS *(a)* revenue and *(b)* capital expenditure per capita in Northamptonshire was in (i) 1997 and (ii) 2005; [70816]

(2) what the revenue budget was for health services in Northamptonshire in *(a)* 1995, *(b)* 2000 and *(c)* 2005. [70817]

Andy Burnham: The information is not available in the format requested. However, the table shows the total revenue and capital expenditure per head by organisations within the Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland strategic health authority (SHA) area.

	Revenue expenditure	*Capital[1] expenditure*
	£	
1997-98	541.85	18.44
2004-05	1,093.20	48.23

	£000
1997-98	836,664
2000-01	1,091,952
2004-05	1,656,267

Notes:
1. Revenue expenditure by SHA area is taken as the total expenditure of the strategic health authority, predecessor health authorities and primary care trusts within the SHA area. Capital expenditure includes NHS trusts within the area.
2. Capital expenditure is the expenditure on the purchased additions of fixed assets.
3. Levels of capital expenditure vary from year to year depending on local investment decisions.
4. Expenditure on general dental services and pharmaceutical services accounted for by the Dental Practice Board and Prescription Pricing Authority, respectively, are excluded. This expenditure cannot be included within the figures for the individual health bodies as they are not included in commissioner accounts.

Sources: Audited accounts of relevant health authorities 1997-98 and 1998-99
Audited summarisation forms of relevant health authorities 1999-2000 to 2001-02
Audited summarisation schedules of relevant primary care trusts 2000-01 to 2004-05
Audited summarisation schedules of national health services trusts 1997-98 to 2004-05
Audited summarisation forms of Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA 2002-03 to 2004-05

Genito-Urinary Care

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average waiting time was for an appointment at NHS genito-urinary medicine clinics in *(a)* England, *(b)* the North East and *(c)* the Tees Valley in each year since 1997; [71088]

(2) what measures are being taken by her Department to minimise regional variations in sexual health care. [71089]

Caroline Flint: The genito-urinary medicine (GUM) clinic waiting times audit collects data on waiting times for all GUM clinics in England for a period of one week every quarter. All patients attending a GUM clinic with a new episode or registering for the first time are asked to complete the short questionnaire on waiting times. This audit has been chosen as the method of monitoring and improving access to GUM services. Current analysis is published on numbers seen within 48 hours. The most recent survey is for February 2006 which shows that in England 51 per cent. of attendees were seen within 48 hours. This compares with 38 per cent. in May 2004, the earliest date for which figures are available.

A summary of the data is available on the Health Protection Agency's website at:

www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/hiv_and_sti/epidemiology/results_Feb_2006.htm

Sexual health and access to GUM clinics is one of the six top priorities for the national health service in 2006-07. By 2008, everyone should be offered an appointment within 48 hours of contacting a GUM clinic. Strategic health authorities have all submitted plans to meet this target.

Health Improvement Workforce Steering Group

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the work of the Health Improvement Workforce Steering Group. [67425]

Ms Rosie Winterton: "Choosing Health" points out that the changes required to deliver its objectives will only occur if the right people, with the right skills are in place to deliver them and if barriers to change and old style professional boundaries are broken down. This means developing a work force within and outside the national health service with the capacity and capability at all levels—across the wider work force, in the leadership of organisations and among public health practitioners and specialists to contribute to health improvement.

This is why in the "Choosing Health" White Paper the Department established a health improvement work force programme board which has met regularly since July 2005. The primary function of the programme board is to monitor overall delivery of "Choosing Health" workforce commitments.

Linked to the board is a stakeholder reference group, with representation from all key strands of the public health work force across a wide range of organisations.

Health Promotion Campaigns

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the impact of her Department's health campaign to reduce the incidence of smoking; [67327]

(2) what action her Department is taking to promote health campaigns related to *(a)* smoking, *(b)* salt, *(c)* mental health and *(d)* sexual health. [67332]

Caroline Flint: Since 1998, the Government have put in place a comprehensive strategy to tackle smoking and to reduce the deaths caused by smoking. The strategy focuses on action to discourage people from ever starting and help for all smokers, of whatever age and sex, to quit. We are aiming to create a climate where non-smoking is the norm.

We have banned almost all tobacco advertising, sponsorship and promotion; introduced clear tobacco pack warnings; run highly effective national anti-smoking education campaigns raising awareness of the health damage of smoking and second-hand smoke. People who wish to give up smoking can get help from the national health service to stop smoking—a world leading programme we set up.

The House agreed, by a very large majority, to reduce exposure to second-hand smoke by ending smoking in all enclosed public places and workplaces. This will mean every pub, club, membership club, cafe, restaurant, shopping centre, office and public and work transport will be smoke-free by summer 2007.

This strategy has helped reduce smoking rates in England from 28 per cent. in 1998 to 25 per cent. in 2004 some 1.2 million fewer smokers. These are the lowest smoking rates in England on record and indicate that the Government are on track to meet the target of 21 per cent. or lower smoking prevalence in 2010.

The Food Standards Agency is leading on a salt campaign to inform consumers of the potential consequences of too much salt in the diet and what steps they can take to reduce their intake. Phase one activity took place in 2004, phase two in 2005 and consideration is now being given to a third phase.

We have promoted mental health through standard one of the national service framework for mental health; through the White Paper "Choosing Health", which promotes the physical health of those with severe mental illness through guidance to the service on models of delivery; and through up-to-date evidence-based guidance on good practice and to support those engaged in mental health promotion across the country was published in October 2005 in "Making It Possible: improving mental health and well-being in England". The White Paper "Our Health, our care, our say" represents our further commitment to making these simple messages more widely known by ensuring that mental well-being is included in the social marketing strategy currently being developed to support "Choosing Health".

We provide support for implementation of mental health promotion at local level through the National Institute for Mental Health in England (NIMHE), part of the Care Services Improvement Partnership. Over the last 12 months, NIMHE has published quarterly "Mental Health Promotion Update" newsletters to inform and motivate mental health promotion staff across the country. The Department and NIMHE are also supporting the forthcoming national men's health week organised by the men's health forum, which this year focuses on men's mental health and well-being.

Our current plans are to aim to launch a sexual health campaign later this year. This will target 16 to 34-year-old men and women but with a concentration on the key 16 to 24 year age bracket. The campaign will focus on the risks of unprotected sex and the benefits of using condoms to avoid sexually transmitted infections including HIV and unintended pregnancies.

Health Protection Agency

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what procedures exist for the Health Protection Agency to evaluate and make recommendations on measures to deal with infection control in hospitals; and how the recommendations are reported. [72731]

Caroline Flint: The Health Protection Agency is not responsible for infection control in hospitals. It carries out surveillance on behalf of the Department, provides general advice, and in collaboration with other stakeholders, carries out research and publishes recommendations on infection control. In addition, the HPA on request, advises on the control of outbreaks and incidents.

Healthy Eating

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with *(a)* the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and *(b)* Ofcom on controlling advertising aimed at children for foods high in fat, sugar and salt. [68565]

Caroline Flint: As outlined in the Choosing Health White Paper, the Department is committed to working with the broadcasting and advertising sectors on ways to help drive down levels of childhood obesity. The involvement of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, as the sponsor Department for the broadcasting and advertising industries and Ofcom, is crucial to progressing this work and departmental officials are in regular contact with them to discuss the food promotion agenda.

My hon. Friend, the then Minister for Creative Industries and Tourism (James Purnell), and I have also met with Ofcom to discuss further restrictions around food and drink advertising and promotion to children.

Healthy Start Programme

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many low income families have been provided with vouchers under the Healthy Start programme in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available; what the cost has been of the programme; and if she will make a statement. [67413]

Caroline Flint: Phase one of Healthy Start commenced in Devon and Cornwall on 28 November 2005. The welfare food scheme continues in the rest of England, Wales and Scotland. At present approximately 9,600 families in Devon and Cornwall are receiving Healthy Start vouchers. The cost of Healthy Start vouchers and administering the scheme in Devon and Cornwall to date is approximately £1,525,000.

Further costs incurred to date are:

£33,000 for one-off training provided to selected health professionals in Devon and Cornwall;

£275,910 to develop and produce information materials to support delivery of Healthy Start; and

£117,300 for an independent rapid evaluation of the impact of phase one, including an evaluation of the effectiveness of the training for health professionals.

The evaluation of phase one of Healthy Start is still underway and will inform phase two, roll out of Healthy Start vouchers across Great Britain, in autumn 2006.

Insulin

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 2 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 919W, on insulin, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the number of deaths attributable to insulin overdoses. [71545]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Safer use of medicines is a key element in the Government's drive to increase the quality and safety of care in the national health service. "Building a safer NHS for patients—improving medication safety" was published in January 2004. The report stems from our commitment, first set out in "An Organisation with a Memory", to reduce the frequency of serious medication errors by 40 per cent. and sets out some of the causes of errors, including those around insulin administration, and examples of good practice to reduce risks.

Improving medication safety is also one of the National Patient Safety Agency's (NPSA) priorities. With the developing work programme of the NPSA, and as part of our overall drive to improve quality and safety of care, these recommendations will help make drug treatment safer for NHS patients.

Leisure Centres (Food/Drink Sales)

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she has issued to local authorities on the criteria they should apply to food and drink sold at leisure centres and other sports facilities. [70184]

Caroline Flint: No formal guidance has been issued to local authorities on this topic. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the Department provide advice to caterers on healthier catering practice. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs provides some guidance on procurement through its public sector food procurement initiative and this includes the Department's and FSA's advice on healthier food provision.

Lung Cancer

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what discussions she has had with stakeholders on increasing expenditure on lung cancer research; [71737]

(2) what the terms of reference are for the National Cancer Research Institute's (NCRI) review of lung cancer research; and when she expects the NCRI to publish its report. [71738]

Caroline Flint *[holding answers 18 May 2006]:* The Department is working closely with its research funding partners[1] through the National Cancer Research Institute's (NCRI) strategic planning group to enhance national research efforts on lung cancer.

The aim of the lung cancer strategic planning group is to take strategic oversight of research in the field, and to identify opportunities for appropriate action by NCRI member organisations, either collaboratively or individually, in order to have maximum impact for the benefit of patients and their carers.

The group has defined its terms of reference in relation to its role, which is to answer the following questions:

How can we maximise impact for the benefit of patients and the public?

What is the past and present state of United Kingdom research in this area?

What are likely to be future demands and opportunities in the area?

Are there any obstacles to research?

If there are obstacles, what is their nature?

How can we overcome the obstacles?

What can we learn from other countries?

The NCRI expects to publish the group's report before the end of the year.

[1] Including the Medical Research Council, Cancer Research UK, and Macmillan Cancer Support

Lupus

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in *(a)* England and *(b)* Shropshire were diagnosed with lupus in (i) 2004 and (ii) 2005. [72159]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Data on the number of people diagnosed with lupus is not collected.

Maternity Services

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the procedures recently adopted for the reconfiguration proposals of existing community hospitals also apply to *(a)* midwife-led and *(b)* other maternity units. [72433]

Andy Burnham: As stated in paragraph 25 of the White Paper, 'Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services', the Department aims to provide more care in more local and convenient settings.

However, decision making on specific local healthcare provision, including midwife-led and other maternity units, is a matter for primary care trusts and strategic health authorities in consultation with the local population.

ME

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the teaching of how to *(a)* diagnose and *(b)* treat myalgic encephalomyelitis in medical schools; and what steps she is taking to ensure that such teaching is improved. [70745]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Medical schools determine their own undergraduate medical curriculum in the light of recommendations from the General Medical Council's education committee, which has the statutory responsibility to determine the extent of knowledge and skill required for the granting of primary medical qualifications in the United Kingdom.

The Department does not provide direction on the content of medical school courses. Medical schools are autonomous bodies and Ministers are precluded by legislation from intervening in their internal affairs, including curriculum content.

Medical Practitioners

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* undertaken into suicide and stress among medical practitioners. [51903]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department last commissioned a research project on suicide in high risk occupational groups by Keith Hawton and colleagues at the centre for suicide research, University of Oxford, in 2000. A major component of the study has been research on suicide in doctors. The research has provided valuable findings to inform policies on education, training and management of doctors. Details of this work are available at www.psychiatry.ox.ac.uk/csr/resdoctors.html.

The Department also funds regular surveys carried out by Michael Goldacre and colleagues at the UK Medical Careers Research Group, University of Oxford, which contain some questions related to stress and job satisfaction. Details of this work are available at www.uhce.ox.ac.uk/ukmcrg/MCRG_home.htm.

Mental Health

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on progress made with proposals in the NHS plan to strengthen primary care mental health services. [69732]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The NHS Plan introduced two new types of mental health workers to the national health service. At the end of March 2005, 648 graduate mental health workers, who have been trained in brief therapy techniques of proven effectiveness, were employed to help general practitioners manage and treat common mental health problems in all age groups, including children. A further 1,520 people were employed as community gateway staff to work with general practitioners and primary care teams, with NHS Direct, and in accident and emergency departments to respond to people who need immediate help. We expect to have more up to date information of the numbers of the new workers in post from the Durham adult mental health mapping database at www.amhmapping.org.uk later in the spring.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the procedure is for getting emergency medical help when a person with a serious mental health problem has a relapse; and if she will make a statement. [69789]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The care of adults of working age who are in touch with specialist mental health services is coordinated under the care programme approach (CPA). Under CPA, service users should be provided with a copy of their care plan that specifies the actions to be taken if the user becomes very ill or their mental health is rapidly deteriorating. In most areas, crisis resolution and home treatment teams provide rapid assessments of individuals with acute mental health problems and refer them to the most appropriate service. For individuals with acute, severe mental health problems for whom home treatment would be appropriate, such teams provide immediate multi-disciplinary, community based treatment 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In areas where there is no crisis resolution and home treatment provision, help is available through general practitioners, social services emergency duty teams and accident and emergency departments.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of children and young people with a mental health disorder in each year since 2000, broken down by *(a)* age, *(b)* sex and *(c)* ethnic group. [71249]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Information is not available in the form requested. The Office for National Statistics 2004 survey, "Mental health of children and young people in Great Britain", looked at the prevalence of mental health disorders. It found that in the five to 10 year old age group 10.2 per cent. of boys and 5.1 per cent. of girls has a clinically diagnosed mental disorder. In the 11 to 16 year old age group, the prevalence among boys was 12.6 per cent. and 10.3 per cent. among girls.

The survey also found the prevalence of mental disorders among the five to 16 year old age group in ethnic minorities was as follows:

	Percentage
Black	9.5
Indian	3
Pakistani	8
Other	6.5

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what public funding has been given to Samaritans in each of the last five years. [69388]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Samaritans have received a total of £701,000 from the Department in the last five years, comprised of the following annual payments:

	£
2001-02	51,000
2002-03	155,000
2003-04	195,000
2004-05	170,000
2005-06	130,000

Mersey Care NHS Trust

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much Mersey Care NHS Trust has spent in relation to *(a)* the suspension of clinical administrative staff and *(b)* the provision of additional staff to cover the individuals currently suspended in each of the last five years; [68441]

(2) how many staff employed by Mersey Care NHS Trust are *(a)* subject to disciplinary action and *(b)* suspended from duty; and what proportion of such staff have been suspended for (i) up to six months and (ii) over six months over the last 10 years. [68442]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Mesothelioma

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which primary care trusts in Hampshire fund treatment for mesothelioma with Permetrexen; and which do not. [71216]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not held centrally. It is for primary care trusts to ensure the services they commission meet the needs of the communities that they serve.

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients were diagnosed with *(a)* asbestos-related illnesses and *(b)* mesothelioma in each primary care trust in Hampshire in each of the last five years. [71218]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not held centrally.

National Health Service

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the countries whose Ministers or officials have expressed an interest to her in modelling their healthcare system on the national health service in the last 12 months. [64855]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally. Officials and Ministers from a number of countries have visited the national health service to exchange information and learn more about best practice in many areas of healthcare and public health in the last 12 months.

National Patient Record Spine

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she has taken to ensure that patient records available on the National Patient Record Spine will not be used by organisations or individuals bidding for NHS contracts to inform their bid unfairly. [67945]

Caroline Flint: Only properly authenticated staff directly involved in the patient's care are able to view elements of a patient's care record held in the NHS care records service (NHS CRS). Under a protocol known as role-based access control, access to a patient's care record will be limited to only as much information as is needed for the purpose of the care or other job role being performed. Access is also limited to those with a legitimate relationship with the patient. These arrangements are explained in the NHS care record guarantee, which sets out the rules that govern information held in the NHS CRS.

Anonymised information drawn from patient records has historically been, and will continue to be used, to support NHS planning, commissioning, audit and clinical governance, performance management, research and public health, subject to strict controls to ensure the confidentiality of patient-specific data. Some anonymised information will be routinely published in the form of reports by the information centre for health and social care.

NHS Direct

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many of the nurses employed by NHS Direct are disabled; and what estimate she has made of the number of disabled nurses employed by NHS Direct who will lose their jobs in the planned reorganisation. [72563]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not centrally held. It may be available from the Chairman of NHS Direct Special Health Authority.

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the NHS Direct call centres to be closed; and what the location is of the centres to which calls will be transferred in each case. [72564]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The consultation document proposes that 12 sites will close over the next 18 months:

	Closure date
Doncaster	2006-07
Scunthorpe	2006-07
York	2007-08
Chester	2006-07
Bolton[1]	2006-07
Preston[1]	2006-07
Chorley	2006-07
Southport	2006-07
Cambridge	2007-08
Croydon[2]	2007-08
Kensington[3]	2007-08
Brighton	2007-08

[1] Potential for staff to transfer to the new Bolton site.
[2] Potential for staff to transfer to Beckenham.
[3] Potential for staff to transfer to Southall.

NHS Direct uses a National Intelligent Network, a virtual call centre and call streaming technology which enables calls to be answered by the next available call handler, irrespective of new location.

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated saving is from the proposed reductions in staff at NHS Direct. [72565]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The proposals set out in the NHS Direct consultation document form an important element of NHS Direct's overall drive to improve performance and efficiency. The precise savings will become clearer following the outcome of the consultation process.

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the present measures of user satisfaction with NHS Direct will be continued after the proposed reorganisation. [72566]

Andy Burnham: The present measures of user satisfaction with NHS Direct will continue to be used during and after the consultation process through their monthly caller survey. NHS Direct is continuously looking at better ways of measuring user satisfaction through feedback on the quality of the service.

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether services provided by NHS Direct will be transferred to *(a)* the private sector and *(b)* abroad. [72567]

Andy Burnham: There are no plans to transfer the services provided by NHS Direct to either the private sector or abroad.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* nurses and *(b)* staff are employed by NHS Direct; and how many will be employed in each category after the proposed re-organisation. [72625]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The most recently centrally collected information is shown in the following table:

National health service hospital and community health services: Non-medical staff employed by NHS Direct by main staff group as at 30 September 2005

	Headcount
All non-medical staff	3,926
Of which:	
Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	1,909

Source:
The Information Centre for health and social care Non-Medical Workforce Census

NHS Direct began a 12 week consultation with staff and staff side representatives on 16 May 2006. The consultation period is due to end on 16 August 2006. The outcomes of the consultation will be made public thereafter.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many telephone calls were dealt with by NHS Direct in each year since it came into operation. [72836]

Andy Burnham: The information requested is shown in the following table:

Availability and use of NHS Direct

	Calls received	*Thousand Visits to NHS Direct Online*
1998-99	110	0
1999-2000	1,650	0
2000-01	3,420	1,5001
2001-02	5,213	2,028
2002-03	6,319	3,972
2003-04	6,405	6,542
2004-05	6,506	9,285
2005-06	6,810	13,537

Source:
Health Intelligence Unit, NHS Direct

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the measured level of user satisfaction with NHS Direct was in each year since it came into operation. [72837]

Andy Burnham: The data is not available as an annual figure, but is collected monthly by NHS Direct. The information from the monthly survey in March each year is shown in the table.

March	*Patients very satisfied and satisfied (Percentage)*
2002	99.2
2003	98.1
2004	98.2
2005	98.0
2006	96.6

Source:
Patient satisfaction reports—NHS Direct.

The rates for patients who are satisfied or very satisfied remain consistently high (above 95 per cent.), although the level of calls received has risen from 5,213,000 in 2001-02 to 6,810,000 in 2005-06.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what consultations were carried out with the staff of NHS Direct before the recent announcement of job cuts. [72838]

Ms Rosie Winterton: NHS Direct has commenced a 12-week consultation with staff on proposals to improve performance and efficiency. Information on any prior consultation with staff is not held by the Department but may be available from the Chairman of NHS Direct.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will set out the timetable for the review of NHS Direct. [71549]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As part of the Department's review of arm's length bodies, NHS Direct is to change its status from a special health authority to a national health service trust from April 2007 with the objective of becoming a NHS foundation trust from April 2008 or as soon as possible thereafter. NHS Direct is also changing the way it operates so that it can respond to the needs of people for advice and support in the most appropriate and cost efficient way. On 16 May it began a three-month consultation with staff on proposed changes to its management structures, skill mix and its call centre.

NHS Finance

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effect of NHS primary care trust budget deficits on the funding of local area agreements with local councils. [66287]

Andy Burnham: Local area agreements (LAAs) are based on a number of area-specific funding streams. NHS funding is not one of these, but can be aligned locally at the decision of the primary care trust (PCT) and the strategic health authority (SHA). PCTs and SHAs have played a key role in developing the LAAs, and this is reflected in the enthusiasm and commitment with which local partners have approached health and social care outcomes within the LAA. LAAs have proved valuable in improving the efficiency and targeting of resources, developing new ways of working and agreeing a joint approach with a range of local partners to addressing local issues.

With the record levels of funding available to NHS bodies, they should all have sufficient resources to invest in national and local priorities. Where appropriate, this includes arrangements for joint working with local authorities.

NHS Logistics

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she is placing a requirement on bidders to take over NHS Logistics to maintain all the current distribution centre; and whether such a commitment has been made. [72705]

Andy Burnham: The preferred bidder has indicated that they will take over all the current distribution centres. Their proposals indicate that they will maintain these distribution centres for the foreseeable future. There are no plans to close any of the current distribution centres over the life of the contract.

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if the Minister of State will fulfil the promise made by her predecessor to visit an NHS logistics distribution centre to discuss its operation and future plans with management and staff before reaching any decisions on the future of NHS logistics; [72706]

(2) if she will meet hon. Members representing constituents who work in NHS Logistics sites before any final decision is reached on its future. [72707]

Andy Burnham: I am happy to visit one of the distribution centres before any contract is awarded and have initiated the process to set this up.

Although my predecessors have met with hon. Members representing constituents who work in NHS Logistics sites on a number of occasions, I am prepared to meet them as well.

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her Department has received reports of changes to the business case for outsourcing NHS Logistics and the NHS consumables supply chain during discussions with DHL/Novation; and if she will make a statement. [72708]

Andy Burnham: There have been no such reports. In March 2006, Ministers approved the full business case for the outsourcing of NHS Logistics and related parts of NHS Purchasing and Supplies Agency. Subject to final negotiation a contract could be awarded to DHL/Novation.

These final negotiations are still in hand. Once they have been completed, I will be made aware of any changes to the business case that are material.

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the likely job losses *(a)* in NHS Logistics and *(b)* in total if the NHS consumables supply chain is outsourced. [72709]

Andy Burnham: Details of known implications for staff will be included in the letter of intent from the bidders as part of the formal consultation process. This letter of intent is known as the measures letter.

We cannot be more specific at this point due to continuing commercial negotiations.

NHS Staff (Attacks)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were *(a)* refused treatment and *(b)* prosecuted for verbal and physical attacks on NHS staff in (i) England and (ii) the Royal Shrewsbury hospital in 2004-05. [64283]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not collected centrally on the number of people who have been refused treatment because they have verbally or physically attacked national health service staff or on

the number of prosecutions for those people who have verbally attacked NHS staff. In 2004-05, 759 people were prosecuted for assaults on NHS staff.

NHS Staff Turnover

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the annual cost of staff turnover in the NHS in each of the last five years. [73108]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what proportion of NHS staff in each health care profession left the service and had to be replaced in the last year for which figures are available. [73109]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally for all health care professions. However, the number of joiners and leavers in the general practitioner workforce are tracked as part of the national health service workforce census.

In 2004 (the last year for which complete figures are available), 1,649 practitioners (excluding GP registrars and GP retainers) left the NHS in England. This equated to 5.2 per cent. of the practitioner workforce. In the same year, 2,930 practitioners (excluding GP registrars and GP retainers) joined the workforce. This equated to 9.3 per cent. of the workforce. The information collected shows only the numbers and proportion of leavers and joiners, it does not specify which of the leavers had to be replaced.

This information is not currently available for any other staff groups working in the NHS.

NHS Work Force

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the job title of each category of non-clinical job within the NHS in each strategic health authority area. [67947]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes to job titles have occurred within each strategic health authority area in the last two years. [67948]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes to job coding in the NHS workforce census were made between *(a)* 2003-04 and 2004-05 and *(b)* 2004-05 and 2005-06. [67946]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: National health service workforce census uses the occupation code manual as the basis for coding the jobs of staff. The census is run recording the position of the NHS workforce at the end of September. NHS organisations require 6 months notice of any changes made to the occupation code manual before they become mandatory in the census. Changes to the occupation code manual are announced through the publication of a data set change notice (DSCN).

The following DSCNs have relevance to the NHS workforce census and were issued between 1 May 2003 and 30 of April 2006. They are as follows:

DSCN 23/2003—which was issued in June 2003

(i) Introduction of new codes for:

qualified school nurses and other nurses working in school nursing

healthcare scientists working in: life sciences / pathology; physiological sciences; clinical engineering and physical sciences; and other healthcare science professions.

(ii) Deletion of scientific, therapeutic and technical codes rendered obsolete by the introduction of the new Healthcare Science codes above—in medical physics, pathology and physiological measurement.

DSCN 26/2004—which was issued in November 2004

(i) Introduction of new codes for: assistant practitioners, occupational therapy technicians and instructor/teachers in speech and language therapy.

(ii) Closure of scientist in clinical psychology and guidance for re coding assistant psychologists.

(iii) Improved guidance for: Emergency care practitioners, administrative managers, locums, pre-registration house offices, NHS Direct nursing, cadet nursing and nursing auxiliary, mental health workers.

DSCN 07/2005—which was issued in May 2005

(i) Introduction of a new specialty code for sports and exercise medicine for medical staff.

(ii) Introduction of codes for modern matrons and community matrons

(iii) Improved guidance for non-executives, general definitions for nurses and suggested re-coding for carer support workers.

DSCN 06/2006—which was issued in March 2006

(i) Recoding of ambulance matrix to allow greater level of detail.

(ii) Introduction of codes to track community matrons distinct from modern matrons.

Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what meetings she has had with officials concerning primary care trusts in the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire strategic health authority area. [68928]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* There have been no specific meetings between departmental officials and my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State to discuss Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridge. However, a range of meetings with officials to discuss primary care trust reconfiguration have taken place, which as a matter of course will have included discussions on Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridge.

Northamptonshire Heartlands PCT

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding has been allocated to Northamptonshire Heartlands Primary Care Trust for the 2006-07 financial year; how much was allocated in each of the previous five years; how much is expected to be allocated in each of the next five years; and what percentage each figure represents of the Government's national standard amount in each year. [68957]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Revenue allocations were first made to primary care trusts (PCTS) in 2003-04. Prior to this, funding was allocated to health authorities (HAs).

The information requested is shown in the following table:

	Northamptonshire HA			*Northamptonshire Heartlands PCT*			*England*	
	Allocation (£ million)	*Allocation per head (£)*	*Allocation per head relative to England average (Percentage)*	*Allocation (£ million)*	*Allocation per head (£)*	*Allocation per head relative to England average (Percentage)*	*Allocation (£ million)*	*Allocation per head (£)*
2001-02	386	674	83	—	—	—	37,157	817
2002-03	429	739	82	—	—	—	40,988	903
2003-04	—	—	—	222	810	90	45,027	903
2004-05	—	—	—	244	882	90	49,328	986
2005-06	—	—	—	267	1,045	89	53,925	1,172
2006-07	—	—	—	336	1,196	94	64,309	1,274
2007-08	—	—	—	377	1,330	96	70,354	1,388

Notes
It is not possible to compare allocations rounds for the following reasons:
organisational changes and changes made to the weighted capitation formula for each allocations round, mean that comparisons between allocations rounds would not be on a like with like basis;
services for which PCTs are responsible for funding change over time. For example, 2006-07 is the first year that primary medical services were incorporated into revenue allocations.
Allocations are informed by a weighted capitation formula. No decision yet has been made on revenue allocations post 2007-08.
Source:
Department of Health

Nursing

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent on agency nurses by *(a)* the Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust and *(b)* St. Helier Hospital in each year since 1997. [71325]

Caroline Flint: The data requested are collected at trust level. Details on agency nursing spend figures for the Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals National Health Service Trust is shown in the table.

Agency nurse spends

£

	Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	*Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust*
1997-98	—	1,190,422
1998-99	—	1,200,386
1999-2000	3,365,663	—
2000-01	6,329,538	—
2001-02	9,304,846	—

Agency nurse spends

£

	Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	*Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust*
2002-03	2,522,590	—
2003-04	677,015	—
2004-05	450,000	—

Obesity

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the levels of obesity in *(a)* children and *(b)* adults were in each year since 1997. [71383]

Caroline Flint: The main source of data on the prevalence of obesity is the Health Survey for England (HSE). Table one and two present the most recent available data on the prevalence of obesity in children and adults, between 1997 and 2004.

Table one refers to the obesity prevalence among children aged two to 15 and table two reports the obesity prevalence among adults aged 16 and over.

Table 1: Prevalence of obesity among children[1], by gender, England 1997 to 2004[2]

Percentage

Body mass index status	*Survey Years* 1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Boys	12.7	13.0	16.4	14.5	15.5
Girls	12.4	13.8	13.7	14.2	14.5
Bases					
Boys	3,063	1,981	977	877	1,653
Girls	3,069	1,872	950	841	1,699

Body mass index status	2002	2003 (unweighted)	Survey Year 2004 unweighted)	2003 (weighted)	2004 (weighted)
Boys	16.9	17.0	18.9	17.0	19.2
Girls	17.1	16.1	17.8	16.1	18.5
Bases					
Boys	3,745	1,410	645	1,452	8,833
Girls	3,636	1,444	579	1,393	8,228

Notes:
1. Children aged 2 to 15
2. From 2003 data is weighted for non response. Data weighted for child selection only are provided for consistency with previous years
Source.
Health Survey for England 2004. Updating of trend tables to include 2004 data. The Information Centre for health and social care.

Table 2: Prevalence of obesity among adults[1], by gender, England 1997 to 2004[2]

Percentage

	1997	1998	Survey year 1999	2000	2001
Men	17.0	17.3	18.7	21.0	21.0
Women	19.7	21.2	21.1	21.4	23.5
Bases					
Men	3,685	6,600	3,204	3,260	6,267
Women	4,254	7,730	3,699	3,703	7,414

	2002	2003 (unweighted)	2004 (unweighted)	2003 (weighted)	2004 (weighted)
Men	22.1	22.9	23.6	22.2	23
Women	22.8	23.4	23.8	23.0	23
Bases					
Men	2,969	5,966	2,444	5,966	39,244
Women	3,509	7,090	3,135	7,090	39,803

Notes:
1. Adults aged 16 and over
2. From 2003 data is weighted. Unweighted data for 2003 and 2004 are provided to show the effect of weighting
Source:
Health Survey for England 2003. The Department of Health
Health Survey for England 2004. The Information Centre for health and social care

Older People's Care

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the degree of independence older people have living *(a)* in a care home and *(b)* in their own home. [70131]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information needed to make this assessment is not held centrally. The Government's policy is to support people to live in their own homes, as long as it is safe to do so and accords with their wishes and assessed needs.

The White Paper, 'Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services', was published on Monday 30 January 2006. The White Paper sets out a new direction for improving the health and well-being of the population and focuses on a strategic shift to locate more services in local communities that are closer to people's homes. It is the product of two consultations; the adult social care Green Paper, 'Independence, Well-being and Choice', published in March 2005 and the listening exercise, 'Your health, your care, your say', which took place between September and November 2005.

The Green Paper, which is available in the Library, sets out our vision for the future of social care. It was followed by a wide-ranging consultation, involving people who use services, carers, stakeholders and the general public. The total number of people directly involved in the consultation is estimated to have been 100,000. The results, published in October 2005, are available in the Library and show that over three quarters of people wish to live in their own homes, with help, such as adaptations to properties, assistive technology and domiciliary care services being provided if necessary.

Packaged Food

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress she has made in reducing the *(a)* salt, *(b)* fat and *(c)* sugar content of packaged foods. [71440]

Caroline Flint: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the Department, working with the food industry, have made significant progress towards reducing the salt content of foods. Voluntary targets for salt reduction were published in March 2006 which will achieve real reductions in consumers intakes, while also being challenging for the industry. Scope for further reductions will be considered in 2008 to ensure continued progress towards the Government's target of a maximum population average intake of six grams of salt a day.

The FSA and the Department are currently in discussion with stakeholders to develop a strategy for reducing levels of saturated fat in packaged foods, and to help consumers maintain energy balance.

Patient/Public Involvement

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many members of patients forums have resigned since 1 December 2003; and what percentage turnover in membership this represents. [71544]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 17 May 2006]:* The commission for patient and public involvement in health has only collected figures since November 2004. From November 2004 to date, 2,710 patient forum members have resigned and have subsequently been replaced. At May 2006, there are currently 4,353 forum members. This represents a 62 per cent. turnover.

Perfluorooctane Sulphonate

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance *(a)* her Department and *(b)* the Health Protection Agency has issued on the use of perfluorooctane sulphonate to tackle fires. [70731]

Caroline Flint: Neither the Department nor the Health Protection Agency has issued advice on the use of perfluorooctane sulphonate in tackling fires.

PFOS was used as an ingredient in two particular fire fighting foam concentrate ranges up until 2003 when production by the main manufacturer ceased following the evidence to suggest that it is harmful to both the environment and humans. I understand from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs that the stocks of foams based on PFOS are diminishing but it is likely that some fire and rescue services do still hold some stocks. NCI Director's Consumer Liaison Group, jointly with the Environment Agency, will shortly be issuing guidance to the fire and rescue services requesting them to no longer use PFOS based foams and instead to consider the use of alternatives once they are satisfied the performance of these alternatives meets their needs.

Physiotherapy

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of the adequacy of places on physiotherapy courses in universities to meet the number of vacancies within the profession; and what recent discussions she has had on filling such vacancies with *(a)* careers advisers and *(b)* educational establishments. [68292]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department collects information on the number of university places commissioned by the national health service for physiotherapy students. This is used by the NHS work force review team as part of their analysis of and recommendations on future work force requirements. The commissioning for these programmes is the responsibility of local NHS organisations, who consider a range of local factors including vacancies, resources and the NHS work force review team's recommendations.

Discussions with careers advisers and educational establishments are held at local level between NHS organisations, their physiotherapy service managers and higher education institution representatives.

Pre-registration Nursing Courses

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are enrolled on pre-registration nursing courses; how many were enrolled in each of the previous four years; and if she will make a statement. [72748]

Andy Burnham: Information on the number of people enrolled on pre-registration nurse training courses is shown in the following table:

	Number
2002-03	58,900
2003-04	64,995
2004-05	70,210
2005-06	72,930
2006-07 Forecast	73,670

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding was allocated to each primary care trust in England in each year since 2001. [64306]

Andy Burnham: Revenue allocations were first made to primary care trusts (PCTs) in 2003-04. Prior to this, funding was allocated to health authorities (HAs). The funding allocated to each HA for 2001-02 and 2002-03 and to each PCT for 2003-04 to 2007-08 in England has been placed in the Library.

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what criteria were used to determine the size of the reorganised primary care trusts announced on 16 May. [72490]

Andy Burnham: Proposals for primary care trust (PCT) reconfiguration were assessed against eight criteria.

secure high quality, safe services;

improve health and reduce inequalities;

improve the engagement of GPs and roll-out of Practice Based Commissioning with demonstrable practice support;

improve public involvement;

improve commissioning and effective use of resources;

manage financial balance and risk;

improve co-ordination with social services through greater congruence of PCT and local government boundaries; and

deliver at least 15 per cent. reduction in management and administrative costs.

These criteria were set out by the Department in July 2005 in 'Commissioning a patient led NHS'. Strategic health authorities consulted widely with stakeholders on reconfiguration. Options for PCTs and Ministers considered carefully the views expressed in making final decisions that balanced views expressed and the criteria.

School Nurses

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many primary care trusts have at least one full-time, year round qualified school nurse for each cluster or group of primary schools and related secondary school; if she will list the primary care trusts which do not have such provision; and if she will make a statement. [67412]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The September 2005 census showed that there were 2,887 (1,913 full-time equivalent (fte)) qualified nurses working in the school nursing service, an increase of 478 (19.8 per cent.) since 2004.

Of these 943 (665 fte) have a post registration school nursing qualification, an increase of 87 (10 per cent.) since 2004.

Data on the number of full-time qualified school nurses by primary care trust have been placed in the Library.

Sexual Health

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate the Department has made of the number of people in each region in England with undiagnosed *(a)* HIV/AIDS, *(b)* Chlamydia, *(c)* gonorrhoea, *(d)* hepatitis B and *(e)* syphilis. [67189]

Caroline Flint: Data on the estimated number of undiagnosed HIV infections for all adults in the United Kingdom is shown in the following table.

Results from screening asymptomatic sexually active young people, aged less than 25 years, through the national Chlamydia screening programme indicate that up to one in 10 of the target population are infected with Chlamydia. This indicates a high level of undetected genital Chlamydia infection in young sexually active people.

There are no estimates of the number of cases of undiagnosed gonorrhoea in England. It is thought that while the majority of infections among men are symptomatic, a significant proportion are asymptomatic and therefore more likely to remain undiagnosed. The proportion of asymptomatic infections is higher among women.

There are no estimates on undiagnosed cases of hepatitis B in England.

Estimates[1] of prevalent HIV infections among adults aged 15 to 59, United Kingdom 2004

Exposure category	*Number diagnosed[2,3]*	*Number undiagnosed*	*Total*
Sex between men	17,400	9,100	26,500
	(16,900, 17,900)	(6,600, 13,300)	(23,900, 30,700)
Injecting drug use	1,300	600	2,000
	(1,300, 1,400)	(500, 800)	(1,800, 2,100)
Heterosexuals	19,900	9,800	29,700
	(19,300, 20,600)	(7,600, 13,000)	(27,600, 32,900)
Men	7,400	4,700	12,000
	(7,100, 7,600)	(3,600, 6,700)	(10,900, 14,100)
African born	4,600	1,600	6,200
	(4,400, 4,700)	(1,000, 2,700)	(5,600, 7,300)
Non-African born	2,800	3,000	5,900
	(2,700, 2,900)	(2,300, 4,200)	(5,100, 7,000)
Women	12,500	5,100	17,700
	(12,100, 13,000)	(3,900, 6,700)	(16,500, 19,200)
African born	9,300	2,400	11,700
	(8,900, 9,600)	(1,700, 3,400)	(10,900, 12,700)
Non-African born	3,300	2,700	6,000
	(3,100, 3,400)	(2,100, 3,500)	(5,400, 6,800)
Grand total	38,600	19,700	58,300
	(37,500, 39,800)	(16,100, 24,800)	(54,700, 63,400)

[1] Numbers diagnosed and undiagnosed (rounded to the nearest 100) were estimated using multi- parameter evidence synthesis, in an extension of the method described in Goubar A et al Bayesian multi-parameter synthesis of HIV surveillance data in England and Wales, 2001, 2005 submitted.
[2] Numbers diagnosed exclude individuals aged 15 to 59 with unknown area of residence (570 in 2004).
[3] Numbers diagnosed exclude individuals aged 15 to 59 infected through blood or blood products or tissue (410 in 2004) or through mother-to-child transmission (120 in 2004).
Source:
SOPHID; CD4 monitoring; reports of deaths in HIV-infected individuals; Natsal 2000; unlinked anonymous prevalence monitoring; national study of HIV in pregnancy and childhood (NSHPC)

Suicidality

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish the research undertaken by Government agencies on the effects of certain drugs on suicidality. [69942]

Andy Burnham: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has published research into the effect of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) on suicidal thoughts and behaviour. The report of the committee on safety of medicines expert working group on the safety of SSRIs was published on 6 December 2004 and is available on the MHRA's website at www.mhra.gov.uk. A copy is available in the Library. The MHRA is committed to publishing the research which underpins its decisions on safety of medicines.

Tuberculosis

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what plans the Government have to change screening arrangements for tuberculosis at United Kingdom *(a)* ports and *(b)* airports; and if she will make a statement; [67429]

(2) how many X-ray machines for tuberculosis screening are located at each United Kingdom *(a)* port and *(b)* airport; and if she will make a statement; [67430]

(3) how many immigrants were *(a)* screened for and *(b)* found to have tuberculosis in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement; [67431]

(4) how many follow-up health checks were conducted on immigrants to the United Kingdom in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement; [67432]

(5) what action she plans to take in response to the Health Protection Agency's report on screening arrangements for tuberculosis at United Kingdom points of entry; and if she will make a statement. [67435]

Caroline Flint: The Immigration Act 1971 gives immigration officers the power to refer people who are subject to immigration control and who are seeking entry to the United Kingdom to a medical inspector for a medical examination. The immigration officer may take the findings of the medical examination into account when deciding whether to admit the person to the UK.

The long-standing policy of successive Governments are that people who come from a country with a high annual incidence rate of tuberculosis (over 40 cases of TB per 100,000 population) and who are seeking leave to enter the UK for more than six months and port asylum claimants should routinely be referred for medical examination. In addition, immigration officers should refer for medical examination anyone who appears ill, or who mentions health or illness as a reason for coming to the UK. Because of the large numbers of travellers passing through Heathrow and Gatwick airports, there are three x-ray machines at Heathrow and one at Gatwick for taking chest x-rays.

The time pressures at points of entry mean that it is not possible, even where x-ray machines are available, to carry out there all the tests that would be desirable, or to make firm diagnoses of TB. That is why long-standing policy is that checks carried out at points of entry should be followed up by the national health service. This was reinforced by the "NICE TB Clinical Guidelines" published on the 22 March 2006, which make clear recommendations to the NHS to identify new entrants for TB screening from port of arrival reports (that is, information from medical inspectors), new registrations with primary care, entry to education (including universities) and links with statutory and voluntary groups working with new entrants. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence also have provided screening protocols and toolkits for the NHS for new entrant screening. The Department does not routinely collect figures from points of entry on the numbers of immigrants screened for TB. Follow up health checks on immigrants may take a variety of forms, in a variety of settings, and are not identified as such in statistics about NHS activity.

As announced in February 2005, in the Home Office's five-year asylum and immigration strategy "Controlling our Borders" (Cm 6742), the Government plan to increase the number of routine TB checks that are done abroad. Checks overseas can be more thorough than those that can be made under pressure of time at points of entry, and those found to have infectious TB are required to complete treatment before entry clearance to the UK is granted. Phase one of this overseas programme began in autumn 2005 has been operational in six countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, Sudan, Tanzania and Thailand) since spring 2006. Phase two is planned to start later in 2006.

The Department and the Home Office commissioned a review of the operational arrangements made at points of entry in England both for medical examinations under the Immigration Act and for discharging responsibilities under the Public Health (Aircraft), (Ships) and (International Trains) Regulations with a view to strengthening those arrangements. (Responsibility for the health input into operational arrangements at points of entry in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland rests with the Scottish Ministers, National Assembly for Wales, and Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern

Ireland). The review was carried out by a project team led by the Health Protection Agency (HPA) and with Home Office representation. Their report is on the Agency's website at www.hpa.org.uk/porthealth/default.htm. Specific actions relevant to medical examinations under the Immigration Act 1971 that are being taken in the light of the review are that:

the Department will continue, as already planned, with an evaluation of the effectiveness of routine TB checks, both overseas and at points of entry;

the HPA will take the overall operational lead at points of entry in England to ensure that there are appropriate operational arrangements for medical examinations under the Immigration Act 1971, ensuring that this and appropriate supporting actions are reflected in its business plan;

the Home Office will take forward with appropriate consultation a proposal that the accommodation needed for medical examinations under the Immigration Act should be provided free of charge; update the relevant Immigration Directorate Instructions; and survey the impact that advice from those who carry out medical examinations has on the entry decisions taken by immigration officers; and

the Department and the Home Office will seek an opportunity to modernise the legislation on medical examinations under the Immigration Act, giving the responsibility for carrying out examinations to a body with health functions (such as the HPA) rather than to individually appointed medical inspectors.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Government is taking to ensure that information on how to receive the BCG vaccination is available following the decision to end the school-based vaccination programme. [71486]

Caroline Flint: The Chief Medical Officer announced changes to the Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) programme via a letter to the medical profession and primary care trusts on 6 July 2005. In support of these changes an updated leaflet, factsheet, and poster were produced and sent directly to the groups listed above. All of these resources were aimed at raising awareness of tuberculosis (TB), and also informing health professionals and the general public alike, of the changes to BCG policy. All these resources were also made available to order free of charge via the Department publications line.

The 6 July 2005 policy changes also meant that the tuberculin skin test was given in a different way, with the Mantoux test replacing the Heaf test. The Department produced a flip chart and DVD for training purposes. These were made available to order free of charge via the Department publications line and sent directly to all TB clinics. Following these changes, the Department held a meeting of immunisation co-ordinators who are responsible for implementation of the BCG programme within their localities. The public information materials were shared with the co-ordinators and their views obtained.

The Department has also carried out public awareness testing on matters relating to TB and its control, and all information materials on TB and BCG are pre-tested with members of the public.

Terminal Illness

Mr. Newmark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in *(a)* Witham, Braintree and Halstead Primary Care Trust area and *(b)* England were diagnosed with a terminal illness in 2004-05; and how many of these were given a life expectancy of less than 12 months for each area. [60460]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Trans Fatty Acids

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the health effects of trans fatty acids. [71439]

Caroline Flint: The Government are aware of the health effects of consuming certain fats, including trans fatty acids (TFAs), particularly on coronary health.

An assessment in 2004 by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) agreed with earlier conclusions of the United Kingdom's committee on medical aspects of food policy that TFAs may increase risk of coronary heart disease by raising blood cholesterol levels.

Uttlesford Primary Care Trust

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the financial position of the Uttlesford primary care trust. [68431]

Andy Burnham: For 2005-06 at month six, Uttlesford primary care trust is forecasting a net year-end deficit of £1.2 million.

Waiting Times

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many patients are waiting for dialysis at Dorset county hospital; [68306]

(2) what the longest time is for which a patient has been waiting for dialysis at Dorset county hospital. [68308]

Caroline Flint: Dialysis is an emergency treatment for patients with established renal failure, therefore patients are given immediate priority treatment as soon as possible following diagnosis.

The Dorset and Somerset strategic health authority has advised officials that there is a robust plan in place to increase dialysis capacity in Dorset by an additional 60 dialysis stations. The plan is being overseen by a renal programme implementation team, which includes clinical, patient and carer representatives.

Part of the proposals include the development of a new renal unit at Alderney community hospital. Other options include investigating potential alternative national health service sites and the use of a private sector unit. In addition, West Dorset general hospitals NHS trust is developing an interim capacity plan to ensure patients requiring renal dialysis receive appropriate treatment.

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the change in patient waiting times in the constituency of Brentford and Isleworth since 1997. [71095]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: It is for the local national health service to assess patient waiting times in the local area and to ensure that waiting time targets are met.

The table shows the number of patients waiting by time bands for the quarter ending March 1997 to March 2006 for Hounslow primary care trust (PCT), Ealing PCT and Hammersmith and Fulham PCT including the Ealing, Hammersmith and Hounslow Health Authority (HA) which existed before the creation of the PCTs.

In-patients still waiting by timeband, quarter ending March 1997 to March 2006. Commissioner based. Ealing, Hammersmith and Hounslow HA

		Patients waiting for an admission in months						
Quarter ending March	*In-patient waiting list*	*0<3*	*3<6*	*6<9*	*9<12*	*12<15*	*15<18*	*18<21*
2003	15,226	6,164	3,790	2,418	1,628	848	357	21
2003	18,461	7,087	4,286	3,228	1,995	1,240	625	0
1999	13,831	6,838	3,075	1,803	1,200	705	210	0
2000	13,717	7,434	3,001	1,678	945	534	125	0
2001	12,679	6,556	2,908	1,639	923	551	102	0
2002	13,066	7,292	3,164	1,517	808	285	0	0

Corresponding PCTs in the former HA

			Patients waiting for an admission in months						
PCT	*Quarter ending March*	*In-patient waiting list*	*0<3*	*3<6*	*6<9*	*9<12*	*12<15*	*15<18*	*18+*
Hammersmith and Fulham PCT	2003	2,631	1,650	626	266	89	0	0	0
Ealing PCT	2003	5,894	3,167	1,543	836	348	0	0	0
Hounslow PCT	2003	4,441	2,442	1,192	678	129	0	0	0
Sum of PCTs	2003	12,996	7,259	3,361	1,780	566	0	0	0
Hammersmith and Fulham PCT	2004	2,348	1,699	494	155	0	0	0	0
Ealing PCT	2004	5,283	3,520	1,409	346	2	6	0	0
Hounslow PCT	2004	3,642	2,546	912	182	2	0	0	0
Sum of PCTs	2004	11,273	7,765	2,815	683	4	6	0	0
Hammersmith and Fulham PCT	2005	2,564	1,654	830	80	0	0	0	0
Ealing PCT	2005	5,046	3,226	1,606	214	0	0	0	0
Hounslow PCT	2005	3,147	2,042	997	106	2	0	0	0
Sum of PCTs	2005	10,757	6,922	3,433	400	2	0	0	0
Hammersmith and Fulham PCT	2006	2,612	1,785	827	0	0	0	0	0
Ealing PCT	2006	5,913	4,217	1,696	0	0	0	0	0
Hounslow PCT	2006	2,806	2,043	763	0	0	0	0	0
Sum of PCTs	2006	11,331	8,045	3,286	0	0	0	0	0

Note:
PCTs came into existence from April 2002. Before then the data are supplied by the corresponding HA.
Source:
Department of Health form QF01.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of waiting times for *(a)* speech therapy and *(b)* cataract operations; and if she will make a statement. [72283]

Andy Burnham: As speech and language therapy is not a consultant-led speciality, data on waiting times for this treatment are not centrally available.

The official figures on waiting times show the length of time that people currently on the list for treatment have been waiting. Those data is collected at consultant led speciality level, for example ophthalmology. It is not possible to split those data down to show waiting list data for specific operations, for example cataract operations. Therefore, the information requested is not centrally available.

However, a different source of information can be used to provide an approximate measure of the times that patients have waited for admission for specific operations such as those relating to cataracts. The most up-to-date data are for 2004-05 which are shown in the table.

Mean/median number of days waited for a cataract operation in NHS Hospitals in England 1996-97 to 2004-05

	Mean waiting time	Median waiting time
1996-97	176	151
1997-98	208	179
1998-99	225	204
1999-2000	201	176
2000-01	190	164
2001-02	179	153
2002-03	173	147
2003-04	148	127
2004-05	91	78

Work Permit Regulations

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether the NHS will pay the work permit charges of trainee doctors from the Commonwealth; [64675]

(2) whether hospitals employing large numbers of Commonwealth doctors will be allocated extra funding to pay for new work permits. [65033]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is the responsibility of any employer to pay for applications for work permits. No specific funding will be allocated to national health service trusts for work permits but primary care trust allocations are increasing by about 20 per cent. in 2006-07 and 2007-08.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to ensure that doctors from overseas who graduated from a UK medical school are allowed to complete all their training in the NHS. [66842]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has been working with the Home Office to put in place transitional arrangements. Those doctors and dentists who were offered a relevant training post before the changes were announced will be given the opportunity to complete their training.

Doctors from outside the European Economic Area who have graduated in the United Kingdom will have up to three years to complete their foundation training. Once the foundation course has been completed doctors will need to meet the normal requirements of the immigration rules.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what consultation she held with *(a)* the British Medical Association, *(b)* organisations representing immigrant doctors and *(c)* hospital trusts on the recent changes to immigration rules affecting doctors. [65014]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The immigration rules for postgraduate doctors and dentists (permit-free training) were amended in July 2005. Since then officials have been discussing with the Conference of Postgraduate Medical Deans, the British Medical Association's junior doctors committee and organisations representing overseas doctors the arrangements for those already in training and to agree what further guidance and clarification is needed to deal with the new arrangements.

The Department has been working closely with NHS Employers to provide guidance to the national health service.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact of the new immigration regulations on the provision of locums. [65030]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No assessment has been made of the impact of the new immigration regulations on the provision of locums. The practice of employing locum doctors under the old permit-free training rules was a misuse of the system and no substitute for good work force planning.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Health Department what steps she is taking *(a)* to protect the position of and *(b)* to encourage the employment of medical graduates from the Commonwealth in the NHS from adverse effects of the new work permit requirements. [65056]

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department is taking to assist non-EU doctors affected by changes to the work permit regulations. [65677]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has been working with the Home Office to put in place transitional arrangements. Those doctors and dentists who were offered a relevant training post before the changes were announced will be given the opportunity to complete their training.

Overseas doctors and dentists will still be able to come and train in the United Kingdom. They will now be considered as being in employment for immigration purposes and will need to meet the requirements of an employment category of the immigration rules.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which organisations were consulted by her Department concerning the effects on medical staff of changes to the work permit regulations due to come into force in July. [65675]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The immigration rules for postgraduate doctors and dentists (permit-free training) were first amended in July 2005. Since then officials have been discussing with the Conference of Postgraduate Medical Deans, the British Medical Association's junior doctors committee and organisations representing overseas doctors the arrangements for those already in training and to agree what further guidance and clarification is needed to deal with further changes that came into operation on 3 April 2006.

The Department has been working closely with NHS Employers to provide guidance to the national health service, including transitional arrangements.

Mr. Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on her discussions with the British Medical Association regarding the impact of the work permit regulations affecting non-EU doctors which comes into force in July. [69756]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Departmental officials have been working closely with the junior doctors committee of the British Medical Association (BMA) since the changes to the immigration rules in July 2005. The Department continues to discuss with the BMA the arrangements for those already in training and to agree what further guidance and clarification is needed to deal with the new arrangements.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 23 May 2006

NORTHERN IRELAND

Asbestos Removal

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public money was spent on the removal of asbestos from buildings identified as unsafe in each of the last three years in each parliamentary constituency in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [69653]

Mr. Hanson: In the last three years some 97,000 Work Orders were issued for Maintenance, Minor Works and Major Capital Refurbishment Projects at Government buildings, totalling approximately £174 million in respect of estimated work value. Asbestos removal work would be an item on many of these orders. It is not possible to determine the full extent of any asbestos removals with any degree of accuracy without incurring disproportionate costs.

Asbestos was, in the past, routinely used in construction by the building industry and as such, many of the older properties in the Government Estate contain this material.

In late 1987, a plan of action was instigated to prepare Asbestos Registers for many properties within the Government Estate. Asbestos Surveys commenced from 1988 onwards, involving over 1,000 properties, many of which are currently known to contain Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs). Each Asbestos Register records the precise location, use, type and condition of all ACMs known to be present.

In the intervening years, these Asbestos Registers have been maintained through various programmes of inspections, including the introduction of effective management and control procedures. These actions have maintained Government properties in a safe and occupiable condition, ensuring that any recorded ACMs present at each location do not present any significant risk to the health and safety of staff employed there or the visiting public.

The Health and Safety Executive (NI) advises that asbestos is dangerous only if fibres are released into the atmosphere. There is no requirement to remove such ACMs if they are in good condition and unlikely to be disturbed. The HSE (NI) further advises that, where possible, ACMs should be left undisturbed, but that their presence should be effectively managed. Where ACMs are deemed in poor condition and require removal, such action is undertaken by specialist Asbestos Removal Contractors accredited by the HSE (NI), using a recognised and legislatively compliant safe system of work. Such work is also notifiable to the HSE (NI).

Government Departments do not, therefore, have a general plan to remove asbestos from their buildings, but will remove such materials where regular inspections dictate such a recommendation.

Asbestos removals, where not deemed necessary through regular inspections, i.e. as a result of planned disturbance, are normally carried out as an integral part of ongoing Maintenance, Minor Works or Major Capital Refurbishment Projects.

BBC Northern Ireland

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what meetings he has had with the Controller of BBC Northern Ireland. [34562]

Mr. Hain: I must apologise to the hon. Member for the delay in responding, owing to an administrative error with the Department. Steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence.

I have met the Controller of BBC Northern Ireland on two occasions since becoming Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

Child Sex Abuse

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 723W, on child sex abuse, in what way the new database will trace offender clusters; how it will alert the authorities to the appearance of offender clusters; in what way offender clusters have traditionally been monitored; and how many people have been identified by way of offender clusters in each of the past three years for which there are records. [69245]

Paul Goggins: As stated in the answer to the hon. Gentleman of 23 March 2006, the Police Service of Northern Ireland is continuing to monitor the development of a new database by the UK's Police Information Technology Organisations. They have confirmed that neither this system nor the Case Administration and Tracking System will be able to identify offender clusters as they are both victim based systems.

The National Intelligence Model currently uses the Integrated Crime Information System to monitor offender clusters. This model delivers the intelligence and analysis to enable audits to be conducted on all crime related issues and to identify and determine any response to offender clusters.

No records are available for the number of people identified by way of offender clusters.

Coeliac Disease

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to ensure that general practitioners receive more appropriate training and support to enable them better to recognise and more accurately to diagnose coeliac disease. [72512]

Paul Goggins: A range of assessment tools are employed, by the Northern Ireland medical and dental training agency (NIMDTA), to determine the continuing

professional development and training needs of general practitioners. The Department is issuing the recently published CREST guidelines for the diagnosis and management of coeliac disease in adults to health professionals in the HPSS and all GPs including locums, to assist with better recognition and more accurate diagnosis of the disease. NIMDTA will take account of the relevance of this work in identifying the future training needs of GPs.

Competitiveness

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the effect of *(a)* the cost of electricity and *(b)* industrial de-rating on the competitiveness of the Northern Ireland economy. [71309]

Maria Eagle: The Cost of Doing Business Survey published by the Economic Research Institute for Northern Ireland (ERINI) in December 2005 concluded that, on balance, business costs in Northern Ireland are relatively competitive when compared to GB and the Republic of Ireland. While some elements such as energy and insurance costs were found to be higher in Northern Ireland than in GB, these 'uncompetitive' costs together make up only a small proportion of business turnover.

Industrial de-rating should not add significantly to the cost burden of manufacturing. In 2004 turnover in manufacturing was around £13.7 billion and even if rates liabilities had to be met in full (which is not due to happen until 2011) this would represent less than 0.4 per cent. of this level of turnover. In addition, the revenues raised will enable significant investment in priority public services, which will benefit the economy. A policy review of industrial de-rating will take place in 2007 which will look at both its impact on manufacturers and also the implications for budgets and future levels of planned public expenditure.

Departmental Communications

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of communications from members of the public to the Northern Ireland Office were made by *(a)* post, *(b)* telephone and *(c)* email during 2004. [34446]

Mr. Hain: Information regarding telephone calls and emails is not held centrally however the NIO Departmental Report 2005, Appendix 1 Six Service Standards for Central Government sets out details of letters received from the public during 2004 as shown in the following table.

	Number of letters received
NIO Core	2,292
Northern Ireland Prison Service	929
Forensic Science Northern Ireland	157
The Compensation Agency	97,141
Public Prosecution Service	50

Disabled People

Tom Levitt: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on his Department's progress in fulfilling its statutory obligation as a public body of promoting the rights of disabled people. [66011]

Mr. Hain: As a general principle the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) fulfils its statutory obligation as a public body for promoting the rights of disabled people through its equality scheme set up under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 which has disability as an equality category. The Department is presently reviewing its Equality Scheme and is in consultation with the Disability Commission to determine what if any additional measures need to be incorporated to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

At a practical level the NIO has developed it arrangements to support disabled people.

A textphone service is available in the Department to allow people with hearing or speech disabilities to make contact with us.

Arrangements for disabled people attending NIO events (e.g. Hillsborough Garden Party) have been reviewed recently in accordance with best practice guidelines on making events accessible.

We are committed to widening the diversity of the people who sit on NIO public bodies: attracting and appointing more disabled people is a key element of this aim. Public appointment opportunities are circulated to 140 community groups and 1,400 individuals who have expressed an interest in applying for public appointments in Northern Ireland.

The NIO participates in the Employment Support Scheme, run by the Department of Employment and Learning, which gives people whose disabilities would make it difficult for them to compete for and retain jobs in the open labour market the opportunity to work alongside non-disabled people.

Within the Department a number of initiatives have concentrated on better facilities for staff with disabilities which include:

A new IT System where provision was considered for disability including the appropriate software required for members of staff with sight impairment. Measures were also considered during the extensive training programme.

A bursary scheme for staff with disabilities targeted at those with the potential to reach Grade A. This scheme provides the bursary holder with targeted training, placements and a SCS mentor to assist them develop the competences needed to aim for promotion.

Promoting a working environment in the Department which actively challenges prejudice in relation to disability. This is done by raising awareness of disability issues through publicising good employment practice and the provision of disability awareness training.

The provision of a Disabled Persons' Liaison Officer to liaise with disabled staff and managers to ensure that jobs are adapted to the specific needs of individuals such as - adjustments to premises to alleviate access problems, reorganising the duties of a post to suit a particular disability, to organise the transfer of staff to a particular post suited to their disability, altering the working hours of an individual to facilitate rehabilitation or treatment, provision of information to suit the needs of staff with visual disabilities i.e. conversion to Braille, acquiring or adapting office

equipment, the provision of sign language interpreters for staff with hearing difficulties and facilitation of a disability network group which is self run by disabled NIO staff who meet regularly to discuss issues affecting disabled staff in the Department.

Dissident Republican Paramilitaries

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, pursuant to the answer of 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 724W, on dissident republican paramilitaries, whether the publication of the eighth report of the independent monitoring commission provided him with information on dissident republican paramilitary recruitment of which he had not previously been in possession. [70461]

Paul Goggins: In his answers of 27 February, 16 March 2006 and 19 April 2006, my right hon. Friend the Member for St. Helens, South (Mr. Woodward) advised that the recently published IMC report indicated that there is evidence that dissident republican groups are attempting to recruit members. Mr. Woodward based his information on the eighth IMC report which was published on 1 February 2006.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, pursuant to the answer of 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 724W, on dissident republican paramilitaries, whether the independent monitoring commission had access to security sources in preparing its eighth report that he does not have. [70489]

Paul Goggins: The role of the independent monitoring commission is to help promote the establishment of stable and inclusive devolved Government in a peaceful Northern Ireland. It reports to the Government on inter alia activity by paramilitary groups and the normalisation of security measures. My right hon. Friend the Member for St. Helens, South (Mr. Woodward), based his assessments on the IMC reports.

Female Prisoners

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many female convicted prisoners there were in Northern Ireland on 1 January *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 2006. [65925]

Paul Goggins: On 1 January 2001 there were nine female sentenced prisoners. On 1 January 2006 there were 10 female sentenced prisoners.

Invest Northern Ireland

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the written statement of 10 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 20WS, on Northern Ireland (Future Garrison Structure), whether Invest Northern Ireland plans to take steps to promote employment opportunities in the East Londonderry constituency. [72623]

Maria Eagle: Invest NI's role is to increase competitiveness in its client companies by helping them become more entrepreneurial, innovative and capable of operating in export markets. Investment in business competitiveness leads to greater wealth-creation and better employment opportunities for all. This was seen, for example, in last year's reinvestment by Seagate where Invest NI worked in partnership with the company to create 300 additional jobs in the area. The agency will continue to pursue all such opportunities within its client base.

Since 2003 Invest NI has secured over £240 million of investment into the North West promoting over 1,100 new jobs. During the last financial year the Agency secured agreements for three new Foreign Direct Investment projects to be based in the North West generating further investment of £1.5 million in the region. These projects will promote 50 new jobs and contribute approximately £700,000 to the local economy through annual salaries.

Increasing the number of new business starts is another key source of job creation and, through partnerships with local stakeholders, Invest NI is also actively promoting enterprise and business start-ups in the area. Since the Agency was established in 2002, 574 new businesses have been assisted in the East Londonderry constituency. These new businesses are forecast to create over 700 additional jobs.

The first phase of the North West Action Plan has been successfully delivered. This has resulted in additional total investment in the area of over £60 million. The second phase of the plan is currently being prepared and we will build on the success of phase 1, working with a wide range of interests, to further increase employment opportunities in the area.

The Department for Employment and Learning will support employers who are expanding their work force or creating new jobs by providing job brokering services and suitable training programmes where appropriate. The Department will also provide advice and support for all employees who lose their jobs as a result of redundancy. Staff from the local jobs and benefits office will provide advice on alternative job opportunities and access to training courses and will also ensure that those who have lost their jobs are able to access advice on a range of other issues such as benefits and taxation.

Ministerial Travel

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on how many occasions since 7 July he has used the London Underground in connection with his official duties. [35331]

Mr. Hain: I must apologise to the hon. Member for the delay in responding, owing to an administrative error with the Department. Steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence.

I have used the London Underground but not in connection with any of my official duties.

Personal Protection Weapons

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to re-possess on-loan personal protection weapons in Northern Ireland. [68983]

Paul Goggins: The Chief Constable plans to withdraw on-loan personal protection weapons as the current firearm certificates held in respect of each of them expires. Those who continue to be authorised to possess a personal protection weapon will then be required to purchase their own firearm.

The Army state that Army Department PPWs issued to army personnel will be withdrawn from PPW holders on or before their last day of service. There is currently under way a review to determine whether the circumstances still remain extant for each of the present PPW holders to retain their weapons.

Prison Service staff who have been issued with a PPW under the General Threat Due to Occupation category will in future be considered under the Specific Threat Criteria when their Firearms Certificate falls due for renewal.

Police

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the original projected cost was of the police training college in Northern Ireland; and what the estimated final cost is. [69463]

Paul Goggins: The original outline business case estimated a cost of £74.6 million for construction of the college. With professional fees and land costs, this gave a total projected cost in the 2002 outline business case of £102.9 million. The 2005 outline business case estimated the cost, on the basis of prices at the fourth quarter of 2006, at £134.15 million. This business case has yet to be considered at a meeting of the project board.

Costs increased between 2002 and 2005 due to inflation, security requirements associated with the site and new requirements associated with simulated training areas.

The Government have advised the policing board and PSNI that it will make available £90 million for the college.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on recruitment to the Police Service of Northern Ireland. [65306]

Paul Goggins: In 1998 when the Patten Commission was conducting its investigation, only 8.3 per cent. of regular officers were from the Roman Catholic community. In less than five years, under the temporary 50:50 provisions Catholic composition among regular officers has risen to 19.68 per cent. with a total of 2,219 recruits having been selected for appointment on a 50:50 basis.

Our goal is to increase Catholic representation to 30 per cent. by 2010-11; the date envisaged by Patten to achieve this aim. The Government recognise that 50:50 recruitment is an exceptional means to addressing an exceptional problem and we firmly believe that these temporary provisions are justified to rectify an acute historical imbalance in the composition of the Police Service in Northern Ireland. These exceptional measures are reviewed every three years, with the next, and hopefully final, such review due later this year. While we envisage that the provisions will be renewed in March 2007, this will be subject to detailed review of the policy, extensive consultation, and debate in both houses. If the 50:50 provisions were not in place then it would not be possible to achieve our 30 per cent. target by 2010-11. I am pleased to say that we are very much on target to reach this goal with a further interim target of 23.5 per cent. set for March 2008.

In the first eight competitions there were over 28,000 applications from non-Catholics, of which 541 will have been rejected directly as a result of these temporary provisions. In other words less than 2 per cent. of all non-Catholic applicants will have been rejected as a direct result of the 50:50 provision.

Although the Patten Report focused on the imbalance between the number of Catholics and Protestants in the composition of the Police Service, it rightly recognised the importance of gender and ethnic minority representation. It is notable that female composition has risen from 13 per cent. to 20.42 per cent. and the ethnic minority background composition compares favourably with the overall level of the working age ethnic minority population in Northern Ireland and continues to rise.

In terms of the steps taken to recruit police officers, the oversight commissioner has commented that the advertising programme has been both imaginative and assiduous. It has varied between competitions, but has included press, television, billboard, cinema and online advertising, all designed to reach groups currently under-represented in the Police Service.

The responses from all communities have been extremely positive and the results have exceeded expectations. The latest campaign (10) saw the highest number of applications yet, with 7,691 applications competing for 220 places. 37 per cent. of these applications were from the Catholic community which is the highest rate to date and the number of ethnic minority applications doubled.

In addition to a large number of Northern Ireland applicants, applications have been received from Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland, as well as from a number of other countries.

Security Forces (Republic of Ireland)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on how many occasions security forces from the Republic of Ireland have crossed into Northern Ireland while on operation *(a)* with and *(b)* without the consent of UK authorities in each of the last 10 years. [70452]

Paul Goggins: The police service of Northern Ireland continue to have a good operational relationship with both the military and 'an garda siochana' in the Republic of Ireland. This relationship has involved a number of operations in which officers have crossed into Northern

Ireland with the consent of UK authorities to frustrate and detect criminality. It would not be possible to quantify the number of occasions during which this has occurred in the last 10 years.

PSNI is not aware of any occasions during which operations from the Republic of Ireland have crossed into Northern Ireland without consent.

Staff Surveys

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many staff surveys have been conducted in *(a)* each department in Northern Ireland and *(b)* his Department in each of the last three years. [70491]

Mr. Hanson: The following table details the number of staff surveys undertaken by each of the 11 NICS core departments and the Northern Ireland Office during the last three years. The information has been provided on a financial year basis.

The information covers surveys undertaken at an NICS-wide, departmental, directorate, divisional and branch level unless where indicated otherwise.

Department	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
DARD	8	9	9
DCAL	2	0	1
DE	3	5	4
DEL[1]	1	2	5
DETI	1	5	8
DFP[1]	1	1	5
DHSSPS	4	4	3
DOE	0	0	0
DRD	1	2	5
DSD	0	2	4
NIO	2	6	5
OFMDFM	3	18	14
Total	26	54	63

[1] Branch level survey information could be provided only at disproportionate costs

Sustainable Development Strategy

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he will publish the Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland. [70947]

Mr. Hanson: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland launched the Sustainable Development Strategy on 9 May and also announced a transfer of responsibility for the Strategy to the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister to place sustainable development policy at the heart of Government. I intend to publish the initial Implementation Plan as soon as possible.

DEFENCE

Aircraft

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many helicopters of each type *(a)* have and *(b)* have not been fitted with fuel tank protection, broken down by service; and if he will make a statement. [71154]

Mr. Ingram: All helicopters have some degree of fuel tank protection. Precise details of the specific fuel tank protection measures employed on particular MOD helicopter fleets are being withheld, because their disclosure could prejudice the safety of our Armed Forces.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Army aviation helicopters had full nuclear, biological and chemical protection *(a)* on the last date for which figures are available and *(b)* in 1997. [48777]

Mr. Ingram: It is not possible to protect Army helicopter airframes against nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) contamination. However, any aircrew that operate these airframes in a NBC environment are afforded NBC protection through individual protective equipment and specialist aircrew assemblies which are not integral to the airframes themselves.

Conscientious Objectors

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what remuneration the six members of the advisory committee on conscientious objectors have received in each of the last five years. [71504]

Des Browne: As the committee has not convened in the last five years, the six members have received no remuneration.

Departmental Procurement

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he plans to publish the findings of his Department's review of the extent to which current processes and organisational constructs support, encourage, hinder and obstruct the delivery of excellence in acquisition; and if he will make a statement. [71482]

Mr. Ingram: The hon. Member refers to the Enabling Acquisition Change Review. It is our intention to publish the outcome of that review and to make a statement at that time.

Departmental Publications

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the Answer of 8 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 29W, on departmental publications, (1) if he will place in the Library copies of The Mole issued since 1 January 2005; [70336]

(2) if he will place in the Library the *(a)* latest edition of The Mole and *(b)* final edition of Compass. [72149]

Mr. Watson *[holding answer 18 May 2006]:* I will make arrangements for redacted copies to be placed in the Library of the House as soon as practicable.

Elbit

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he made of the ethical credentials of Elbit prior to awarding the UK Watchkeeper contract to the company. [71498]

Mr. Ingram: None. The contract for the demonstration and manufacture phase of the Watchkeeper programme was awarded to Thales UK in July 2005. Elbit is a sub-contractor selected by Thales UK for the supply of the air vehicle. The company is also a partner with Thales UK in a joint venture to provide major subsystems for Watchkeeper, also through a sub-contract let and managed by Thales UK.

Helicopter Search and Rescue

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the written statement of 9 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 12-14WS, on helicopter search and rescue, what assessment he has made of the cost implications of the new arrangements for the helicopter search and rescue service. [72379]

Mr. Ingram: As part of the procurement strategy assessment, an investment appraisal was conducted, which considered the full range of options available. The results were scrutinised by both the MOD and the Department for Transport (DfT) and it was concluded that a private finance initiative is likely to offer the best value for money and strategic fit for the future UK search and rescue helicopter capability.

Iraq

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reasons the head of British forces in Iraq wears US Army rank insignia; and if he will make a statement. [70099]

Mr. Ingram: Senior Commanders in Iraq wear US rank insignia (stars) in addition to their standard rank insignia to assist Coalition and Iraqi partners to identify their position and equivalent rank. This is particularly useful for those coalition Commanders who work in, and regularly visit, Multi National Force (MNF) Headquarters. In addition, the wearing of rank stars aids interaction with Iraqi military hierarchy and politicians—all of whom understand the star structure.

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate has been made of the number of non-state militia operating in *(a)* Al Basra, *(b)* Al Muthanna, *(c)* Dhi Qar and *(d)* Maysan province in Iraq. [70934]

Des Browne: Two main militias are known to operate in Multi-National Division (South-East): these are SCIRI's Badr Organisation and Muqtada al-Sadr's Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM), each with a significant following. There are a number of other militia groups with much smaller membership and influence.

Iraq/Afghanistan

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the technical capability of the weapons being used by insurgents against coalition forces in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [71908]

Des Browne: Coalition forces continuously monitor and assess the full range of weapons used by insurgents in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Our assessments, including predictions of how the threat might evolve, influence the conduct of military operations as well as equipment countermeasures.

Project Delivery Skills

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of levels of project delivery skills within his Department. [71491]

Mr. Ingram: The December 2005 defence industrial strategy (DIS) white paper recognised the need to address shortages of project, programme management and acquisition leadership skills. Seven specific skills areas within the acquisition organisations have been identified for attention; leadership, programme management, project management, commercial management, procurement, logistics, science and technology management and resource management. senior professionals have been appointed as 'skills champions' for each of these areas and will undertake an assessment of the levels of skills currently available in these areas. Their work will include an assessment of skills shortfalls linked directly to MOD's business needs, and of the likely causes of shortfalls, including problems relating to recruitment, retention and development. This work will be completed by the end of May 2006 and will form the basis of urgent action to train and develop our workforce.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Departmental Estate

Mr. Amess: To ask the Leader of the House what *(a)* land and *(b)* property his Department (i) leases and (ii) leased in (A) 1979, (B) 1983, (C) 1987, (D) 1992 and (E) 1997 in (1) the Southend West constituency, (2) Essex, (3) Hertfordshire and (4) the Metropolitan Police area of London. [72101]

Mr. Straw: None. During the periods mentioned, the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons occupied space in the Metropolitan Police area of London belonging to the Cabinet Office, under a Memorandum of Terms of Occupation.

The Office of the Leader of the House of Commons was not responsible for the lease of this building.

Joint Committees

Mr. Amess: To ask the Leader of the House if he will make it his policy not to table a motion for a Joint Committee on a draft Bill until the draft Bill has been published; and if he will make a statement. [71978]

Mr. Straw: Motions to establish a Joint Committee on a draft Bill are occasionally tabled ahead of the publication of the draft Bill in cases where it is understood that this would assist the Committee. It has been indicated in the past that Joint Committees have found it helpful to have been established ahead of the publication of the draft Bill, to enable them to undertake preparatory work. I refer the hon. Member to paragraph 35 of the First Report of the Liaison Committee of session 2004-05 (HC 419).

Parliamentary Recalls

Mr. Amess: To ask the Leader of the House on which occasions the House has been recalled in each session since 1976; and for what reason the House was recalled in each case. [72452]

Mr. Straw: Recalls of the House, under what is now Standing Order No. 13, since 1976 have been as follows:

	Occasion
2002	
24 September	Iraq and Weapons of Mass Destruction
3 April	Death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother
2001	
14 September	International terrorism and attacks in the USA
4 October	
8 October	
1998	
2-3 September	Omagh Bomb: Criminal Justice (Terrorism and Conspiracy) Bill
1995	
31 May	Bosnia
1992	
24-25 September	Government economic policy; UN operations in Yugoslavia, Iraq and Somalia
1990	
6-7 September	Kuwait Invasion
1982	
14 April	Falkland Islands
3 April	Falkland Islands

This information is available in a Library Standard Note "Recall of Parliament" which is available on the Parliament website at:

http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/notes/snpc-01186.pdf

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Information Technology

Chris Huhne: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how much was spent on information technology (IT) sourced from outside the House in each of the last five years; who is responsible for such projects in the House service; and what IT *(a)* expertise and *(b)* qualifications they possess. [71765]

Nick Harvey: The cash expenditure from the administration estimate on externally-sourced IT equipment purchase and maintenance, and corporate system development during the last four years has been:

£000

	2002-03	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
IT equipment	2,657	2,554	639	1,150
IT maintenance	1,995	1,955	2,022	3,542
Software	467	431	683	65
System development	2,216	3,421	4,989	3,632
Total	7,335	8,360	8,333	8,389

Figures for 2001-02 are not readily available following the replacement of the financial accounting systems in October 2003.

The Commission is not responsible for expenditure on Members' IT equipment. However, I understand that the cash costs of this have been:

	Members' IT equipment (£000)
2002-03	1,230
2003-04	792
2004-05	725
2005-06	2,094

Prior to 2006 responsibility for information technology projects rested with the particular Department concerned. Cross-departmental projects, or projects which involved both Houses, were managed by projects boards established by the Board of Management. The project boards used external expertise to advise on and support the projects, and the procurement of this expertise was subject to a tender process for each project. Overall supervision was provided by a board, including Members with extensive experience in IT project management.

Since January 2006, a single service (PICT) has been established to manage IT projects and service contracts for both Houses. Project activity will be supervised by the management boards of both Houses through a joint board.

Parliamentary ICT staff are given appropriate training and a number have relevant qualifications, though details of these are not held centrally. PICT is currently in the process of adopting an approach to staff competence, training and development pioneered by the British Computer Society.

Meat and Poultry

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission which company supplies the House with meat and poultry; and what steps are taken to ensure that its chickens are not fed on soya grown in the Amazon rainforest *(a)* on illegally deforested land and *(b)* with use of slavery. [72330]

Nick Harvey: The Refreshment Department retains three suppliers of fresh meat and poultry products: Billfields Food Co Ltd., Nigel Fredericks Catering Butchers and Russell Hume Ltd. Neither Nigel Fredericks nor Russell Hume supply soya-fed chicken to the House of Commons. The Billfields Food Company is unable to guarantee that chickens supplied to the House of Commons are not reared on feeds containing soya, nor are they able to give an absolute assurance about the region of origin of soya that may be present in the animal feeds used by their suppliers.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what the cost to the House was of processing written questions in each of the last three years. [72544]

Nick Harvey: Readily available printing and publishing costs cover both oral and written questions. We estimate the part of these costs attributable to written questions in each of the last three years to have been:

	£
2003-04	1,620,900
2004-05	1,350,300
2005-06	1,463,900

This does not include the costs of electronic publishing, which cannot easily be disaggregated.

Staff costs for 2005-06 are estimated at £841,900, on the basis of the proportion of time spent on written questions by the staff involved, using 2005-06 pay rates at the midpoint of each scale, including employer's national insurance contributions and employer's pension contributions. Costs of accommodation, lighting, heating, etc. are not included. Estimates of staff costs for earlier years could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

This gives a total for 2005-06 of £2,305,800. This does not include the subsequent printing of the answers in the *Official Report*, indexing and entering on databases, nor the costs to the House of Commons Service of answering written questions addressed to me, representing the Commission.

Private Sector Fund Recipients

Chris Huhne: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will list the 10 non-public sector entities that have received the largest total sum of payments from the House in each of the last five years. [71767]

Nick Harvey: Details of individual financial transactions are only retained for the last three years. The 10 non-public sector entities that have received the largest total sum of payments since 2003-04 are:

2003-04	£ £000
The Stationery Office	10,147
Cushman and Wakefield, Healey and Baker	5,914
Balfour Kilpatrick Ltd.	3,740
Mansell Construction Serv Ltd.	3,288
Mansell Plc	2,540
Wates Construction Ltd.	2,387
Seele Avis Fenestration Ltd.	2,252
Computacenter Ltd.	2,084
Mitie Cleaning (Southeast) Ltd.	2,037
William Verry Limited	1,859
2004-05	
The Stationery Office	10,885
Mansell Construction Serv Ltd.	7,633
Cushman and Wakefield, Healey and Baker	5,968
Morse Group Limited	4,322
Benson Ltd	3,161
Mitie Cleaning (Southeast) Ltd.	2,638
Mansell Plc	2,191
Computacenter Ltd.	1,824
Saltash Enterprises	1,706
Kier Regional Ltd.—Wallis Division	1,674
2005-06	
Stationery Office	10,587
Cushman and Wakefield, Healey and Baker	6,508
William Verry Limited	4,709
Mansell Construction Serv Ltd.	4,375
Mitie Cleaning (Southeast) Ltd.	3,047
Insight Management and Systems Consultants Ltd.	1,747
Morse Group Limited	1,734
Kier Regional Ltd.—Wallis Division	1,669
EDf Energy	1,649
Seele Avis Fenestration Ltd.	1,557

Vote Office Print Unit

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what the retail price per issue was of *(a)* the daily, *(b)* the weekly and *(c)* the bound edition of the *Official Report* in each year since 1988; and how many copies were sold. [71972]

Nick Harvey: Pricing and sales of House of Lords publications are not a matter for the Commission. Pricing and sales of House of Commons publications became a matter for the Commission only in November 1996, when the Stationery Office was privatised. Complete records of copies sold are available only back to 1999. The price and sales information available for the publications requested is as follows:

Official Report: Daily Part

Financial Year	Price (£)	Copies sold
1999-2000	5.00	96,829
2000-01	5.00	99,231
2001-02	5.00	75,585
2002-03	5.00	73,558
2003-04	5.00	62,139
2004-05	5.00	47,951
2005-06	5.00	33,954

Official Report: Weekly

Financial Year	Price (£)	Copies sold
1999-2000	12.00	9,036
2000-01	12.00	9,076
2001-02	12.00	8,330
2002-03	12.00	7,965
2003-04	12.00	6,288
2004-05	12.00	4,815
2005-06	12.00	4,299

Official Report: Bound Volume

Financial Year	Price (£)	Copies sold
1999-2000	70.00	4,961
2000-01	70.00	4,289
2001-02	70.00	3,276
2002-03	70.00	4,130
2003-04	70.00	3,659
2004-05	[1]105.00	2,876
2005-06	[1]105.00	1,082

[1] Bound Volume format changed from two to three-weekly content and the price was adjusted accordingly.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bangladesh

Margaret Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what measures he is taking to assist Bangladesh in tackling arsenic poisoning in its water supply. [72501]

Mr. Thomas: Arsenic contamination in Bangladesh's water supply is naturally occurring, and mainly affects shallow tube wells. DFID is currently providing £1 million to the Government of Bangladesh's (GoB) Arsenic Policy Support Unit to ensure that arsenic contamination is addressed as part of the GoB's safe drinking water policy. A new programme is being developed in conjunction with the GoB and the World Bank to prepare a groundwater management strategy, which will promote and enable greater use of deep tube wells which are uncontaminated by arsenic.

In addition, DFID is providing £15 million to the Advancing Sustainable Environmental Health (ASEH) programme in Bangladesh, implemented by WaterAid. ASEH has provided a rigorous and effective system for testing and monitoring arsenic in all new groundwater supplies provided since 2002. ASEH also provides information and support to enable communities to access arsenic free water supplies.

DFID is also planning to contribute up to £40 million to the GoB/UNICEF Sanitation, Hygiene, Education and Water Supply—Bangladesh (SHEWA-B) programme. SHEWA-B includes a significant arsenic mitigation component, and will target almost 4,000 villages (6,400,000 people) where over 80 per cent. of tube wells are affected.

Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the extent to which the sixth round of grants by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria will receive adequate funding from the international community. [72514]

Mr. Thomas: The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has estimated that it will need approximately US$1 billion for round six. Currently only US$46 million is available. The Global Fund needs significantly more funding from existing and potential donors to ensure that the sixth round of new grants is approved and fully funded in 2006. This will be a challenge for the Global Fund. The UK will continue to work with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to encourage other donors including the EU, the private sector and oil rich countries to increase their support to the Global Fund.

The UK provides very generous support to the Global Fund. We doubled our pledge for 2006 and 2007 to £100 million in each year. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is only one part of the UK's contribution to tackling AIDS. We are committed to spend at least £1.5 billion between 2005-06 and 2007-08 on the global AIDS response.

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to encourage *(a)* other countries and *(b)* private sector donors to contribute funding to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. [72515]

Mr. Thomas: The UK strongly supports the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and has committed £359 million to the fund for 2002-08, including £100 million for 2006 and the same for 2007. The UK is meeting its "fair share" of support to the Global Fund and we need to ensure that other donors including the private sector contribute their "fair share".

We are encouraging other donors in our bilateral discussions to contribute to the Global Fund. We will continue to lobby the G8 for extra funds. We are also encouraging the G8 Finance Ministers meeting in June to take stock of existing Global Fund commitments in order to agree additional finance for 2006 and 2007 at the St. Petersburg Summit. We will also continue using our influence with the private sector, Oil Rich States and the EC.

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will increase his Department's contribution to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. [72516]

Mr. Thomas: The UK provided very generous support to the Global Fund Replenishment in 2005 and has doubled its pledge for 2006 and 2007 to £100 million in each year. This means that our overall share of support for the Global Fund at around 5.1 per cent. is consistent with our support over the 2001-05 period. The UK is meeting its "fair share" and other donors need to do the same; we are encouraging them to do so.

The UK has no further plans at the moment to increase its contribution to the Global Fund. The Global Fund is only one part of our contribution to tackling AIDS; the UK accounted for 20 per cent. of all direct bilateral donor commitments to the fight against AIDS in 2004[1]. We are committed to spend at least £1.5 billion on the global AIDS response in the three years from 2005-06 to 2007-08. Our direct support goes to 39 different countries.

[1] *Source:*
(Resource Needs For An Expanded Response to AIDS in Low and Middle Income Countries) UNAIDS August 2005

Home Working

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many people in his Department have been enabled to work from home in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [67996]

Mr. Thomas: DFID does not keep records of the number of home workers.

However, DFID operates a 'one machine' policy under which each member of staff elects to be equipped with either a desktop computer or, subject to the approval of their Head of Department, a laptop computer. The laptop option enables staff to work from home or at other remote locations while travelling on behalf of the Department. At 31 March, 1,678 staff had been issued with laptops.

DFID is committed to improving work/life balance, values diversity and accommodates a wide range of different work patterns including the use of home working. DFID's policy is set out both in the Staff Handbook, which is available to all staff electronically, and in a booklet "Flexible Working", which is given to staff on their arrival.

Information Technology

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the *(a)* originally estimated, *(b)* most recently estimated and *(c)* outturn cost was in each of the five largest information technology contracts agreed with outside suppliers over the last five years. [71769]

Mr. Thomas: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to the hon. Member for Chipping Barnet (Mrs. Villiers) on 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1642W, for the figures for the three largest IT projects over the last five years.

DFID has also let a number of small IT related contracts. However, our central records do not distinguish IT contracts, so provision of details for these contracts would incur disproportionate costs.

Millennium Development Goals

Mark Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the millennium development goal for universal primary education is met by 2015. [72376]

Mr. Thomas: DFID plans to spend £1.4 billion on education from 2005-08. This support helps countries to invest in teacher training and salaries, purchase text books and construct new schools and classrooms. DFID plans to further increase its support and aims to spend approximately £8.5 billion in support of education over the next ten years. This long-term commitment will provide governments with predictable funding against which they can prepare ambitious 10 year investment plans to achieve the millennium development goal (MDG) for universal primary education.

More information on DFID's work on universal primary education, including DFID's work in specific countries, is included in the DFID departmental report 2006 which is available in the Libraries of the House.

Overseas Development Agency

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the expenditure of the Overseas Development Agency was in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005, broken down by (i) staffing, (ii) accommodation and departmental offices, (iii) travel expenses, (iv) development project funding and (v) other expenditure. [69992]

Hilary Benn: DFID's expenditure for 2004-05 and 2005-06 was as follows:

£000

Expenditure	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
Staffing	93,700	101,096
Accommodation and departmental offices	27,851	28,842
Travel expenses	13,337	12,646
Bilateral funding	[1]2,145,000	[1]2,321,000
Other expenditure	[1]3,265,000 (less the above)	[1]3,750,000 (less the above)

[1] Rounded to the nearest million.

Notes:

1. Staff costs include wages and salaries, social security costs and other pension costs for permanently employed staff, Ministers, special advisers and "other", which include costs for seconded officers and those on fixed term contracts. The figures for 2005-06 are provisional, as final outturn figures are not yet available.
2. Accommodation and departmental office costs include rent, rates utilities and maintenance costs.
3. The figures for travel reflect all domestic and overseas travel for Ministers, advisers and officials, which include the costs of accommodation and subsistence.
4. Bilateral funding includes all forms of direct assistance. The 2005-06 figures are provisional, as final outturn figures are not yet available.
5. Other spend represents both administration costs and programme costs, not covered by the previous headings, examples of which would be staff training—on the administration expenditure and multilateral contributions on programme expenditure.

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of his private office staff is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled. [69021]

Mr. Thomas: The following table shows the percentage of current DFID private office staff by gender and those who had declared a disability. Declaration of a disability is voluntary.

	Number
Total	8
Males	2
Male (percentage)	25
Females	6
Female (percentage)	75
Staff with declared disability	0
Percentage declared disabled	0

Protectionism

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress has been made in reducing the impact of protectionist trade policies on poor countries; and if he will make a statement. [69532]

Mr. Thomas: In recent years there has been a good deal of progress in reducing protectionist trade policies which impact on poor countries. Within the EU for example, agricultural import tariffs declined by an average of 36 per cent. between 1995 and 2000. Our current projections are that once the reforms to the Common Agricultural Policy agreed in 2003 have worked through, EU reliance on export subsidies will have reduced by approximately 65 per cent. compared with 1997.

But there is still much to be done outside the EU as well as within, which is why the UK supports an ambitious outcome to the current round of World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations in areas such as agriculture, industrial products and services, with meaningful special and differential treatment for developing countries built in. It also includes the elimination of export subsidies and other equivalent measures by 2013, which was agreed at the Hong Kong ministerial meeting in December. Time is running out for such an ambitious outcome to the current WTO negotiations, and discussions between the key players have intensified since the Hong Kong meeting to try to narrow the gaps that still remain, and reach a consensus on a balanced package of agreements across the main negotiating areas.

Tsunami Evaluation Coalition

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition's report will be published. [71542]

Mr. Thomas: The Tsunami Evaluation Coalition, a group of UN relief agencies, non-government organisations, the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement and other donors, will publish its report on 14 July 2006, in both London and Geneva.

TRANSPORT

Channel Tunnel

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* the French police, *(b)* Kent police and *(c)* Eurotunnel regarding security in the channel tunnel. [72353]

Derek Twigg: The Secretary of State has not had reason to discuss security issues with any of the named parties recently. However, Department for Transport officials meet with these organisations regularly at various fora including the Intergovernmental Commission, its Joint Security Committee, the channel tunnel operational sub-group of the National Rail Security Committee and the Multi-Agency Threat and Risk Assessment (MATRA) group at Eurotunnel. Officials also have regular contact and discussions in the course of routine security monitoring activities.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what security equipment is in place to scan *(a)* freight traffic and *(b)* passengers on Eurotunnel. [72355]

Derek Twigg: While I cannot publicly disclose the details of the security equipment, or how it is deployed at the channel tunnel, to avoid its potential compromise, I can confirm that, among other measures, x-ray equipment and explosive detection technology is in place to screen freight at the Eurotunnel site at Cheriton. A range of security measures is in place in respect of passengers, their luggage, and their vehicles including explosive trace detection, manual searching and under-vehicle video.

Consultants

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the relationship between his Department's expenditure on external consultants and efficiency gains; and if he will make a statement. [71428]

Gillian Merron *[holding answer 17 May 2006]:* External consultants have only been used in support of the Department's efficiency programme to provide expertise that is not available in-house. The use of external consultants is assessed on a case by case basis in terms of the value that can be added by their skills and expertise and the potential benefits.

Cycling

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department is taking to ensure that all children have the opportunity to undertake the cycle proficiency training scheme and test. [71828]

Derek Twigg: The responsibility for delivering cycle training in schools rests with individual local highway authorities.

We have with the help of over 20 road safety and cycling organisations including ROSPA, the CTC, local authorities and Cycling England developed an improved new child cycle training standard to replace the old style cycle proficiency test.

To support the new standard we have through our advisory body Cycling England awarded over £1 million to support capacity building in cycle training. Grants and bursaries are available for trainers and training centres to teach the new standards together with a national training helpline.

Cycling England is also funding jointly with the bicycle industry cycle training through their 'Bike It' initiative which delivers additional funding for cycle training, cycle parking at schools and helps schools implement their school travel plans on cycling.

Lamp Posts

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many lamp posts on motorways and trunk roads in each region of England have reached the end of their recommended lifespan. [71994]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of lamp posts on motorways and trunk roads, for which the Highways Agency (HA) is responsible, that have reached the end of their recommended lifespan, is given in the following table:

Region	*Number*
North	5,326
West Midlands	3,296
East and East Midlands	5,266
South West	1,270
South East	9,021

The numbers contained in the table are as accurate as possible.

Further details are contained in a table which has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

It should be noted that where a lighting column is beyond its estimated lifespan it does not necessarily mean that it is dangerous. By using careful maintenance, the practical life of a column can be extended. The HA employs a robust maintenance strategy.

M60

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made in resolving the flooding problems on the M60 motorway between Denton and Hollinwood, Oldham. [72650]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency's initial works pilot to re-profile a section of the affected carriageway to improve surface water drainage was originally planned for spring 2006. The design is currently being finalised, and to avoid conflict with other works, this work is now programmed for summer 2006, with the aim of undertaking the remaining work in 2007.

Manchester Metrolink

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to make an announcement concerning the funding for the Manchester Metrolink extension to Ashton-Under-Lyne. [72653]

Derek Twigg: An announcement will be made in due course, once we have completed our consideration of Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive's business case.

Milton Keynes South Midlands Growth Area

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment has been made by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Highways Agency of (i) projected traffic volumes into and out of the West Midlands and (ii) the improvements that would be needed as a consequence of the development of the Milton Keynes South Midlands growth area. [72984]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency has commissioned consultants to study the future capacity and operational performance of the M6 between junction 4 and the M1 at junction 19, and the A46 between junction 2 of M6 and the A46/A45 Tollbar End junction to the East of Coventry. The anticipated traffic growth resulting from the additional development expected in the Milton Keynes South Midlands growth area will be taken into account in the traffic modelling for this scheme.

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will improve junction 19 of the M1 to improve traffic flows between the Milton Keynes South Midlands growth area and the West Midlands region. [73066]

Dr. Ladyman: A scheme to improve junction 19 of the M1 was incorporated into the Government's Targeted Programme of Improvements [TPI] in February 2003.

The improvement scheme will allow for all traffic movements to and from the M1, M6 and A14, by providing an elevated four level junction. The improvement will reduce congestion, long tailbacks and accident risks on all three routes.

Subject to funding and the successful completion of statutory procedures, construction is programmed to start in late 2007/early 2008 with completion in 2010.

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what local transport infrastructure improvements are being considered in consequence of an enlarged travel to work area for the Milton Keynes South Midlands growth area as indicated in its development plans. [73067]

Dr. Ladyman: The Milton Keynes South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy, published in March 2005, provides strategic guidance on the scale, location and timing of development and associated transport infrastructure to 2021. It is for local authorities in the growth area (and on its boundaries) to consider and bring forward proposals

for local transport infrastructure through their Local Transport Plans. Those plans should be informed by the Sub-Regional Strategy.

Motoring Revenues

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimates he has made of the total revenue from *(a)* motoring taxes, *(b)* road tolls and *(c)* fees paid to the Government by motorists in each of the past 10 years. [72082]

Dr. Ladyman: On *(a)*, motoring taxes are a matter for the Chancellor.

On *(b)*, the Government only receive income from one undertaking—the Dartford-Thurrock River Crossing. Income from tolls at other statutory tolled undertakings is retained by the operator. For information about the revenue from the Dartford-Thurrock River Crossing, I refer to the answers given to the hon. Members for Leicester East (Keith Vaz) on 14 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1884W and Gravesham (Mr. Holloway) on 20 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 752-53W.

On *(c)*, figures for fee income are set out in the following table.

£ million

Service	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06[1]
Practical car driving test	46.7	37.9	40.4	43.7	46.5	49.7	54.6	59.0	70.6	85.0
Practical lorry and bus driving test	5.6	3.7	4.6	4.4	4.7	5.5	6.3	6.8	7.9	9.4
Practical motorcycle driving test	5.4	3.1	3.7	4.6	5.1	4.2	4.4	4.5	4.1	4.6
Motorcycle compulsory basic training	0.5	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.5
Driving theory test	16.9	18.8	18.8	18.6	17.2	19.5	24.2	29.8	31.2	31.7
Van roadworthiness test	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5
Single vehicle approval	—	—	—	—	2.3	5.0	4.7	6.0	5.5	4.2
Vehicle identity check	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.8	1.4	3.1
MOT Pad fee (this excludes the element of the MOT fee retained by garages)	7.1	10.0	12.4	13.5	16.9	24.1	28.8	33.1	36.0	35.4
Driving licence provision	28.3	29.1	33.1	40.4	47.1	59.7	67.6	70.2	70.2	72.9
Vehicle registration	—	—	67.7	68.6	70.5	77.9	79.0	92.6	131.3	125.0

[1] Provisional.

Notes:

1. From 1990-2000 the driving licence fee includes duplicate licence fees.
2. From 2003-04 the vehicle licence fee includes the fee for duplicate registration documents.
3. Motorcycle compulsory basic training figures for 1996-97 are estimates because fee income was not recorded separately for that year.

Network Rail

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) the relationship is between Network Rail Infrastructure Finance and Network Rail Infrastructure Limited; [72468]

(2) how much of the debt issuance programme of Network Rail Infrastructure Finance has been *(a)* authorised and *(b)* issued or drawn down; [72469]

(3) what the relationship is between Network Rail and Network Rail Infrastructure Finance (NRIF); whether NRIF is a subsidiary of Network Rail; and how much of NRIF is owned by Network Rail; [72470]

(4) what the total value is of property assets owned by Network Rail. [72471]

Derek Twigg: These questions are for Network Rail and I have asked them to reply directly to the hon. Member.

Railways

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will examine the merits of options for introducing a rail discount scheme for people without cars. [71894]

Derek Twigg: There are a number of discount schemes already offered on rail: the Young Person's, Senior, Family and Disabled railcards and, in the South East, the Network Card. There are also group travel discounts available for some journeys. There are no specific plans to examine further schemes at this stage.

Road Pricing Policies (Greater Manchester)

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has had from *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* the passenger transport executive in Greater Manchester concerning (i) congestion charging and (ii) road pricing policies; and if he will make a statement. [72651]

Dr. Ladyman: In October 2005 the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities and the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority and Executive applied to the Department for Transport for Transport

Innovation Fund development funding. The application was for funding to assist in the development of their corridor partnership approach and a demand management toolkit involving definition of the circumstances in which increasingly hard-edged measures, such as road pricing, will need to be deployed.

My right hon. Friend the former Secretary of State announced on 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 3WS, that the authorities of Greater Manchester were one of seven areas that had been awarded funding.

Road Safety

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many bridges on the strategic road network do not meet safety standards for the level of traffic they carry; and how many would not meet the standards at projected traffic levels for *(a)* 2016 and *(b)* 2026 levels. [71831]

Dr. Ladyman: There are no bridges on the strategic road network, for which the Highways Agency is responsible, that do not meet safety standards for the level of traffic they carry.

Bridges on the strategic road network are managed to safely carry loading from permissible vehicles covered by The Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986 and The Road Vehicles (Authorised Weight) Regulations 1998. For a particular bridge, the traffic loading is derived by considering the effects of the most severe combination of permissible vehicles that it can accommodate. Currently, there are approximately 18 bridges on the strategic network with weight restrictions.

A regime of regular inspections, assessments and renewals is in place to ensure that bridges continue to safely accommodate the traffic on the network.

As there are no known proposals to increase permissible vehicle weights the traffic loading will be safe in the future.

Road Traffic Regulations

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the operation of the Road Traffic (Parking Adjudicators) (London) Regulations 1993; what recent representations he has received about the operation of these regulations; if he will place in the Library copies of such representations; and whether he has any plans *(a)* to amend and *(b)* to repeal these regulations. [69144]

Gillian Merron: Regulations to enact the parking provisions in part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 will go to public consultation later this year. When those regulations are enacted the Road Traffic (Parking Adjudicators) (London) Regulations 1993 will be repealed. The Department expects to receive comments on the draft new regulations following the public consultation. The Department frequently receives letters from members of the public about the parking adjudication service but have received none recently that are specifically about these regulations.

Road Use

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the total combined mileage of *(a)* vehicles and *(b)* cars travelling on roads in the UK in each of the past 10 years. [72083]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department makes estimates for Great Britain only. Estimated mileages for each year from 1995 to 2004, the latest year available, were published in the annual statistical bulletin "Road Traffic Statistics: 2004". The bulletin was published on 7 July 2005 on the DfT website and a copy placed in the House of Commons Library.

PRIME MINISTER

Energy Review

Lynne Jones: To ask the Prime Minister what account he took of the DTI Energy Review, "Our Energy Challenge—Securing clean, affordable energy for the long term", in formulating the contents of his speech to the Confederation of British Industry on 16 May 2006. [72820]

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Prime Minister when he received the first draft of the Energy Review; and if he will make a statement. [73126]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Members to the press briefings given by my official spokesman on 16 and 17 May, copies of which are available on the No. 10 website.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

UK/Venezuelan Relations

12. **David Taylor** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make a statement on UK-Venezuelan relations. [72688]

Mr. Hoon: We have an active relationship with Venezuela. We work together in several areas of shared interest, including counter-narcotics and energy. We also have an important commercial relationship. Venezuela is the third biggest market for the UK in Latin America. Our policy is to maintain constructive engagement; we have much to gain from working together.

Middle East

13. **Mr. Evennett:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make a statement on the middle east peace process. [72689]

Dr. Howells: We welcome both Israeli Prime Minister Olmert's and Palestinian President Abbas' commitment to the Roadmap and negotiations. It is important that both sides take steps to move the peace process forward.

We remain committed to the principles of a negotiated solution based on the relevant Security Council resolutions and international law. We continue to work towards a just, viable and lasting peace.

The Government are extremely dismayed, however, by the recent spate of killings in what appears to be an escalating battle between Hamas and Fatah militias for control of the streets in Gaza. That kind of internecine conflict is the last thing the middle east peace process requires.

Iran

14. **Julie Morgan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the US about Iran. [72690]

Margaret Beckett: I discussed Iran's nuclear programme with my US, Russian, Chinese, French and German counterparts when we met in New York on 8 and 9 May. We agreed that it was essential that Iran should meet the requirements of the International Atomic Energy Agency Board and the Security Council, including fully suspending all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities. We will continue to work closely with our EU partners, the US, Russia, China and others to ensure that Iran meets its obligations.

17. **Mr. Stewart Jackson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions she had on Iran with her US and EU counterparts during her recent visit to New York. [72693]

Margaret Beckett: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, North (Mrs Julie Morgan) today (UIN 72690).

18. **Mr. Jim Cunningham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make a statement on the steps the UK is taking to ensure Iran does not acquire nuclear weapons. [72694]

Margaret Beckett: The UK is working closely with international partners in multilateral fora and in ad-hoc groupings to ensure that Iran takes the steps necessary to guarantee that its nuclear programme is exclusively for peaceful purposes. We continue to maintain strict national export controls in fulfilment of our obligations and commitments, including under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

Palestinian Authority

15. **James Brokenshire:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions she has had with her US counterparts on the funding of the Palestinian Authority. [72691]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary raised the importance of developing a temporary international funding mechanism to channel donor funds with US Secretary of State Rice on 9 May and Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick on 17 May.

Proliferation

16. **Mr. Goodwill:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions she had on proliferation with her UN Security Council counterparts during her recent visit to New York. [72692]

Margaret Beckett: I had no discussions on proliferation issues during my visit to New York other than those on Iran.

Arms Export Controls

19. **Chris McCafferty:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress there has been towards further arms export controls; and if she will make a statement. [72695]

Margaret Beckett: The Government continue to work to strengthen regulation of the arms trade and counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Key current goals are securing the launch of a UN-based process toward an international arms trade treaty, and also seeking agreement within the UN Programme of Action to establish minimum criteria for controls on the transfer of Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Montenegro

20. **Mr. Evans:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions she has had with her EU counterparts on the referendum in Montenegro on 21 May. [72696]

Mr. Hoon: The Montenegrin Referendum was discussed at the General Affairs and External Relations Council, which I attended, on 15 May.

Following the vote on 21 May, the Head of the Referendum Commission stated at a news conference this morning that the preliminary result shows a majority in favour of independence at 55.5 per cent. with a turnout of 86.49 per cent.

The EU has issued a declaration welcoming the conduct of the referendum.

I issued a press statement this morning noting that the people of Montenegro have expressed a clear desire for an independent state and calling on all sides in Montenegro, and the Serbian Authorities, to work together to determine the way forward.

Karen People (Burma)

21. **Mr. David Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make a statement on the situation of Karen people in Burma. [72698]

Mr. Hoon: We condemn the Burmese army's attacks on civilians in Karen State, which have forced thousands to flee their homes and seek refuge on the

Thai/Burmese border. My right hon. Friend the Minister of State for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs, Ian McCartney, will shortly be calling in the Burmese Ambassador to express our concern about the situation.

Palestinian Aid

22. **Helen Goodman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact on the Palestinian people of the decision by the EU to suspend aid. [72699]

Dr. Howells: The EU continues to provide aid to the Palestinian people. Following the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority's (PA) failure to commit to the three Quartet principles direct budgetary assistance to the PA has been suspended.

The 15 May General Affairs and External Relations Council concluded that an international mechanism would be urgently established to direct delivery and supervise assistance to the Palestinian people.

EU Constitution

23. **Mr. Laurence Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make a statement on progress made on the EU constitution. [72700]

Mr. Hoon: Following the rejection of the Treaty in the Dutch and French referendums, the European Council agreed on a period of reflection to consider the way forward. The European Council will come back to the matter this June. We will participate constructively in these discussions.

Darfur

24. **Mr. Simon:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make a statement on the peace process in Darfur. [72701]

Dr. Howells: We welcome the signature of the Darfur Peace Agreement by the Government of Sudan and the largest rebel faction. This followed intense efforts by the UK and others to agree a deal. We call on those parties who have signed the agreement to begin implementation immediately; and on those who have not to join the agreement and help rebuild peace in Darfur.

BBC World Service

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many hours a week was broadcast by the BBC World Service to *(a)* Bhutan and *(b)* Nepal in (i) television and (ii) radio format in the last year for which figures are available. [71725]

Mr. McCartney: There is no dedicated service to Bhutan. But SW transmissions of the Bengali, Nepalese and English services are audible there. The dedicated Nepalese service is delivered on SW and FM. FM transmissions were adversely affected by recent political events. These should return to normal soon. SW transmissions in English and Hindi can also be heard in Nepal. Details are:

Bhutan English (115.5 hours per week), Bengali (10.5 hours per week), Nepalese (3.5 hours per week)

Nepal English (129.5 hours per week), Nepalese (3.5 hours per week), Hindi (17.5 hours per week)

From March to end September 2005, the Nepalese Service also broadcast an additional 15 minutes daily but this was discontinued in October. The World Service does not broadcast via television.

Children's Services

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many nursery and creche places are provided for people working in her Department; what charges are made for the provision of such services; and what other facilities are provided for children of employees of her Department. [67372]

Dr. Howells: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) runs two in-house nurseries in London and Hanslope Park, with a total of 67 places.

The London nursery, managed by Bright Horizons, has 36 places for children from six months to five years. Fees are subsidised and are charged according to grades, ranging from £23 to £34 per day. The Hanslope Park nursery is run by a management committee comprising of volunteer FCO staff and has a capacity of 31 places for children from three months to five years. Fees are £115 per week for children under two and £104 for children two and over. The fees are used to pay staff wages. Services such as water, heat, power etc. are subsidised by the FCO at a cost of £115 per week.

Five subsidised places were offered at Buffer Bear nurseries in commuter areas but because of the low take up of places this contract is not being renewed from end April 2006.

The FCO pay a 50 per cent. subsidy for places used by schoolchildren of FCO staff at the Westminster Play Scheme, which runs during normal school holidays.

We have also introduced from 1 April 2006 "salary sacrifice" arrangements enabling staff to purchase child care vouchers at a discount.

China

Mark Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps her Department is taking to encourage China to improve its human rights record following its election to the United Nations Human Rights Council. [72378]

Mr. McCartney: We continue to raise human rights concerns regularly with the Chinese Government, through ministerial contact, the UK-China Human

Rights Dialogue and EU mechanisms. We will expect every member of the Human Rights Council, including China, to co-operate fully with the council and take very seriously the responsibility that they will have for the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide.

Diego Garcia

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the US Administration on its lease of Diego Garcia; and if she will make a statement. [72981]

Mr. Hoon: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary of State has not had recent discussions with the US Administration on the international agreement entered into by the UK and the US in 1966. There is no lease.

The 1966 Exchange of Notes between the Government and the Government of the United States provides that the islands of the British Indian Ocean Territories, including Diego Garcia, shall be available to meet the defence needs of both Governments for an initial period of 50 years, i.e. until 2016, and continuing thereafter for a further period of 20 years unless terminated by either Government at the end of the initial period.

European Court of Human Rights

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations she is making to the European Court of Human Rights for the removal of the language barriers highlighted in the recent Woolf Report on the working practices of that institution. [71535]

Mr. Hoon: The noble and learned Lord Woolf's report was a UK initiative, funded and supported by the Government. UK officials regularly raise the importance of implementing the recommendations in Lord Woolf's report, including those on language barriers, with the European Court of Human Rights and the Council of Europe.

My right hon. Friend the former Foreign Secretary (Mr. Straw) did not make representations on the report. My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs, Baroness Ashton of Upholland, represented the UK at the Council of Europe Ministerial on 19 May. She raised Lord Woolf's Report during her intervention, stressing that the UK supported its recommendations.

Leased Land

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* land and *(b)* property her Department (i) leases and (ii) leased in (A) 1979, (B) 1983, (C) 1987, (D) 1992 and (E) 1997 in (1) the Southend West constituency, (2) Essex, (3) Hertfordshire and (4) the Metropolitan Police area of London. [72116]

Margaret Beckett: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) is not leasing nor has leased in the years requested any land or property in the hon. Member's Southend West constituency, Essex or Hertfordshire.

The FCO is not leasing nor has leased in the years requested any sites or undeveloped land in the Metropolitan Police area of London, but currently leases property in that area as follows: 1 Carlton Gardens, 89 Albert Embankment (one floor of 15,000 square feet) and Lancaster House.

The FCO assumed, from the former Department of the Environment, responsibility for acquiring and holding its own premises in the UK only from 1 April 1996. In 1997 we leased in, the Metropolitan Police area of London, 1 Carlton Gardens and Lancaster House, and also office space at Cromwell House, Dean Stanley Street, 20 Victoria Street, 24 Whitehall, 10 Carlton House Terrace, 4 Central Buildings, Matthew Parker Street, 8 Cleveland Row, St James' and 1 Palace Street.

Ministerial Support Unit

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of the *(a)* cost-effectiveness of the Ministerial Support Unit and *(b)* its impact on the morale of staff in her Department; and if she will make a statement. [68713]

Margaret Beckett *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The Ministerial Support Unit (MSU) was reviewed earlier this year. We concluded that further small changes were needed to its structure and responsibilities—in particular in the area of ministerial travel. These changes are now being implemented and we will review the overall impact of the MSU, including its cost-effectiveness, at the end of the financial year. Creating the MSU has caused some short-term disruption to the staff directly affected. But there is no evidence of a wider impact on morale in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Recruitment

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on recruitment, search and selection agencies in each of the last five years. [68343]

Margaret Beckett: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) paid the following total amounts to recruitment, search and selection agencies in the last five years:

	£
2001-02	2,467,854.61
2002-03	2,484,105.83
2003-04	1,786,178.41
2004-05	670,488.95
2005-06	1,075,081.27

The FCO has responsibility for one Executive agency, Wilton Park. It made no payment to recruitment, search and selection agencies in any of the last five years.

The FCO uses the services of recruitment agencies for volume, specialist and senior appointments. Volume recruitment is handled under contract by Capita Resourcing. For specialist slots, we use the Cabinet Office's call-off contract to select agencies to handle positions which require specific skills. This contract is also used for senior appointments.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Consumer Advice

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans he has to introduce a consumer advice handbook. [71347]

Mr. McCartney: DTI currently has no plans to develop or introduce a consumer advice handbook. However the introduction of Consumer Direct, a national telephone and online consumer advice service, has considerably raised the profile of consumer advice. By the end of June 2006, with the launch of the last three contact centres, Consumer Direct will be a fully national service providing a single national phone number that makes it easier than ever for consumers to get the advice and information they need.

The service is very popular and currently receives around 25,000 calls per week across England, Scotland and Wales. A recent customer satisfaction survey reported that 87 per cent. of callers were satisfied and eight out of 10 callers feel that they now have the confidence to deal with similar problems should they occur in future.

We are also funding a £45 million, two-year programme to provide face-to-face debut advice. About £16 million will go to citizens advice projects, £7 million to other voluntary sector advice agencies and the remaining £22 million to partnership projects involving both Citizens Advice and other advice agencies. The funds will pay for 500 new advisers who will help tens of thousands of families to tackle debt.

Copyright

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what recent guidance his Department has issued to *(a)* internet service providers, *(b)* telecommunication companies and *(c)* electronic hardware companies on discouraging the illegal use of (i) music and (ii) other creative content online; [72412]

(2) what measures the Government are taking to encourage *(a)* internet service providers, *(b)* telecommunications companies and *(c)* electronic hardware companies to promote responsible copyright awareness programmes to consumers. [72414]

Mr. McCartney: Although the IT and telecommunications sectors are not specifically being targeted, the Patent Office, as the DTI agency responsible for IP, is continuing to work with a range of partners to deliver a programme of IP awareness raising among all sectors of business. This builds on the success last year of the 'What is the key?' initiative, and includes responsible use of other people's intellectual property, as embodied by the CREATE principles. These principles were developed and endorsed by the Creative Industries IP Forum, which was chaired by Lord Sainsbury and the then Minister for Creative Industries and Tourism.

East Midlands Development Agency

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many cross-council meetings have been organised by the East Midlands Development Agency in 2005; and how many such meetings have been attended by *(a)* Bassetlaw and *(b)* Mansfield council. [71893]

Margaret Hodge: East Midlands Development Agency ('emda') does not organise specific cross-council meetings, but does work closely with a wide range of local authorities (counties, unitaries and districts) within the region on specific issues. Meetings are set up as and when they are needed and many involve wider partnerships, often including more than one local authority, 'emda' also works through existing groupings such as local government association where appropriate. During 2005 these meetings covered all aspects of the agency's agenda, including formal groups to consider issues such as Urban Policy and Rural Action Zones and ad-hoc meetings to cover specific issues (for example planning issues associated with major projects), 'emda' also consulted all local authorities on their strategy development, in particular related to the current revision of the Regional Economic Strategy, and invited councils to events such as their annual public meeting. Bassetlaw district council has attended two such events and Mansfield district council four events.

Energy Review

Dr. Whitehead: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will place in the Library a copy of the first draft of the Energy Review. [72666]

Mr. Darling: There is no written first cut of the Energy Review. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister was briefed by Ministers on 15 May on the findings thus far and the analysis of the scale of the energy challenge. Information highlighting some of the key findings are available on the No. 10 website at http://www.number10.gov.uk/output/page9469.asp The review will be published in the summer.

Imperial Measures

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether there are plans to introduce EU legislation which would prevent the use of certain imperial measures in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [72590]

Mr. McCartney: Current legislation permits the continued use of imperial units in certain contexts, including the use of imperial units as supplementary indications accompanying indications given in authorised (metric) units. The Government have no present plans for new legislation in this area. The permission for the use of imperial units as supplementary indications at present expires on 31 December 2009. However, the European Commission is, as provided for in directive 80/18 I/EC as amended, examining the working of that directive with particular reference to supplementary indications. The Government expects that the Commission will propose at least an extension of the permission for use of supplementary indications. The Government will consult widely on whatever proposals may be made by the Commission.

Income/Debt Statistics

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what studies he has commissioned to investigate the link between over-indebtedness and *(a)* income level, *(b)* unemployment and *(c)* educational achievement levels; and if he will make a statement. [71243]

Mr. McCartney: In 2004 the DTI commissioned MORI to complete a survey on over-indebtedness and its link to income levels, unemployment and social group ("Over-indebtedness in Britain: a DTI report on the MORI Financial Services survey 2004" http://www.cst.gov.uk/ccp/topics1/pdf1/debtdtionmori.pdf).

This followed a similar piece of work commissioned by the DTI in 2002 when Elaine Kempson of Bristol university carried out research into the links between over-indebtedness and income and unemployment.

In terms of a link between income and the likelihood of over-indebtedness, the survey concluded that those earning less than £9,500 a year were more likely to be over-indebted. On the issue of a link between unemployment and over-indebtedness the results were less clear, although it was noted that unemployed individuals are more likely to find keeping up with bills and credit commitments a 'heavy burden', as well as being more likely to have been in arrears on credit commitments for more than three months.

The Wealth and Assets Survey that is due to enter the field in summer 2006 will provide a much more detailed assessment of over-indebtedness and its links to income, assets such as houses and savings, employment and the educational background of survey participants. The survey is to be carried out over a substantial time period, taking multiple assessments of the participants over the period in order to map changes between areas such as employment, income and assets.

Insolvency Act

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many declared bankruptcies there were under the Insolvency Act 1986 in each of the last 10 years. [72296]

Mr. McCartney *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The following table shows the number of bankruptcies in the last 10 years in England and Wales:

	Bankruptcy orders
1996	21,803
1997	19,892
1998	19,647
1999	21,611
2000	21,550
2001	23,477
2002	24,292
2003	28,021
2004	35,898
2005	47,291

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many appeals against insolvency declarations under the Insolvency Act 1996 there were in each of the last 10 years. [72297]

Jim Fitzpatrick *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The table shows the number of bankruptcy orders made against individuals that have been annulled in the last 10 years on the ground that the order ought not to have been made, and the number of winding-up orders made against companies that have been rescinded over the same period:

	Annulment order	*Number* *Rescission order*
1996	21	127
1997	91	94
1998	141	73
1999	236	69
2000	415	178
2001	438	220
2002	339	130
2003	419	171
2004	399	122
2005	376	140

Insolvency Service

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people have been employed in the Office of the Official Receiver in the Insolvency Service in each year since 1989; and if he will make a statement. [72408]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The total number of staff employed (full-time equivalent) in Official Receives' offices at the end of each year since 2003 is as follows:

Year ending March	*Number*
2003	1,058.14
2004	1,126.99
2005	1,180.65
2006	1,377.04

Notes:
1. These figures include permanent and casual staff, but do not include short-term appointees or agency staff.
2. The numbers of staff employed by The Insolvency Service in earlier years are published in the Agency's Annual Report and Accounts.

Israel/UK Trade

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many officials in his Department are employed to increase trade between Israel and the United Kingdom; at what grade; and if he will make a statement. [72178]

Mr. McCartney: The commercial team in the British embassy in Tel Aviv comprises one UK-based D6 Head of Section and six local Israeli staff. In addition, UK Trade & Investment employs one Range 8 and one Range 6 officer in London, focused primarily on boosting trade and investment links with Israel, as well as more senior staff who have wider geographical responsibilities, which include Israel.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he last visited the state of Israel; what was discussed; when he next plans to visit the state of Israel; and if he will make a statement. [72179]

Mr. McCartney: I have not yet had the opportunity to visit Israel, but hope to be able to do so during my time as Minister for Trade.

Nuclear Power

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will conduct an assessment of the lifecycle carbon dioxide emissions of nuclear power. [72558]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department is aware of a number of studies estimating the total life-cycle emissions and carbon costs of nuclear power.

In November 2005 my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister announced that there would be a review of energy policy which would report in summer 2006. This will take account of external assessments of the total life-cycle carbon costs of nuclear power.

Offshore Petroleum Licensing

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what applications have been made in the 24th round of offshore petroleum licensing for production consents for field developments in the Cardigan Bay area; [72946]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 12 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 540W, on offshore petroleum licensing, when he expects to complete the Appropriate Assessment of potential impacts on the Cardigan Bay Special Area of Conservation in the 24th Licence Round; [72947]

(3) pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 91-92WS, on offshore petroleum licensing, whether any of the 50 blocks that will not be offered for licensing at the request of the Ministry of Defence are in the Cardigan Bay area. [72948]

Malcolm Wicks: No 24th Round applications have been made, but the Round is open until 16 June. We will then consider whether or not to make licence awards. Drilling and production consents are not part of the licence award and have to be sought separately from my Department at a later stage and are subject to further environmental scrutiny.

It is not possible to give an exact date when the Appropriate Assessment will be concluded but it will be before any 24th Round licences are granted. This Assessment will cover all 24th Round acreage on offer, including those blocks in the Cardigan Bay area. We anticipate being able to award licences by the autumn.

Of the 50 blocks withheld from licensing at the request of the Ministry of Defence, none are in the Cardigan Bay area.

Pipe Organs

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent progress has been made in developing a formal application for the total exemption of the manufacture of new pipe organs from the Restriction of Hazardous Substances Directive. [72930]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 22 May 2006]*: The Department has been working with the pipe organ industry for some time and will continue to do so in order to secure a favourable outcome on this issue.

The UK Government do not consider that pipe organs should fall within the scope of this directive, a view widely accepted across Europe. The DTI is working closely with the European Commission and other EU member states to obtain agreement at a European level without the need for a formal exemption. Our aim is to reach a successful conclusion before the directive comes into force on 1 July.

Post Office Closures

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many post offices have closed in Suffolk in each year since 1997. [72605]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Information relating to post office branches for each parliamentary constituency is placed in the Libraries of the House on an annual basis. I have, however, asked Alan Cook, the managing director of Post Office Ltd., to provide a direct reply to the hon. Member as the question relates to operational matters for which the company is directly responsible.

Sunday Working

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research he has undertaken on the impact of Sunday working on individuals working in the *(a)* food and *(b)* retail industry. [72058]

Mr. McCartney: From 13 January to 14 April we asked for views on all aspects of extending Sunday shop

opening hours. We are currently analysing the large number of responses we received. We intend to publish a summary of the responses on the DTI website (www.dti.gov.uk/consumers/buying-selling/Sunday%20Shopping) within three months of the close of this consultation.

In addition we appointed Indepen Consulting Ltd. to produce an economic cost benefit analysis of easing the restrictions on Sunday shopping. We published Indepen's report on 5 May on the DTI website. Indepen's report includes some analysis of the impact on employment if large shops were allowed to open for longer on Sunday.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what assessment he has made of the impact of Sunday trading hours on employees who also have caring responsibilities; [72064]

(2) what assessment he has carried out to determine the impact of extending Sunday opening hours on children and families. [72065]

Mr. McCartney: From 13 January to 14 April we asked for views on all aspects of extending Sunday shop opening hours. We are currently analysing the large number of responses we received. We intend to publish a summary of the responses on the DTI website (www.dti.gov.uk/consumers/buying-selling/Sunday%20Shopping) within three months of the close of this consultation.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research has been undertaken to examine the implications of extending Sunday opening hours; and what the terms of reference were for this research. [72135]

Mr. McCartney: The DTI appointed Indepen Consulting Ltd. to produce an economic cost benefit analysis of easing the restrictions on Sunday shopping. We published Indepen's report on 5 May on the DTI website:

www.dti.gov.uk/consumers/buying-selling/Sunday%20Shopping

The terms of reference for this analysis are included as an annex in the report.

From 13 January to 14 April we asked for views and evidence on all aspects of extending Sunday shop opening hours. We are currently analysing the large number of responses we received. We intend to publish a summary of the responses on the DTI website within three months of the close of this consultation.

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment his Department has made of the available infrastructure capacity in the UK to handle waste in accordance with the waste electrical and electronic equipment directive. [72510]

Malcolm Wicks: Successful implementation of the waste electrical and electronic equipment directive will require appropriate infrastructure capacity to be in place at various points along the waste management chain. Delivery of this infrastructure is necessarily driven by market forces. The role of Government is to ensure that this market can operate properly by providing certainty about the regulatory environment. The Government are committed to implementing the WEEE directive as quickly as possible in consultation with stakeholders. The Department will issue a consultation paper and timetable for implementation before the summer recess.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Arts Council

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on what date the Arts Council was first informed that the West Bromwich arts organisation, The Public, was likely to exceed the projected costs of constructing its new building; and what steps *(a)* the Arts Council and *(b)* her Department subsequently took. [68960]

Mr. Lammy: The Public informed Arts Council England that it was likely to breach its funding envelope in a report to the organisation on 31 January 2006.

The Arts Council consequently commissioned a stocktake report and options appraisal, and the funders agreed upon one of the recommended options and to make short-term cash-flow funds available. However, in spite of close working between all stakeholders, the Board of The Public acted on legal advice and registered for insolvency on 3 March 2006. The Arts Council has since assembled a client handling team and has been working with other funders and the administrators to make progress on completion of the building project and a sustainable business plan for The Public.

My Department have been kept informed of the situation while respecting the arms length principle. The Government Office for the West Midlands has attended regular stakeholder meetings with funders and the administrators. A meeting took place on 27 March between myself, the Member for West Bromwich, East (Tom Watson) and representatives from the Arts Council to discuss the situation at The Public.

BBC Licence Fee

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects to announce the new BBC licence fee settlement. [72571]

Mr. Woodward: The Government are currently conducting a funding review to determine the level of the licence fee to apply from April 2007. An announcement will be made in due course.

Correspondence

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for West Chelmsford of 23 January

about the hon. Member for Havant (Mr. Willets) (ref 34665 and 39899); for what reasons there has been a delay in replying; and if she will make a statement. [72575]

Mr. Caborn: I apologise for the delay in responding to the correspondence from the hon. Member. I hope to provide you with a response shortly.

Internet Gambling

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what research she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the addictiveness of internet poker; [72399]

(2) what regulations govern the operation of internet poker; [72403]

(3) what assessment she has made of the extent of misuse of credit and debit cards by underage people in relation to internet gambling services; [72404]

(4) pursuant to the answer of 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1234W, if she will commission research to establish the prevalence of problem gambling on the internet by *(a)* under and *(b)* over 18-year-olds. [72405]

Mr. Caborn: Under existing legislation it is illegal to operate remote gaming, including internet poker, from Great Britain. There are therefore no such sites currently based in this country. The Gambling Act, when fully implemented in September 2007, will enable remote gaming to be licensed and regulated in Britain. The Gambling Commission's programme of consultation on its new regulatory regime is currently under way.

In addition to the updated National Lottery Commission research referred to in my previous answer, the Gambling Commission's first prevalence study, which is currently under way, will look at the prevalence of problem gambling in those aged 16-years-old and over, across all gambling activities. My Department is now considering what additional research should be commissioned in this area.

Licensing Act/Gambling Act

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the impact of *(a)* the Licensing Act 2003 and *(b)* the Gambling Act 2005; and if she will make a statement. [71616]

Mr. Caborn: The Government believe it is too early to make any firm assessment about the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 either across the country or in any one area. It is, however, reassured by many positive examples which indicate an improving situation through better regulation, improved partnership working, targeted enforcement by police and local authorities, and proper engagement by all stakeholders.

The Government will continue to monitor the impact of the new legislation closely on a range on initiatives, including a programme of evaluation being conducted by the Home Office into the impact of the licensing reforms on crime and disorder.

A regulatory impact assessment of the Gambling Act 2005 was published on 21 April 2005. We are currently working through the programme of secondary legislation needed to implement the Act, in order that the process of implementation will be complete in September 2007. An assessment of the impact of the Act will be made after this process has been completed.

London Olympics

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games's legal contract with the International Olympic Committee for the 2012 Olympic Games permits betting on individual sporting events. [73196]

Mr. Caborn: Presently, British betting operators are permitted to take bets on a range of sporting events including the Olympic Games. We have no plans to legislate otherwise. LOCOG is aware of the existing legal position relating to betting in Great Britain.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which organisation has formal responsibility for ensuring a lasting legacy of increased sporting participation following the 2012 Olympic games; and if she will make a statement. [71614]

Mr. Caborn: The Olympic Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the social, economic and sporting benefits from 2012 are maximised. The board have agreed that the Greater London Authority, the British Olympic Association and Government will work together to ensure that there is lasting legacy of increased sporting participation in London, and the wider UK, as a result of the 2012 games.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much funding within the World Class Pathway Summer Olympic Investment 2006-09 is earmarked for *(a)* the English Institute of Sport, *(b)* the Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme and *(c)* TASS 2012 scholarships, broken down by sport in each case. [72055]

Mr. Caborn: UK Sport will be allocating £9 million per annum to the English Institute of Sport (EIS) through its World Class Pathway programme for the benefit of summer Olympic sports over the period 2006-09. UK Sport is currently in discussion with the EIS and the Summer Olympic sports to determine an appropriate level of funding on a sport by sport basis over this period.

The Department has confirmed funding for both TASS and TASS 2012 Scholarships up to the end of the 2007-08 financial year. UK Sport has been allocated £3 million and £1 million per annum to TASS and TASS 2012 Scholarships respectively to cover the costs of sporting services provided to athletes. An additional 1 million per annum has been allocated to cover specific additional athlete support, such as

medical support, the TASS Hardship Fund, institutional staff training, educational review (2012 athletes), attendance at the World University Games, as well as the schemes administration costs.

National Governing Bodies of sport have been invited to put forward their athlete nominations for this academic year, 1 August to 31 July, for consideration by UK Sport and the TASS National Manager. Until this process is complete we are not in a position to confirm the funding allocation to each sport with regard to TASS and TASS 2012 Scholarships.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what public funding has been made available to people with physical and learning difficulties to train and equip themselves for the Olympics in *(a)* 2012 and *(b)* 2008; and how many individuals have received such funding, broken down by sport. [72063]

Mr. Caborn: Athletes with a learning disability are currently ineligible under the International Paralympic Committee rules, from competing in the Paralympics and as a result UK Sport does not provide funding support to athletes with this disability.

UK Sport has allocated £19.1 million to assist athletes with a physical disability to train and compete at the 2008 Beijing Paralympics. The funding allocation to support disabled athletes beyond this period will be determined following a review of athlete performance at Beijing.

The number of athletes with a disability currently benefiting from the funding made available by UK Sport for the Beijing cycle is shown in the following table:

	Total
Archery	10
Boccia	5
Cycling	6
Disability Athletics	23
Disability Fencing	1
Disability Swimming	24
Disability Table Tennis	9
Disability Tennis	3
Equestrian	8
Judo	3
Powerlifting	4
Rowing	6
Sailing	6
Shooting	3
Wheelchair Basketball	12
Wheelchair Rugby	17
Total	140

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what is the average funding allocated to *(a)* a person with a physical or learning disability and *(b)* a person with no disability in preparation for the Olympic Games in (i) 2008 and (ii) 2012. [72067]

Mr. Caborn: UK Sport supports our very best athletes indirectly through funding support to the national governing bodies of sport and directly through Athlete Personal Awards (APA). The APAs are available to able bodied and disabled athletes, are paid directly to the athlete and are a contribution to their sporting and living costs.

The level of award is dependent upon whether the athlete qualifies for category A, B or C. funding. The category of award into which an athlete falls is based upon a number of criteria, including the most recent performance in major international competitions as well as their ability to deliver medal success at a future Olympics /Paralympics. The level of APA that an athlete is entitled to receive is the same, irrespective of whether they are a disabled or able-bodied athlete.

For both the 2008 and 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the annual APAs are currently set at the following levels—"A" Category athletes £23,930, "B" Category athletes £17,948 and "C" Category athletes £11,965.

Millennium Stadium

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received on crowd crushes due to the collapse of safety rails outside the Cardiff Millennium Stadium on 13 May 2006; and if she will make a statement. [71988]

Mr. Caborn: I have received no representations about crowd crushes outside the Millennium Stadium on 13 May 2006. However, my officials have been informed by the Football Licensing authority that the incident which took place before kick-off was not caused by the failure of safety railings. Rather, the cause, as recorded in the formal report by the FLA officer in attendance, was the attempt by a large number of fans to rush the turnstiles at gate 2, as a result of which, three spectators are reported to have required treatment for injuries.

The local authority will review the matter at the next safety advisory group to ensure that this will be figured into future arrangements for events at the stadium.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on how many occasions *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in her Department have stayed overnight in (i) five star, (ii) four star and (iii) three star hotels in each of the last three years. [69121]

Mr. Lammy: An analysis by type of expenditure on travel and subsistence including hotel star rating is not recorded on the Department's accounting system and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost. In general, choice of hotels is influenced by cost rather than star rating.

Problem Gamblers (Tamworth)

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to her answer of 9 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 183W, to the hon.

Member for Tamworth (Mr. Jenkins), on problem gamblers (Tamworth), whether this figure is intended as the baseline figure against which the impact of problem gambling will be assessed. [71696]

Mr. Caborn: I can confirm that the figure of 0.06 per cent. will be used as the baseline figure against which the impact of problem gambling will be assessed.

Royal Parks

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions her Department has had with the Royal Parks Agency concerning the provision of motor cycle parking spaces within the Royal Parks; and if she will make a statement. [72655]

Mr. Lammy: DCMS has had no discussions with The Royal Parks Agency about the provision of motorcycle parking spaces within the Royal Parks. Motorcycles are already able to park wherever there is visitor parking provision in the Royal Parks. And in those parks which operate a pay and display system motorcycles are exempt from the charges. There are no plans to increase overall parking provision in the Royal Parks.

Sports Funding

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much has been distributed to sport from the national lottery in each year since 1997; and through which bodies it has been distributed. [72051]

Mr. Caborn: To pay Lottery grants and meet administrative costs, the five sports lottery distributors have drawn down the following amounts in each financial year:

	Amount (£ million)
1997-98	188.3
1998-99	397.4
1999-2000	316.7
2000-01	292.5
2001-02	359.2
2002-03	377.5
2003-04	315.5
2004-05	241.6
2005-06	264.0

The five bodies are Sport England, SportScotland, Sports Council for Wales, Sports Council for Northern Ireland and UK Sport.

Other lottery distributors have made grants that have directly or indirectly benefited sport, for example money to a village hall that has enabled people to play indoor football.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much the Big Lottery Fund plans to give to sport in the period 2006 to 2009. [72816]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The Big Lottery Fund is the operating name of the National Lottery Charities Board and the New Opportunities Fund, working jointly together.

The Big Lottery Fund has committed £19 million to the School Sports Co-ordinator programme in England over the period 2006 to 2009. A further £438 million will be spent on sport-related activities across the UK from the fund's legacy programmes over this period. In addition, the fund has said it is likely to provide funding to sport-related projects under a number of its new programmes.

Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much funding is available to *(a)* the Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS) and *(b)* TASS 2012 Scholarship in each year to 2012; and how much of that funding will be allocated to (i) summer Olympic sports, (ii) winter Olympic sports, (iii) non-Olympic sports, broken down by sport and (iv) paralympic sport. [72057]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 18 May 2006]:* The Department has confirmed funding for both TASS and TASS 2012 Scholarships up to the end of the 2007-08 financial year. Funding details beyond this period is therefore not available.

The annual allocation of funding up to the end of 2007-08 is £5 million, with £3 million and £1 million allocated to TASS and TASS 2012 Scholarships respectively to cover the costs of sporting services provided to athletes. The remaining funding will cover specific additional athlete support, such as medical support, the TASS Hardship Fund, institutional staff training, educational review (2012 athletes), attendance at the World University Games, as well as the schemes administration costs.

While the funding of TASS and TASS 2012 is based on a financial year, the athlete awards are made annually and run from 1 August to the 31 July. National Governing Bodies have been invited to put forward their athlete nominations for this year for consideration by UK Sport and the TASS National Manager. Until this process is complete we are not in a position to confirm the funding allocation across the sports requested.

Timber

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether it is her policy that only timber products certified by the Forest Stewardship Council will be used for the 2012 Olympics. [72427]

Mr. Caborn: The Government are committed to ensuring that we deliver not only the most successful Games, but also that they are environmentally, economically and socially sustainable. Environmental principles have been taken into account from the very earliest stages, influencing every aspect of planning for the Games and their legacy. The Candidate File, which

set out the policy for the Olympic Games, states that the London Organising Committee's sustainability management system will ensure that environmental and sustainability criteria are taken into account in planning, tendering and procurement decisions, including support for independent certification of products, such as Forestry Stewardship Council timber.

Water Sports

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department is taking to promote water sports. [72597]

Mr. Caborn: We are committed to encouraging more people to participate in water sports.

Sport England has so far awarded £367 million of Lottery funding to 538 water sports projects around the country.

The National School Sport Strategy has enabled further financial support for water sports through its Club Links workstrand. This workstrand aims to strengthen links between schools and local sports clubs and by doing so increase the number of children who are members of accredited sports clubs. In 2006-07, funding has been awarded through Club Links as follows:

	£
Swimming	352,000
Sailing	97,500
Rowing	97,500
Canoeing	97,500

Funding has also been made available for water sports through the Step into Sport programme, which is part of the National School Sport Strategy. The programme provides a simple framework of opportunities at a local level to enable young people to experience sports leadership and volunteering. In 2006-07, funding has been awarded to the following National Governing Bodies of sport through the Step into Sport programme:

	£
Swimming	20,000
Sailing	20,000
Rowing	20,000

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what publicly-funded resources are available for people with physical disabilities to train in water sports; and where these facilities are located. [72062]

Mr. Caborn: Sport England has awarded £367 million of lottery funding to 538 water sports projects around the country. Although it is not possible to assess which of these projects specifically target people with physical disabilities, any project receiving lottery funding would be expected to provide opportunities for all members of society, including disabled people.

TREASURY

Departmental Expenditure

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the 10 non-public sector entities that have received the largest total sum of payments from his Department in each of the last five years. [71815]

John Healey: The entities which received the largest total payments for each of the four financial years from 2002-03 to 2005-06 inclusive are as follows:

	2002-03	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
Carlson Wagonlit Travel UK Ltd	—	Yes	—	—
Centerprise International Ltd	Yes	—	—	—
Chessington Computer Services Ltd	Yes	Yes	—	—
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association	—	Yes	Yes	Yes
Computacenter (UK) Ltd	Yes	—	Yes	Yes
European Broadcasting Union	—	—	—	Yes
Exchequer Partnership plc	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Inter Parliamentary Union	—	Yes	—	—
Jack Morton Worldwide Limited	—	—	—	Yes
Natwest Bank plc	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Oracle	Yes	—	—	—
Partnerships UK plc	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Paymaster (1836) Ltd	—	Yes	Yes	—
Pitney Bowes Management Services Ltd	—	—	Yes	—
Royal Bank of Scotland	—	—	Yes	Yes
Robson Associates	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Royal & Sun Alliance	Yes	—	—	—
Stationery Office	Yes	Yes	Yes	—
UBS AG Bank	—	—	—	Yes

An equivalent list for 2001-02 could be provided only at disproportionate cost because of a change in accounting system in 2002-03. The lists cover payments made by the Treasury on behalf of the Treasury and the Debt Management Office, who operate a combined supplier payments system.

It has been drawn to my attention by Treasury officials that there was a mistake in the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Leicester, East (Keith Vaz) on 15 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 709W, on the matter of consultancy fees paid by the Treasury in 2005-06. Some of the figures in the table accompanying my answer were understated because of a fault in the software programme that was used to extract them. A corrected table has been placed in the Library of the House. I very much regret this inadvertent error.

HM Revenue and Customs

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many times the HM Revenue and Customs website was *(a)* overloaded, *(b)* off-line, *(c)* slowed up through demand and *(d)* unable to offer complete access in each of the last 24 months for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [72017]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is not readily available in the format or for the whole period requested. However HMRC's website has remained available to users continuously since October 2005.

From time to time however, certain online functions or pages of information and guidance within the website are withdrawn to enable maintenance, upgrades or updating of content.

At particularly busy periods—e.g. around filing dates—users of the website may occasionally experience access difficulties or slow running. On these occasions users will be advised to try again later. Users may also experience problems at other times for a variety of reasons outside of HMRC's direct control including—for example—the type of connection and equipment they are using and the speed and capacity of third parties' communications infrastructure.

Home Computer Initiative

Peter Luff: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1718-21W, on the Home Computer Initiative, if he will give further consideration to the questions asked by hon. Members to satisfy himself that all the questions asked received substantive responses in the answer provided. [72570]

Dawn Primarolo: My reply of 16 May 2006 to the hon. Member's further question, *Official Report*, columns 830-31W, explained that my answer of 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1718-21W, was designed to enable a full, substantive statement on the Home Computer Initiative to be made to the House. That remains the position.

Information Technology

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was spent on information technology (IT) sourced from outside his Department in each of the last five years; who is responsible for such projects in his Department; and what IT *(a)* expertise and *(b)* qualifications they possess. [71813]

John Healey: The information is as follows.

Annual spend on IT

	£000
2002-03	5,300
2003-04	2,823
2004-05	4,281
2005-06	3,087

Information on 2001-02 is not readily available and providing it would incur disproportionate costs.

Projects are the responsibility of the appointed project/programme managers. Depending on the scale of the project, project managers are expected to have increasingly formal training and background in project management. The current head of technical infrastructure came with a background in MOD procurement and has Prince2 and British Computer Society project management qualifications.

National Insurance Contributions

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the cost to the Exchequer of changing the lower earnings limit on national insurance contributions (NICs) to the equivalent of £7,500 per annum for *(a)* class 1 NICs, *(b)* class 2 NICs, *(c)* class 3 NICs and *(d)* class 4 NICs while simultaneously raising the upper earnings limit to the equivalent of £50,000 per annum. [71207]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 16 May 2006]:* Raising the Lower earnings limit (LEL) would have the effect of removing employees whose earnings are between the current LEL and the new higher LEL from entitlement to contributory national insurance benefits.

Leaving the LEL unchanged but raising the earnings threshold at which class 1 national insurance contributions are payable by employees and employers to £7,500 a year, and raising the upper earnings limit to £50,000 a year, would lower national insurance contributions for 2006-07 by around £8 billion. This figure comprises £1.6 billion of primary contributions paid by employees, and £6.4 billion of secondary contributions paid by employers.

Raising the lower and upper profits limits for class 4 national insurance contributions paid by the self-employed to £7,500 and £50,000 respectively would lower national insurance contributions in respect of 2006-07 by around £80 million.

Class 2 national insurance contributions are flat-rate payments payable by all self-employed people unless they apply for a 'small earnings exception' if their earnings from self-employment are expected to be low (below £4,465 for 2006-07). In order to preserve entitlement to benefits the self-employed with low earnings may choose to pay class 2 contributions voluntarily.

Class 3 contributions are voluntary flat-rate payments and are paid by people whose contribution record would otherwise be insufficient to enable them to qualify for retirement pension and bereavement benefits.

The above estimates do not take any account of rebate payments in respect of contracting out, nor of increased payments of state second pension in the longer term for those not contracted out.

The figures also exclude any estimate of behavioural response, which could be significant given the scale of the changes.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will reply to Question 42761, tabled by the hon. Member for Bury St. Edmunds on 11 January 2006, on tax credit fraud. [71724]

Dawn Primarolo: I have done so.

Pensions

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what guarantees the Government have given to private sector companies in respect of their pension liabilities. [66899]

Ed Balls: I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer which my hon. Friend the former Economic Secretary (Mr. Lewis) gave the hon. Member for Eastbourne (Mr. Waterson) on 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1723-24W.

Public Sector Accounting Units

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many accounting units are responsible for reporting to the Treasury across the public sector; if he will name the official concerned in each case; and what the professional accountancy qualifications are of each. [71731]

Mr. Timms: Information relating to accounting units is available in the Treasury publication of December 2005, "Delivering the Benefits of Accruals Accounting for the Whole Public Sector". The names of the officials concerned and their qualifications are not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Stamp Duty

Helen Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of properties in England and Wales on which stamp duty was levied at a rate of one per cent. sold at between £60,000 and £120,000 in 2004. [72720]

Ed Balls: The number of residential transactions in England and Wales in 2004, costing between £60,001 and £120,000, on which one per cent. stamp duty was paid, is estimated to be 300,000. An additional 90,000 transactions were exempt from stamp duty as they took place in designated disadvantaged areas.

Kitty Ussher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many properties sold in England and Wales attracted stamp duty in each year since 2000; and what proportion this number represented of *(a)* all properties in England and Wales and *(b)* the owner-occupier sector in each year. [72724]

Ed Balls: The following table gives the numbers and proportion of property transactions above the stamp duty threshold in England and Wales in each year since 2000. Figures for 2005 will be published in June 2006.

	Number of property transactions above lowest stamp duty threshold (Thousands)	*As proportion of total transactions (Percentage)*
2000	791	55
2001	913	63
2002	1,049	66
2003	975	73
2004	1,299	73

The numbers paying stamp duty will be lower due to the use of various reliefs for example disadvantaged area relief and group relief, registered social landlord relief. It is not possible to separately identify properties purchased by owner occupiers.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much revenue has been raised from stamp duty on property transactions in each year since 2000. [72734]

Ed Balls: Stamp duty revenue on property transactions for each financial year is available at:
http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/stamp_duty/15_1_sep05.xls

Tax Credits

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cases of tax credit fraud have been detected in each of the last six years; and how many resulted in successful prosecutions. [42761]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2379W.

HMRC is planning to provide more comprehensive information on the level of claimant error and fraud.

Mr. Devine: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many people in Livingston received overpayments of *(a)* child tax credit and *(b)* working tax credit in 2005; [72279]

(2) how many people in Livingston received *(a)* child tax credit and *(b)* working tax credit in 2005. [72363]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates for 2004-05 of the numbers of in-work families with tax credits awards, including information on overpayments and underpayments, by constituency, based on final family circumstances and incomes for 2004-05 are due to be published on 31 May 2006.

We do not produce statistics separately for child and working tax credits.

Hywel Williams: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress has been made in ensuring that the most recently produced standard tax credit letters and forms are available in Welsh. [72572]

Dawn Primarolo: With the exception of the tax credits award notice and renewals pack, HMRC currently provide Welsh language versions of all standard tax credits letters and forms, including the claim pack.

More information is available on the internet at: www.hmrc.gov.uk/cymraeg/index.htm.

HMRC continues to explore the practicality of providing tax credit notices and renewals packs in Welsh and to discuss progress with the Welsh language board.

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the tax credit office will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for West Chelmsford (Mr. Burns) of 11 November 2005 (ref 2005/11006403); for what reasons there has been a delay in replying; and if he will make a statement. [72574]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs very much regrets the delay in replying to the hon. Member's letters. I understand that they have now done so.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library a copy of the Valuation Office Agency's training material on aspects of council tax, including dwelling house coding. [70681]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1038W. This included training material on aspects of council tax. Any additional training is based on the Valuation Office Agency's council tax manual and instruction and advice documents to staff, which are available on the agency's website at www.voa.gov.uk.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Commission on Integration and Cohesion

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what progress has been made in establishing the Commission on Integration and Cohesion. [71937]

Meg Munn *[holding answer 18 May 2006]:* The Prime Minister wrote to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 9 May asking her to chair the Commission on Integration and Cohesion that he announced last year.

It is intended that the Commission will produce a framework for the Government's future work on Integration and Cohesion. I will make an announcement about the way ahead shortly.

Corporate Hospitality

David Simpson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on how many occasions he has accepted corporate hospitality in the last 12 months. [67533]

Angela E. Smith: I have been asked to reply.

Paragraph 5.28 of the "Ministerial Code" sets out the rules on the registration of hospitality.

Departmental Name Change

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the expected cost is of changing the name of her Department; and if she will make a statement. [69869]

Angela E. Smith: The Department will bear down on the necessary costs arising from the establishment of the Department for Communities and Local Government and at all times will look to achieve best value for money for the complete exercise.

The Department has allocated a budget of £8,000 to £12,000 for this exercise.

Grant Moneys

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what arrangements are in place for monitoring proper use of grant money allocated by her Department; and if she will make a statement. [72618]

Mr. Woolas: Grants, other than those paid to local authorities, are covered by a legal agreement called a grant funding agreement. In that my Department carefully defines the expenditure which is eligible for grant funding and that which is not, and we include conditions covering value for money and financial propriety.

Where these grants are over £20,000 a year then, by 30 September after the end of each year, the grant recipient must complete and submit to the Department a Statement of Grant Usage giving details of eligible expenditure during the funding period. This must be accompanied by a report from a reporting accountant, who must be a member of a supervisory body recognised by the Companies Acts, and be independent of the grant recipient using the definition given in section 27 of the Companies Act 1989.

Arrangements for European grants and grants to local authorities are similar, except that for local authorities, instead of a reporting accountant, the Audit Commission appoints an external auditor to carry out the work. Some grants provided to local authorities from Government Departments are on a non ring-fenced basis, that is with no conditions attached. However, local authorities are subject to a comprehensive statutory framework which governs the uses to which their income can be put, and the control and accountability of their financial transactions. Since 2002 local authorities have also been subject to a comprehensive performance framework which provides a rounded picture of local councils' performance. The framework provides the basis for establishing a more effective and efficient relationship between central and local government, based on performance and on risk.

Home Information Packs

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Department will retain an electronic database of home information packs. [64436]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

A register of completed home condition reports will be held by the Department in order to ensure the integrity of the reports. Data stored in the register will be accessible only to those parties having a legitimate interest in the transaction such as buyers, sellers, their advisers, and mortgage lenders, plus those ensuring the quality of the reports. Certification schemes will operate their own local registers. There will be no central database of home information packs.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the expected total cost is of implementing home information packs over the next five years. [63788]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

A Regulatory Impact Assessment to be published alongside the regulations is to be laid next month.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister for what period of time a Home Information Pack will be valid. [64667]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Neither the Housing Act 2004 nor the regulations made under the 2004 Act will prescribe a validity period for Home Information Packs. The regulations to be made later this year will provide that certain time-sensitive items in the pack (e.g. local searches and the Home Condition Report) are no more than three months old when marketing begins, but they will not require sellers to renew these documents thereafter.

Michael Gove: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact on the property market of the introduction of home information packs. [64927]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

An assessment of the impact of home information packs will be published shortly in a regulatory impact assessment to accompany regulations to be made under Part 5 of the Housing Act 2004. This assessment will be updated in the light of the findings of a baseline study of the home buying and selling process to be carried out this year and information obtained during the dry-run of home information packs.

Michael Gove: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister who will be liable for the costs of a new local authority search for a home information pack if the property for sale is still on the market after the search has been deemed out of date. [64950]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

It should be relatively a rare occurrence that searches become out of date as we expect that home information packs will speed up the buying and selling process. We are not proposing to stipulate whether the buyer or the seller should update searches as it is a matter of judgment when searches need to be refreshed. Where they do need to be refreshed this can be done for a fraction of the cost of new searches.

Michael Gove: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment has been made of the impact on competition within the estate agent sector of the introduction of home information packs. [64951]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The partial Regulatory Impact Assessment for Home Information Packs published in March 2003 (a copy of which is deposited in the House Library) covers the anticipated effect of the Home Information Pack on the estate agency sector. The Department also commissioned research "Litmus Test of Impact of Regulations on Small Businesses", DETR 2000, that examined the impact of the proposals on a range of small businesses, including estate agents.

Currently costs in the estate agent sector are not fully transparent. Over the last 10 years property prices have doubled allowing estate agents who keep their percentage fee broadly constant to significantly increase their income per transaction. The introduction of Home Information Packs will increase transparency over information and services provided to both sellers and buyers. This has the potential to increase competition and demand for transparency across the estate agency sector.

Michael Gove: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been allocated to raise public awareness of the home information pack scheme; and how it will be spent. [65064]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Government have a duty to inform the profession, stakeholders and homebuyers and sellers about the forthcoming change in the law. Expenditure for the 2005-06 financial year was £706,000. This includes the cost of an extensive trade advertising campaign to raise awareness of the June 2007 implementation date within the home buying and selling professions.

Planned expenditure of £2,500,000 for 2006-07 includes continued awareness raising within the professions and a national and regional advertising campaign to raise awareness of home information packs among consumers, during the dry run.

In 2007-08 we expect to run a major information campaign for consumers which would include marketing, advertising and publicity. The extent of the campaign and the level of investment will be decided later in the year on the basis of the experience of the dry run.

Michael Gove: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many home inspectors have completed their training to provide home condition reports; and how many inspectors he estimates will need to have qualified to ensure an effective introduction of the home information pack scheme. [65071]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

4,400 Home Inspectors are in the process of being trained, and as of 30 April 2006 200 have completed their training. The amount of training required depends on previous experience but the average surveyor can be trained in around five days plus the time taken to assemble a portfolio of work. Over the next 12 months we expect thousands of Home Inspectors to complete their training in time for the implementation date of 1 June 2007.

We estimate that the number of Home Inspectors required will be between 5,000 and 7,400. This estimate has been developed in consultation with the industry, and it will be kept under review.

Michael Gove: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister where the proposed pilots for home information packs will take place. [65074]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Home information packs will be tested through a dry-run before becoming mandatory in June 2007. The dry-run will include home information packs provided on a voluntary basis throughout England and Wales.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his Department has allocated in funding for *(a)* marketing, *(b)* advertising and *(c)* publicity in relation to home information packs. [66321]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Government have a duty to inform the profession, stakeholders and home buyers and sellers about the forthcoming change in the law.

Expenditure for the 2005-06 financial year was £706,000 of which:

(a) £175,000 was spent on marketing,

(b) £462,000 for planned advertising and

(c) £69,000 on planned publicity.

This includes the cost of a trade advertising campaign to raise awareness of the June 2007 implementation date within the home buying and selling professions.

Planned expenditure of £2,500,00 for 2006-07 is made up of:

(a) £628,000 on planned marketing,

(b) £1,700,000 for planned advertising and

(c) £172,000 on planned publicity.

This includes continued awareness raising within the professions and a national and regional advertising campaign to raise awareness of home information packs among consumers during the dry run.

In 2007-08 we expect to run a major information campaign for consumers which would include marketing, advertising and publicity. The extent of the campaign and the level of investment will be decided later in the year on the basis of the experience of the dry run

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance the Government have given local authorities on charging for information for inclusion in home information packs. [66354]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

There has been no such guidance. The Home Information Pack will include standard local searches derived from local authority records. The Government are considering how to implement the recommendations of the Office of Fair Trading market study into property searches, including the provision of clear guidance for local authorities on how they should recover the costs of providing property information in compiled and unrefined forms. Under the current rules, the Lord Chancellor sets the charge for an "official" search of the local land charge register and local authorities may set their own charge for supplementary inquiries that covers the cost of providing information. We intend to apply this principle to any new charging arrangements for dealing with the provision of search information and will provide the appropriate guidance to cover them.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate his Department has made of the average amount of the compulsory insurance of last resort indemnity levy on home information packs. [66445]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The only new component of a home information pack will be the home condition report. These can only be provided by approved home inspectors. Details of the minimum insurance they will need to have will be set out in the Certification Scheme Standards that the Government will publish next month.

It will be the responsibility of the estate agents to ensure that home information packs are otherwise complete. They will be required to belong to an approved redress scheme.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how long a home information pack will be valid for before its contents will have to be updated; and if he will estimate the cost of updating the pack after *(a)* six months and *(b)* 12 months. [66447]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Neither the Housing Act 2004 nor the regulations made under the Act will prescribe a validity period for Home Information Packs. However, we do not expect many properties to remain on the market for more than six months. The regulations to be made in June will provide that certain time-sensitive items in the pack (e.g. local searches and the Home Condition Report) are no more than three months old when marketing begins, but they will not require sellers to renew these documents thereafter. In practice, local authority searches are normally considered acceptable for six months as will Home Condition Reports. Where sellers choose to update time-sensitive documents in the pack, we expect the market to provide a means for them do so at a relatively small cost.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate the Government has made of the average level of charges by *(a)* the Land Registry and *(b)* local authorities for providing information for home information packs. [70637]

Yvette Cooper: The Home Information Pack will include the office copy of register entries where a property is registered on the Land Register. The Land Registry charge for this is £10. The average cost for local authority searches (i.e. an official search of the Local Land Charges Register and additional standard inquiries using form CON.29 Part 1) is estimated to be £160. Searches of local authority records carried out by private search companies are often cheaper and can be included in the Home Information Pack in certain circumstances.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many home inspectors are *(a)* certified and *(b)* in training. [70638]

Yvette Cooper: 4,400 Home Inspectors are in the process of being trained, and as of 30 April 2006 200 have completed their training. The amount of training required depends on previous experience but the average surveyor can be trained in around five days plus the time taken to assemble a portfolio of work. Over the next 12 months we expect thousands of Home Inspectors to complete their training in time for the implementation date of 1 June 2007.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what targets the Government have set in relation to the training of home inspectors. [70639]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

We estimate that the number of home inspectors required will be between 5,000 and 7,400. This estimate has been developed in consultation with the industry, and it will be kept under review.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether home inspectors can qualify via distance learning; and what the average length of the training course is. [70640]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Awarding Body for the Built Environment (ABBE) offers the Diploma in Home Inspection through a number of assessment centres around the country. Although the most common route to obtain the qualification is by attending full or part-time courses at a college a number of assessment centres operate the qualification via distance learning.

The amount of training required depends on previous experience but the average surveyor can be trained in around five days plus the time taken to assemble a portfolio of work.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether *(a)* HM Revenue and Customs and *(b)* the Valuation Office Agency will have access to the Register of Home Condition Reports; and what representations her Department has received from each body on access to the Register. [70649]

Yvette Cooper: No. Neither HM Revenue and Customs nor the Valuation Office Agency will have access to the Register.

We received representations from various organisations including the Valuation Office Agency (but not HM Revenue and Customs) but concluded that access to the Register should be restricted by regulations to buyers and sellers, their advisers and mortgage lenders and those monitoring the performance and quality of the reports.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment the Government have made of the likely effects of the introduction of Home Information Packs on small estate agents. [70724]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

An assessment of the impact of Home Information Packs will be published shortly in a regulatory impact assessment to accompany regulations to be made under Part 5 of the Housing Act 2004. This assessment will be updated in the light of the findings of a baseline study of the home buying and selling process to be carried out this year and information obtained during the dry-run of Home Information Packs. Like other organisations in the property market small estate agents will need to adapt to the introduction of Home Information Packs in the interest of consumers.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what plans there are to monitor the effects on the housing market of the introduction of home information packs. [71037]

Yvette Cooper: An assessment of the impact of home information packs (HIPs) will be published shortly in a regulatory impact assessment to accompany regulations to be made under part 5 of the Housing Act 2004. This assessment will be updated in the light of the findings of a baseline study of the home buying and selling process to be carried out this year and information obtained during the dry-run of home information packs. We will also discuss specific market impact issues with stakeholders as we near implementation date and, together with the industry, monitor the operation of HIPs after implementation.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when she expects to set the cost of the home information pack. [71038]

Yvette Cooper: The cost of home information packs will be set by the market, not Government.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to include details of whether land is contaminated within home inspection packs. [63182]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The home information pack will include a local search, which incorporates definitive information on whether the property is entered on the register of contaminated land that local authorities are obliged to maintain under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The pack may also include additional search reports relating to actual or potential environmental hazards, including contaminated land.

Home Inspectors

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many home inspectors *(a)* have been trained, *(b)* are in training and *(c)* have expressed an interest in training. [63337]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

4,400 Home Inspectors are in the process of being trained, and as of 30 April 2006 200 have completed their training. The amount of training required depends on previous experience but the average surveyor can be trained in around five days plus the time taken to assemble a portfolio of work. Over the next 12 months we expect thousands of home inspectors to complete their training in time for the implementation date of 1 June 2007.

There is no central record of the number of people who have expressed an interest to become a home inspector but a high level of interest continues to be shown.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans the Government have to change the training period for Home Inspectors. [66232]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Department will continue to work with the key parties including the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), the Awarding Body for the Built Environment (ABBE) and the assessment centres to make sure that prospective Home Inspectors are trained as quickly as possible and at an acceptable cost.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the number of home information pack inspectors who will be required. [64665]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

We estimate that the number of home inspectors required will be between 5,000 and 7,400. This estimate has been developed in consultation with the industry, and it will be kept under review.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many Home Information Pack inspectors have been trained to date. [62292]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

4,400 Home Inspectors are in the process of being trained, and as of 30 April 2006 200 have completed their training. The amount of training required depends on previous experience but the average surveyor can be trained in around five days plus the time taken to assemble a portfolio of work. Over the next 12 months we expect thousands of Home Inspectors to complete their training in time for the implementation date of 1 June 2007.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many home condition inspectors have been trained; and how many are in training. [64340]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

4,400 home inspectors are in the process of being trained, and as of 30 April 2006 200 have completed their training. The amount of training required depends on previous experience but the average surveyor can be trained in around five-days plus the time taken to assemble a portfolio of work. Over the next 12 months we expect thousands of home inspectors to complete their training in time for the implementation date of 1 June 2007.

Housing (West Chelmsford)

Mr. Burns: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to ensure timely development of infrastructure to keep pace with housing in construction in West Chelmsford constituency. [64723]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* I have been asked to reply.

Public sector investment in the eastern regions has increased substantially over the last nine years. Local authorities also have the ability to use S106 agreements to secure developer contributions.

My colleagues in the Department for Transport will consider any proposals for future infrastructure which may be identified by the local planning authority, for example in their Local Transport Plan, taking into account the priorities which the region has indicated.

The Government are currently considering the responses to the consultation on the Planning Gain Supplement which would help increase investment in infrastructure in the local areas experiencing housing growth.

Local Authorities (Work Force)

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps she is taking to promote the employment of a mixed age work force among local authorities. [71638]

Meg Munn: Local authorities are independent employers. They recognise the benefits of recruiting, training, and retaining staff of all ages to help encourage a more diverse work force. The Local Government Employers (LGE) works with local authorities on issues regarding pay, pensions and the employment contract, in order to ensure best delivery of local services.

The Government are strongly committed to tackling age discrimination. New legislation, the Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, coming into force in October, will make unjustified age discrimination in recruitment, training, promotion or dismissal, unlawful for workers of all ages.

LGE has drawn up guidance information to help local authorities implement the new legislation. In addition, the Government also support mixed-age working through the Age Positive campaign led by the Department for Work and Pensions.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on how many occasions *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department have stayed overnight in (i) five star, (ii) four star and (iii) three star hotels on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [69051]

Angela E. Smith: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested is not collected centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Newcastle/Gateshead Pathfinder

Jim Cousins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister, pursuant to the answer of 15 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2374-5W, on the Newcastle/Gateshead pathfinder, if he will place in the Library the strategic commission plans, programmes and budget allocations for each strategic commission area of the Newcastle/Gateshead housing market pathfinder. [69306]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

I shall place a copy of Bridging Newcastle's pathfinder scheme update, including its proposals for each strategic commission area, in the Libraries of both Houses.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when she will provide a substantive reply to question 64723, on infrastructure in West Chelmsford, tabled by the hon. Member for West Chelmsford on 18 April. [72301]

Yvette Cooper: I have answered the hon. Member's question today. I apologise for the delay in replying.

Race Relations

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what projects the Government has commissioned to improve relations between black and Asian communities. [71179]

Meg Munn: The Government have not specifically commissioned projects to improve relations between black and Asian communities; however it has supported a range of initiatives which will improve community relations in general. For example, £18 million will be provided over three years by the 'Connecting Communities Plus' grant programme, and £.5 million was provided in 2005-06 by the 'Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund', in support of the Government's race equality and community cohesion strategy 'Improving Opportunity Strengthening Society'.

In addition public authorities have a statutory duty to promote good relations between persons of different racial groups. The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) oversees this duty and published 'Promoting good Race Relations: A Guide for Public Authorities' in July 2005. The Equality Act 2006 prepares the ground for a new Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) which will absorb the activities of the CRE in 2009, and transfers this good relations duty onto the new body. To carry this out the CEHR will have new powers to monitor, as well as to make, co-operate with or assist in any arrangement s designed to reduce hate crimes. The CEHR will have particular regard to the importance of its work with different groups reflecting the historical origin of the duty.

The CRE also gives grants to organisations concerned with the promotion of race equality and good race relations through the 'Getting Results' programme. The programme will distribute c£4.2 million in the current financial year. In particular, Race Equality Councils (RECs) aim to improve relations between all communities, and over £2.5 million of the CRE's funding this year will go to RECs.

Register of Home Condition Report

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which *(a)* Department and *(b)* agency will maintain the electronic register of Home Condition Reports; and whether the Government plan to use private contractors to develop the register. [66317]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Each certification scheme approved by the Secretary of State will hold a register of Home Condition Reports completed by home inspectors accountable to them. A copy of each Home Condition Report will also be registered in a centrai register owned by DCLG. Potential suppliers were invited on 9 March 2006 to express and interest in providing the register. The technical requirements of the register have been developed in consultation with the industry.

Search Fees

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) what discretion local authorities have *(a)* to levy and *(b)* to set fees for search services; and whether such fees are capped; [70610]

(2) what estimate the Government have made of the local authority revenue from search fees in each year since 1997. [70611]

Yvette Cooper: The Local Authorities (Charges for Land Searches) Regulations 1994 (SI 1994 No. 1885) provides local authorities with a discretionary power to charge for answering inquiries about land and property made in connection with home sales and other transactions. In determining the amount of the charge, each authority has to have regard to its costs in dealing with such inquiries.

Charges for local land charges register enquiries are prescribed by the Lord Chancellor. The current fees are set out in the Local Land Charges (Amendment) Rules 2003. The fee for an official search of the register is £6 (£4 if undertaken electronically). The fee for a personal search of the local land charges register is £11. Fees are also set for office copies and certain other types of application.

Second Homes

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many second homes for council tax purposes were recorded in England in *(a)* 1997-98, *(b)* 2005-06 and *(c)* the latest period for which figures are available. [72314]

Mr. Woolas: The number of properties in England designated as second homes and eligible for a discount in council tax as at 19 September 2005, the latest year for which figures are available. was 236,000.

The number of second homes as recorded for council tax purposes was not separately identifiable in 1997-98.

Staff Development

David Simpson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total cost was of *(a)* staff away days and *(b)* staff team building exercises in his Department in each of the last three years. [69055]

Angela E. Smith: I have been asked to reply.

Full information on the total cost of staff away days and team building exercises organised by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was not collated centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Transsexuals

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps the Government are taking to ensure equality of access to services for transsexuals; and if she will make a statement. [72633]

Meg Munn: The Government made clear during recent parliamentary debates on the Equality Act that it will prohibit discrimination on grounds of gender reassignment in the provision of goods, facilities and services. The Government are taking forward the necessary work in the context of the Discrimination Law Review.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer of 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1814W to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman), on the Valuation Office Agency, what *(a)* statutory and *(b)* non-statutory obligations local planning authorities have to provide planning information to the Valuation Office Agency. [70565]

Mr. Woolas: Section 27(1) of the Local Government Finance Act (LGFA) 1992 prescribes that where a notice is served by a listing officer on a billing authority, requesting information relating to a property that he reasonably believes will assist him in carrying out his functions, then the authority must supply the information requested.

Section 27(6) of LGFA 1992 prescribes that, where in the exercise of its functions any information comes to the notice of a billing authority which it considers would assist a listing officer in carrying out any of his functions, it shall be the authority's duty to inform the listing officer.

Paragraph 6(1) of Schedule 9 of Local Government Finance Act 1988 prescribes that if in the course of the exercise of its functions any information comes to the notice of the billing authority which leads it to suppose that a list requires alteration it shall be the authority's duty to inform the valuation officer who has the duty to maintain the list.

Regulation 42(2) of the Non-Domestic Rating (Alteration of Lists and Appeals) (England) Regulations 2005 (SI 2005/659) specifies the information to be provided as:

(a) the address of the property;

(b) the nature of the event by reason of which, in the opinion of the relevant authority, the local non-domestic rating list is required to be altered;

(c) the day from which, in the opinion of the relevant authority, such alteration should take effect; and

(d) if the property is shown in a local non-domestic rating list, any reference number ascribed to it in that list.

Paragraph 7 of Schedule 4A to the Local Government Finance Act 1988 prescribes that a billing authority shall supply to the valuation officer a copy of any completion notice served by it; notify the valuation officer if it withdraws a completion notice and supply the valuation officer with details of any agreement to which it is party and by virtue of which a completion day is determined under Section 4A in relation to the building.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

China Task Force

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to visit the 2008 Beijing Olympics as part of his ministerial role as head of the China Task Force. [71265]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I visited the site of the Beijing Olympics on my trip to China earlier this year and held discussions with the Mayor of Beijing. I have also discussed the Beijing and, more recently, the London Olympics as part of the annual visits I have made to China for the past eight years. UK Government representation at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games has not yet been finalised.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what priorities he has set for his role as head of the China Task Force. [71266]

The Deputy Prime Minister: The China Task Force was established as a result of my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister's visit to China in 2003, when he agreed with the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao that a group should be set up to consider issues of interest to our two countries' bilateral relations. State Counsellor Tang Jiaxuan was nominated to be the chair for the Chinese side and the Prime Minister asked me to represent him.

The Task Force's remit covers trade and investment, education, science and technology, health, culture, environment and sustainable development, and development issues. These areas align closely with the areas identified for cross-departmental action being developed in response to the challenges of globalisation. The Task Force is recognised and valued by both the UK and Chinese Governments as a high-level contact mechanism for deepening relations in the areas under its remit.

Dorneywood

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria he will apply for the issuing of invitations to Dorneywood. [69909]

The Deputy Prime Minister *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* The criteria for the use of Dorneywood are set out in the terms of the charitable trust, established in 1942, which owns the property. The Prime Minister may nominate, at his discretion, a Minister of the Crown to become the resident. All residents have been required to abide by the terms of the trust, and I have fully done this. Since Dorneywood is a charitable trust, there is no cost to the public purse.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on how many occasions he has offered hospitality at Dorneywood to members of *(a)* foreign and *(b)* Commonwealth Governments in each year since he took up residence. [70684]

The Deputy Prime Minister: The information requested is not collected. Use of Dorneywood is governed by the terms of the trust, which I abide by fully.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which of his new responsibilities will qualify as official in relation to the use of Dorneywood for such purposes. [70143]

The Deputy Prime Minister *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* The criteria for the use of Dorneywood are set out in the terms of the charitable trust, established in 1942, which owns the property. The Prime Minister may nominate, at his discretion, a Minister of the Crown to become the resident. Previous residents have included Chancellors, a Home Secretary and other Deputy Prime Ministers. All residents have been required to abide by the terms of the trust, and I have fully done this. Since Dorneywood is a charitable trust, there is no cost to the public purse.

Ministerial Duties

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he will publish an annual report to Parliament on his ministerial duties; and if he will make a statement. [73320]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I shall remain fully accountable to Parliament, answering both written and oral questions in the usual way.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much time per week he expects to be available for him to carry out his responsibilities as Deputy Prime Minister. [69969]

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of his working time he expects to spend on official Government duties. [70176]

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the proportion of his time which will be available for his role as Deputy Prime Minister. [69987]

The Deputy Prime Minister *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* My right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister announced on 10 May 2006 that he has asked me to take on a new role overseeing and co-ordinating Government policy across the full range of domestic policy areas. He has also asked me to continue my international role, particularly with relation to China, and to work on delivering our post-Kyoto environmental objectives here in the UK. I shall, therefore, continue to play a full and active role, and will divide my time between these new responsibilities according to what is required.

Slavery

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Advisory Group on celebrating the bicentenary of the abolition of slavery plans to discuss the issue of whether a formal apology for slavery should be made. [71188]

The Deputy Prime Minister: The Advisory Group on the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade currently has no plans to discuss the question of whether a formal apology for the slave trade should be made. However, the Advisory Group is able to discuss all aspects of the slave trade, its abolition, and the celebrations connected to the bicentenary of its abolition.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Adviser Discretion Fund

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of recent reductions in the permitted individual amounts available under the adviser discretion fund; what steps he is taking to secure the maximum benefits from discretionary sums available to jobcentre plus advisers; and if he will make a statement. [69275]

Mrs. McGuire: Jobcentre plus is responsible for the management of the adviser discretion fund (ADF) which enables the purchase of virtually anything that will help people obtain a job, or, if already offered a job, to enable them to accept that offer.

To maintain effective controls on expenditure, the level at which an adviser can authorise payment from the fund, without requiring a supporting business case, was reduced in May 2005 to £100 per customer within any 12 month period. Awards above that level are authorised at a higher management level to ensure efficient and effective use of public funds. There is no limit on the individual amounts that can be awarded as long as they are supported by a business case.

Improved financial control has been achieved by delegating budgetary accountability to local managers and further value for money has been achieved by the implementation of the retail trade framework (RTF). Advisers can refer recipients of the ADF to suppliers who are part of the RTF and this has enabled jobcentre plus to achieve savings of up to 40 per cent. on high street prices and obtain more for less.

Ageist

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress has been made on the National Guidance Campaign on non-ageist practice by employers. [72238]

James Purnell: The Department's 'Be Ready' National Guidance campaign, developed in conjunction with leading business organisations, was launched in May 2005. Approximately 1.4 million employers were mailed information designed to raise awareness of age discrimination legislation, due to come into effect from 1 October 2006, and to provide practical guidance to help employers become more age diverse in their employment practices.

The next stage of the campaign will be launched in June with fully updated materials mailed to over 1.4 million employers. Materials will also be freely available from the website, www.agepositive.gov.uk/agepartnershipgroup.

An evaluation of 1,650 employers, who had ordered the products, has been carried out and the results are due to be published shortly. Preliminary results show that respondents overall were very happy with the materials they received and found the products clear, easy to use, well designed, helpful and useful. A further evaluation of the second phase of the campaign is planned for later in the year.

Asbestos-related Cancer

Natascha Engel: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much the Government paid out in attendance allowance to people diagnosed with asbestos-related cancer in each of the last three years. [68473]

Mrs. McGuire: The estimated expenditure for constant attendance allowance in 2005-06, where the recipient has asbestos related cancer, is £800,000.

Notes:

1. The figure is an estimate based on D3 and D8 proportions of constant attendance allowance expenditure taken from a 10 per cent. sample of industrial injuries disablement benefit assessments which was then applied to the 100 per cent. industrial Injuries Computer System data and rounded to the nearest £100,000.

2. Asbestos related cancer is defined by the prescribed diseases, D3 (Diffuse Mesothelioma) and D8 (Primary Carcinoma of the lung where there is evidence of either asbestosis or pleural thickening).

Benefit Claims

Mr. McFall: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many days were taken to process a benefit claim in West Dumbartonshire constituency in May *(a)* 2006, *(b)* 2004 and *(c)* 2005. [70420]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking what the time to rate a claim for jobseeker's allowance, income support and incapacity benefit was in West Dunbartonshire in May 2006, May 2004 and May 2005. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Our measure of the time taken to process a claim is the actual average clearance time. Since April, national Jobcentre Plus targets have been set for the clearance of claims to jobseeker's allowance, income support and incapacity benefit, replacing the former Key Management Indicators. The targets have been set at 12 working days for jobseeker's allowance claims, 11 working days for income support and 18 working days for incapacity benefit.

The actual average clearance times for the West Dunbartonshire area expressed in working days are in the table. As the figure for May 2006 is not yet available details for April 2006 have been included.

	Jobseekers allowance		*Income support*		*Incapacity benefit*	
	Target (days)	*Clearance time (days)*	*Target (days)*	*Clearance time (days)*	*Target (days)*	*Clearance time (days)*
May 2004	12	8.1	12	10.8	19	19.4
May 2005	12	11.1	12	11.4	19	27.0
April 2006	12	13.4	11	12.6	18	14.1

Although the average actual clearance time for incapacity benefit in May 2005 was 27 days, the overall figure for 2005-06 was 16.4 days.

We are also concentrating additional resources on improving our current performance in clearing claims for income support and jobseeker's allowance.

I hope this is helpful.

Child Support Agency

Derek Conway: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent estimate he has made of the number of claimants who decline to identify the father of their child for Child Support Agency purposes. [67810]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is the matter for the chief executive. He will write to the right hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent estimate he has made of the number of claimants who decline to identify the father of their child for Child Support Agency purposes.

Any application made by a parent with care for Income Support or Income- Based Jobseekers Allowance should be accompanied by an application for Child Support maintenance, which requires the identification of the relevant non-resident parent. A parent with care can refuse to provide this identification, in which case one of two outcomes can result:

1. If there are reasonable grounds for believing that a risk to the parent with care or to any of their children living with them exists, and that harm or undue distress could result from identifying the non-resident parent, then 'Good Cause' will be granted and no further action will be taken.

2. If it is determined that no such reasonable grounds exist, then a continued withholding of this information can lead to a loss of benefit under a Reduced Benefit Direction (for old scheme cases) or a Reduced Benefit Decision (for new scheme cases).

In the financial year 2005/06, a claim for Good Cause was approved in 14,800 cases, and a Reduced Benefit Decision/ Direction imposed in 14,400 cases.

It should be noted that these figures are derived from management information held by Jobcentre Plus, and thus differ from the information provided by the Agency in Table 2.2 of the Agency's latest Quarterly Summary Statistics (QSS). There are three main reasons for this:

The data in Table 2.2 of the Quarterly Summary Statistics only shows the initial clearance type for those cases that have been cleared, and thus will not show those cases where a claim for Good Cause or the imposition of a Reduced Benefit Decision has been approved, but the case itself has yet to be cleared.

Table 2.2 only shows new scheme cases, whereas the cases above include old scheme and new scheme cases.

Table 2.2 only shows the method by which a case was initially cleared, whereas the numbers given above are for the total number of Good Cause and Reduced Benefit Decisions/ Directions approved or imposed in the financial year 2005/06.

Note that the information given is recorded on the basis of cases, rather than claimants. The data therefore reflects this, and volumes are rounded to the nearest hundred.

I hope you find this helpful.

Claim Processing

Willie Rennie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many days it took on average to rate a claim for *(a)* income support, *(b)* jobseeker's allowance and *(c)* incapacity benefit in Fife in the most recent period for which figures are available; [70793]

(2) what targets his Department has set for the number of days taken to rate claims for *(a)* income support, *(b)* jobseeker's allowance and *(c)* incapacity benefit in Fife. [70794]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 12 May 2006]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking how many days it took on average to rate a claim for (a) income support, (b) jobseeker's allowance and (c) incapacity benefit in Fife in the most recent period for which figures are available and what targets his Department has set for the number of days taken to rate claims for (a) income support, (b) jobseeker's allowance and (c) incapacity benefit in Fife. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Our measure of the time taken to process a claim is the Actual Average Clearance Time. For 2005/06, the Jobcentre Plus internal Key Management Indicator (or target) for processing claims for Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance was 12 working days while the figure for Incapacity Benefit was 19 working days. From April 2006, the Key Management Indicator has been upgraded to a full headline Jobcentre Plus target and the figures changed to 11 days for Income Support and 18 working days for Incapacity Benefit. The level for Jobseeker's Allowance remains at 12 days.

The Actual Average Clearance Times for the Fife area are in the table.

Days

	March 2006[1]	*Cumulative for the period from April 2005 to March 2006*	*Key Management Indicator*[2]
Incapacity benefit	15.5	11.9	19
Income support	13.3	9.7	12
Jobseeker's allowance	14.5	13.4	12

[1] Most recent period available.
[2] Actual average clearance time.

I hope this is helpful.

Customer Management Systems

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent developments have taken place in rolling out the various releases of the Department's Customer Management Systems (CMS); what progress has been made in replacement of CMS by the BPRP/WATCH programme; and if he will make a statement. [69444]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking what recent developments have taken place in rolling out the various releases of the Department's Customer Management Systems (CMS), and what progress has been made in replacement of CMS by the BPRP/WATCH programme. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Since CMS was first implemented in 2003 there have been several further releases that have significantly improved system performance. The most recent improvements have been introduced with Releases 3 and 3.5. Release 3 was introduced to all existing CMS sites in October 2005 following user feedback. The release included a significant reduction in the clerical products which previously supported the system, as well as other enhancements.

Release 3.5 was introduced to all existing CMS sites in March 2006 and provided:

improved validation to ensure that information gathered and verified within CMS was transferred electronically to the Income Support Computer and Jobseeker's Allowance Payment systems;

fixes to live running problems; and

other changes to improve the system for staff.

Plans are now in place to introduce Release 4 of CMS in June 2006 and this release will build on the improvements made in Release 3.5 as well as supporting legislative changes.

The longer term future for CMS is being considered as part of the Department's Benefit Processing Replacement Programme (BPRP).

Departmental Contact Centres

Natascha Engel: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the percentage of people telephoning contact centres run by his Department who got through on their first attempt between April 2005 and March 2006; and how long it took for them to be called back. [68455]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question about the percentage of people telephoning contact centres who got through on the first attempt between April 2005 and March 2006; and how long it took for them to be called back. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The available information is in the following table.

Month	Percentage of calls answered[1]	Number of days booking ahead for Call backs[2] (first contact service only)
2005		
April	82.6	—
May	85.9	—
June	80.9	—
July	75.1	—
August	75.5	—
September	77.5	—
October	88.3	3.2
November	93.7	1.7
December	95.9	0.9
2006		
January	96.2	1.1
February	96.3	0.9
March	95.9	0.9
Year to date	86.6	—

Notes:
1. The percentage of calls answered represents calls made to the first contact service (customers wishing to make a new claim to benefit) and Jobseeker Direct Service (customers inquiring about Jobs).
2. Data on number of days booking ahead has only been collected centrally from October 2005

We do not have information on the number of customer calls that are answered on their first or on subsequent attempts.

I hope this is helpful.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) Executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997. [39079]

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 20 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1810-11W, on departmental advertising, whether the figures provided include all costs of publicity which the Department has incurred in each year. [44759]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed on 8 June 2001 from parts of the former Department for Social Security, the former Department for Education and Employment, and the Employment Service. Information prior to 2001 is not held centrally and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental advertising costs

	£000
2005-06[1]	
State pension deferral	300
Images of disability	2
Targeting benefit fraud	4,553
Pension credit	362
Winter fuel payments	918
State second pension	675
Age Partnership group	19
National sector campaign	23
2004-05[1]	
Age Positive	29
State pension deferral	115
Disability Discrimination Act	1,992
Targeting benefit fraud	6,017
Direct payment	8,379
Council tax benefit	674
Pension credit	4,388
Winter fuel payments	515
Lone parent leaflet promotion marketing	216
National vacancy campaign	390
IB reforms pilots	106
2003-04[1]	
Age Positive	70
Second state pension	216
Pension service awareness	906
New Deal	5,678
Disability Discrimination Act	40
Targeting benefit fraud	8,383
Direct payment	11,095
Council tax benefit	556
Pension credit	9,907
Winter fuel payments	625
Jobseekers direct	1,632
IB reforms pilot	113
Jobcentre Plus customer marketing	1,401
National employer campaign	1,158
2002-03[1]	
Age Positive	706
Future pensioners/informed choice	2,878
Second state pension	489
New Deal for Musicians	33
Disability Discrimination Act	50
Targeting benefit fraud	35
Direct payment	858
Winter fuel payments	627
Inherited SERPS	646
2001-02[1]	
Minimum income guarantee	3,365
Winter fuel	475
Future Pensioners/Informed Choice	4,740
Age Positive	6
Fraud	8,039
New Deal 25 Plus	613
New Deal for Disabled People	350
Disability Discrimination Act	2,882

[1] The table does not include the following as the information is not held centrally and to obtain it would incur disproportionate cost: spend by non-departmental bodies for which the Department is responsible details of highly localised publicity activity by the Department's customer-facing businesses recruitment or procurement advertising Jobcentre Plus publicity during 2002-03 as at that time allocations sat with individual policy teams and within regional budgets.

The information in the table, and that in the answer of 20 July 2005, *Official Report*, relate to media buying expenditure only which forms the bulk of departmental publicity expenditure, but excludes direct mail, public relations, production and other costs.

These figures update the information provided on 20 July 2005 (PQ/05/9501) following the identification of a number of transcription errors in that reply.

The following tables show the correct advertising media breakdown for 2004-05 and 2003-04.

2004-05

Campaign/subject	*TV*	*Radio*	*Press*	*Other*
Age Positive	—	—	29,000	—
State pension deferral	—	—	115,440	—
Disability Discrimination Act	—	1,016,540	885,000	90,000
Targeting benefit fraud	1,481,000	1,140,000	618,000	2,778,000
Direct payment	2,668,000	930,000	4,046,000	735,000
Council tax benefit	—	12,810	660,970	—
Pension credit	1,687,580	46,840	2,633,520	20,500
Winter fuel payments	—	—	514,910	—
IB reforms pilots	—	35,290	70,630	—
Lone parent leaflet promotion marketing	—	—	215,740	—
National vacancy campaign	—	—	323,500	66,000
Total	5,836,580	3,181,480	10,112,710	3,689,500

2003-04

Campaign	*TV*	*Radio*	*Press*	*Other*
Age Positive	—	—	70,400	—
Second state pension	—	—	215,590	—
Pension service awareness	—	—	906,100	—
New deal	3,526,190	818,030	1,043,320	290,410
Disability Discrimination Act	—	40,290	—	—
Targeting benefit fraud	1,835,000	1,145,000	1,423,000	3,980,000
Direct payment	3,594,000	1,872,000	5,389,000	240,000
Council tax benefit	—	—	556,230	—
Pension credit	3,570,860	30,990	6,305,170	—
Winter fuel payments	—	—	625,000	—
Jobseekers direct	1,565,730	—	66,420	—
IB reforms pilot	—	45,090	67,510	—
Jobcentre plus customer marketing	—	—	11,860	1,389,000
National employer campaign	—	—	1,158,020	—
Total	14,091,780	3,951,400	17,837,620	5,899,410

Notes:
1. All figures in the departmental advertising costs table have been rounded to the nearest thousand, while the revised tables from 20 July 2005 have not in order to be consistent with the previous reply.
2. Press includes national press, regional press, specialist press, advertorials and featurelink.
3. Other includes outdoor, online and ambient media.
4. All figures are exclusive of VAT.

Departmental Relocation

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress has been made in the relocation of departmental posts from the South East to other regions. [45238]

Mrs. McGuire: The basis of the Department's relocation strategy resulting from the Lyons' review is to relocate posts rather than people. Information on the number of posts relocated from London and the South East to other regions is contained in the following table:

Posts relocated from London and the South East between 1 June 2003 to 31 December 2005

Location	*Number of posts*
Blackpool	453
Cwmbran	286
Liverpool	399
Wrexham	510
Newcastle	387
Pembroke Dock	386
Dundee	40
Sheffield	68
Makerfield	198
Bradford	129
Annesley, Grimsby, Liverpool, and Peterlee	26
Plymouth, Bristol and Edinburgh	74
Taunton	95
Halifax	31
Bridgend	69
Derby	25
Total relocated posts	3,176

Disability Equality Duty

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether private finance initiative contracts agreed by public bodies up until 3 December 2006 will be required to meet the requirements of the Disability Equality Duty within the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. [68329]

Mrs. McGuire: The Disability Equality Duty comes into force on 4 December 2006 and contracting-out services before then are not covered by the requirements of the Duty.

However, public authorities should be considering the need to put measures in place now so that they can demonstrate that they are giving 'due regard' to the Disability Equality Duty after 4 December. For example, if an authority is planning to contract-out a major service, it should consider building in arrangements to promote equality now so that it does not have consider varying the contract once the Duty is in place.

Disabled People

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what initiatives the Government have introduced to ensure that people with a range of disabilities are treated equally. [72184]

Mrs. McGuire: The Government have given a commitment that, by 2025, disabled people in Britain should have full opportunities and choices to improve their quality of life, and will be respected and included as equal members of society.

Following a recommendation in the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit report, "Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People", we have set up an Office for Disability Issues (ODI) to drive forward our strategy to meet this challenge. The work of the ODI is overseen by a ministerial group, involving Ministers from several key Departments (Department of Health, Department for Education and Skills, Department of Trade and Industry, Department for Transport, Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Communities and Local Government).

The Government have also put in place a comprehensive and enforceable set of civil rights for disabled people. For example, provisions introduced in October 2004 substantially improved rights in employment and required service providers to make reasonable adjustments to tackle physical barriers to disabled people accessing their services. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 amended the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) to provide rights for disabled pupils and students in education.

Most recently, the DDA 2005 extended rights for disabled people in a number of areas including transport, functions of public bodies, private clubs and the renting of premises. It also extended protection to around 250,000 people, effectively from the point they are diagnosed with cancer, multiple sclerosis or HIV, freeing them from pre-symptomatic discrimination. In addition, people with mental illness will avoid the unnecessary burden of being required to prove their condition is clinically well-recognised to get redress against discrimination.

Importantly, from 4 December 2006, the DDA 2005 places a new duty on public authorities to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. This will mean that public bodies must take account of the needs of disabled people as an integral part of their policies, practices and procedures.

The ODI is responsible for raising awareness of the Disability Discrimination Act and improving attitudes to disabled people. A campaign aimed at small and medium-sized businesses was launched on in December 2005 and will initially run until the end of May 2006. The ODI also sponsors the Images of Disability initiative to promote representation of disabled people in Government advertising and publicity.

Hazardous Substances

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what discussions his Department has had with the Department of Trade and Industry regarding the letter from the Treasury Solicitors dated 27 April 2006 on the role played by the Health and Safety Executive in connection with risk analysis conducted in relation to the issuing of Hazardous Substances consents to Dragon LNG and South Hook LNG; and if he will make a statement. [72495]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* Health and Safety Executive (HSE) did not discuss with DTI the content of the letter from Treasury Solicitors to all the other parties to the proceedings, their solicitors, and the Civil Appeals Office sent on the 27 April, although DTI was a copy recipient of the letter.

Home Computer Initiative

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what costs were associated with setting up the Home Computing Initiative scheme for his Department, including consultancy and administrative costs. [66536]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions had intended to launch a Home Computing Initiative in the winter of 2006. The only costs incurred have been the internal staff costs on the early stages of the project, which we estimate to be around £47,000. There have been no consultancy costs.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many constituents in Midlothian are receiving *(a)* long-term and *(b)* short-term incapacity benefit. [72746]

Mrs. McGuire: The most recent available information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance claimants in the Midlothian parliamentary constituency, by rate of benefit: November 2005

	Number
All incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance	4,290
Incapacity benefit short-term (lower) rate	130
Incapacity benefit short-term (higher) rate	190
Incapacity benefit long-term rate	2,330
Incapacity benefit credits-only	1,090
Severe disablement allowance	550

Notes:
1. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
2. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study.

Job Vacancies

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many job vacancies were on the register on average at job centres in Easington constituency in each year between 2001 and 2005; and if he will make a statement; [69424]

(2) how many job vacancies there were on average on the register at job centres in Easington constituency in each year from 2000. [72459]

Mrs. McGuire: Information on Jobcentre plus vacancy data by parliamentary constituency is only available from April 2004 and is set out in the following table.

Easington parliamentary constituency

	Average number of 'live' unfilled vacancies on the register on any given day
2004	1,430
2005	1,350

Source:
Jobcentre plus labour market system

Jobcentre Plus

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what changes have been made to the Jobcentre Plus delivery process as a result of the national operational strategy changes undertaken in 2005. [68333]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking what changes have been made to the Jobcentre Plus delivery process as a result of the national operational strategy changes undertaken in 2005. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Throughout 2005 Jobcentre Plus continued to implement the rollout of its new style offices. Jobcentre Plus also responded to temporary difficulties in some contact centres in Summer 2005 by making operational adjustments to improve levels of customer service. We are also testing whether further improvements can be made. Jobcentre Plus has also started the centralisation of benefits delivery services in order to support better workflow and performance management and provide a more compact basis for IT improvements.

Customers continue to be offered personal advice and support in finding work through local jobcentres. They are also able to make claims to benefit and receive telephone help with job enquiries through a national network of telephone contact centres. These essential elements of the delivery process have not changed.

I hope this is helpful.

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what action is being taken to ensure people who have experienced delays in their benefit payments due to changes at Jobcentre Plus do not incur penalties as a result, with particular reference to repossession of property. [68352]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking what action is being taken to ensure people who have experienced delays in their benefit payments due to changes at Jobcentre Plus do not incur penalties as a result, with particular reference to repossession of property.

A series of actions has been put in place to address the recent increase in the average actual clearance times for income support assessments to 12.2 days. We expect that these actions will steadily bring back performance to within the target of 11 working days. As a safeguard, any customer experiencing financial hardship while awaiting benefit can request an interim payment.

Customers are responsible for the payment of their mortgage interest for the first nine months of their claim with help included in their benefit entitlement only after this period has elapsed. The minor delays currently being experienced in the assessment of income support entitlement will therefore not have any marked impact on repossessions of property.

Customers are advised at the start of a claim that they should contact their mortgage lender as soon as possible to discuss their mortgage repayments.

I hope this is helpful.

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the level of staff satisfaction of Jobcentre Plus staff. [68751]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking what assessment he has made of the level of staff satisfaction of Jobcentre Plus staff. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Staff satisfaction is measured in part through the annual DWP Staff Survey. The 2005 survey showed that staff generally respected their immediate line managers and were clear on the purpose and objectives of their individual job roles. However, the survey also showed that people had low confidence in our senior leaders and were particularly concerned about job security.

These results are in line with what we would expect, given the scale and pace of our change programme, which is designed to provide a better quality of service to our customers within the context of the Departmental efficiency challenge.

We have substantially improved the range and frequency of feedback opportunities through which staff can debate issues that affect them and express their views directly to the Board and senior managers. We fully understand the concerns of our staff and are committed to taking appropriate action to address them.

I hope this is helpful.

Pathways to Work

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what elements of the Pathways to Work programme will be funded by the £360 million earmarked for its roll out; and how the sum was calculated. [71747]

Mr. Jim Murphy *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The funding for welfare reform has been drawn from the budgets provided to the Department through the 2004 Spending Review settlement which covered the financial years 2005-06 to 2007-08. Details are available in The Departmental Report 2005 (Cm 6539) published in June 2005. The £360 million funding is largely to be spent extending the Pathways to Work programme beyond the pilot areas and covers 2006-07 and 2007-08, but may also be used to fund other measures dependent on responses to the Welfare Reform consultation.

A detailed costing of the various parts of our proposals is not possible at this time. This is especially the case in relation to the costs for each Pathways to Work scheme as we are looking to the private and voluntary sector to deliver many of the Pathways schemes and it is not possible to provide detailed costs prior to contract negotiations.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to his answer of 4 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1768W, on pathways to work, how many claimants the figures represent in each case. [72756]

Mrs. McGuire: The information requested is in the following table:

Numbers of pathways to work participants and of choices starts

	Registered with New Deal for Disabled People Job Broker		*Referred to the Condition Management Programme*		*Awarded the Return to Work Credit*	
	All new claimants in pathways areas	*Claimants who volunteer to participate in choices programme*	*All new claimants in Pathways areas*	*Claimants who volunteer to participate in choices programme*	*All new claimants in pathways areas*	*Claimants who volunteer to participate in choices programme*
Existing customers-volunteers	1,530	1,530	970	790	3,320	740
New/repeat mandatory customers	7,630	8,010	6,410	5,950	8,260	2,500
Existing customers-mandatory extension	850	850	1,500	1,500	350	N/A

Notes:
1. Data are to October 2005.
2. All figures have been rounded to the nearest ten.

Source:
Pathways to work evaluation database

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what work the Government have undertaken to identify the destinations of the 56 per cent. residual unknown category leaving Pathways to Work detailed in Table 1 of HC 616-I. [72941]

Mr. Jim Murphy *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The Department is continually making efforts to improve our destinations information and analytical evidence base, and therefore our knowledge of what happens to working age people when they leave a benefit. For example, in addition to the data used in Table 1 of HC 616-1 the Department also uses information gathered from the 2004 Destination of Benefit Leavers survey, which is available in the Library.

The Destination of Benefit Leavers surveys provide more detail about the reasons for leaving where claimants were not going into work of 16 hours or more. It showed that 50 per cent. of those leaving incapacity benefits entered or returned to work of 16 hours or more. Of the remainder, 19 per cent. moved on to another working age benefit, most to JSA, 7 per cent. left because they were no longer eligible to claim or their benefit had been stopped and a further 7 per cent. left because they had been disallowed following a medical assessment.

Pension Age

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his estimate is of the number of state retirement pensioners aged over *(a)* 80 and *(b)* 90 years in (i) 1980, (ii) 1990, (iii) 2000, (iv) 2010, (v) 2020, (vi) 2030, (vii) 2040 and (viii) 2050; and if he will make a statement. [70312]

James Purnell: The information is provided in the following table:

	Thousand	
	Over 80	*Over 90*
Nov 1980	1,540	150
Sept 1990	2,120	250
2000-01	2,470	400
2010-11	3,030	480
2020-21	3,800	710
2030-31	5,320	1,060
2040-41	6,300	1,640
2050-205	7,730	2,000

Notes:
1. All figures include Non-contributory Retirement Pension.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10,000 and are for GB and overseas pensioners.

Sources:
1. 1980 and 1990 figures are derived from published DWP statistics.
2. 2000-01 figures are derived from bi-annual 5 per cent. statistics for March 2000, September 2000 and March 2001 appropriate for the 2000-01 financial year.
3. 2010-11 onwards figures are from the GAD model aligned to the latest data available.

Pension Credit

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many residents in each electoral ward in Tamworth constituency receive pension credit. [71233]

James Purnell: The information is provided in the following table:

Pension credit beneficiaries by ward in Tamworth constituency, November 2005

Ward name	*Individual beneficiaries*
Bourne Vale	65
Fazeley	340
Little Aston	60
Mease and Tame	150
Shenstone	160
Stonnall	55
Amington	340
Belgrave	355
Bolehall	540
Castle	630
Glascote	390
Mercian	530
Spital	465
Stonydelph	305
Trinity	305
Wilnecote	315
Tamworth Total	4,990

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest five.
2. Ward totals do not sum to parliamentary constituency total due to rounding.
3. The number of individual beneficiaries includes both claimants and their partners.

Source:
Information Directorate Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data.

Mr. Devine: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Livingston received pension credit in 2005. [72364]

James Purnell: The information is provided in the following table.

Pension credit individual beneficiaries in the parliamentary constituency of Livingston by quarter, February 2005 to November 2005

Quarter	*Beneficiaries*
February 2005	4,240
May 2005	5,510
August 2005	5,540
November 2005	5,610

Notes:
1. The numbers of individual beneficiaries are rounded to the nearest ten.
2. Parliamentary constituencies are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant ONS postcode directory.
3. The February 2005 figures relate to the 1997 parliamentary constituency boundaries. The figures for May 2005 onwards relate to the 2005 parliamentary constituency boundaries.
4. The number of individual beneficiaries includes both claimants and their partners.
5. Individual beneficiaries figures may include partners who are aged under 60.

Source:
Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study.

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioner households were receiving pension credit in West Suffolk constituency in each financial year since 2001-02. [72541]

James Purnell: The information requested is in the following table.

Pension credit recipients in the parliamentary constituency of West Suffolk since November 2003

Quarter	*Recipients*
November 2003	2,730
November 2004	3,930
November 2005	4,060

Notes:
1. Caseloads are rounded to the nearest ten.
2. Parliamentary constituency is assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant postcode directory.
3. Pension Credit replaced Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) on 6 October 2003.
4. Recipients are those people who claim Pension Credit either on behalf of themselves only or on behalf of a household. This number is equal to the number of households in receipt of Pension Credit.

Source:
Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study

Pension Protection Fund

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what guidance he has given to the Pensions Regulator on whether the transfer of assets from a company whose pension fund was showing a deficit would be a bar to the transfer of pension liabilities to the Pension Protection Fund. [71373]

James Purnell *[holding answer 16 May 2006]:* None. This is a matter for the Pensions Regulator.

Pensioners

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* individual pensioners, *(b)* pensioner couples and *(c)* pensioner households eligible for pension credit in each (i) local authority and (ii) constituency in Scotland. [73199]

James Purnell: The information requested is not available. Estimates of eligibility are not available below the level of Great Britain.

Pensions

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether it is his policy to reduce the number of pensioners subject to means-testing; and if he will make a statement. [70288]

James Purnell: The proportion of pensioners entitled to income-related benefits has risen since 1997 due to our reforms which have been extremely successful in combating pensioner poverty. With respect to further reform, we shall be setting out the Government's response to the Pensions Commission's report in a White Paper very shortly.

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will raise the level of pensions received by British pensioners resident overseas to the level received by those who remain resident in the UK. [71685]

James Purnell: The UK state pension is payable in all countries abroad to those who are entitled to it. It is uprated in the normal way for UK pensioners living overseas where there is a legal requirement or a reciprocal social security agreement to do so. We have no plans to change these arrangements.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much has been spent on advertising the fact that people have to apply for their state pension on reaching retirement age in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [69894]

James Purnell: Four months before they reach state pension age people are normally issued with an individual invitation to apply for state pension. There is no general advertising.

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to publish his Department's evaluation of the pilot schemes relating to post office card accounts; and if he will make a statement. [73247]

Mr. Plaskitt: Shortly.

Unemployment

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has for addressing seasonal unemployment fluctuations in seaside towns; and if he will make a statement. [72022]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Our successful labour market policies have resulted in a fall of 52 per cent. in claimant unemployment in Torbay since 1997. In addition the number of lone parents in receipt of benefit has fallen by 36 per cent. in Torbay over the same period.

Seasonal unemployment fluctuations are however more marked in seaside towns than elsewhere. Such local economies rely on tourism to provide employment opportunities and investment in the area. This may lead to higher unemployment out of season. However, data for winter 2005 shows that the claimant count rate for Torbay was below the national average, at 2.3 per cent.

Our recently published Green Paper 'A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work' sets out proposals for piloting new initiatives to help local partners work together to improve economic regeneration through skills, employment and health. The key aim of this initiative will be to provide a solution that offers the maximum degree of local flexibility, so that local areas can provide local solutions to local problems.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proposals he has to deal with unemployment in the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement. [72037]

Mrs. McGuire: Latest figures show that there are more people in work than ever before. Employment now stands at 28.9 million, up by nearly 2.5 million since 1997. More than 1.5 million people have been helped into work through our new deal programmes[1], including over 660,000 young people, and our successful labour market policies have contributed to the virtual eradication of long term youth unemployment.

With an 11.3 percentage point increase since 1997, the lone parent employment rate now stands at a record high with around a million lone parents in work, up over 300,000 since 1997. We have achieved more than 21,000 Pathways to Work job entries, and the number of recorded job entries for people with a health condition or disability has almost doubled in Pathways areas. In the 12 month period to November 2005, the number of people claiming incapacity benefits fell by 60,000.

The unemployment rate remains close to its lowest level since 1975, but we want to go further still. Tackling worklessness and inactivity—particularly among those on benefits—remains our top priority and our Welfare Reform Green Paper sets out our proposals to build on Pathways to Work and our other successful labour market programmes. We will build on our success in cutting the numbers on lone parent and incapacity benefits, and continue to do all we can to help those claiming jobseeker's allowance back into work.

Note:

Information on new deal and Pathways to Work refers to Great Britain as this Department does not deliver employment programmes in Northern Ireland.

Unsatisfactory Attendance Procedures

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* oral warnings, *(b)* written warnings, *(c)* dismissal decisions and *(d)* retirements on medical grounds decisions were made in (i) Jobcentre Plus and (ii) his Department under his Department's unsatisfactory attendance procedures in each month in 2005. [52680]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 27 February 2006]:* The best information we have available at this time is contained in the following table. The data on oral and written warnings has been extracted from the Department's Staff Information System. This system went live at the end of October 2005; prior to this, the Department did not have a single, central system which recorded warnings given. As a result, the figures for January to September may not fully represent the actual level of warnings given.

The data on dismissals on health grounds is taken from clerical records because the Department's computerised payroll records do not differentiate

between dismissals for ill health and other types of dismissal. The data on medical retirements is taken from payroll records.

Department for Work and Pensions

	Oral warnings	*Written warnings*	*Dismissals*	*Ill health retirements*
January	158	36	52	19
February	185	34	78	15
March	241	52	76	23
April	208	47	55	20
May	293	77	55	23
June	285	76	55	21
July	329	87	58	18
August	365	94	42	14
September	406	93	56	11
October	496	121	55	9
November	666	132	48	14
December	402	89	30	3

Note:
The table for DWP includes the figures for Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus

	Oral warnings	*Written warnings*	*Dismissals*	*Ill health retirements*
January	96	27	31	12
February	117	22	49	10
March	168	29	53	14
April	124	26	29	14
May	183	40	39	16
June	172	46	34	13
July	197	59	33	13
August	227	59	24	9
September	279	55	34	7
October	333	72	26	5
November	403	83	30	10
December	257	54	16	3

Workplace Health Connect

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will report progress made on the development of Workplace Health Connect. [72249]

Mrs. McGuire: Workplace Health Connect was launched on 23 February 2006. The service is now up and running, providing free, impartial and practical advice and support on workplace health, safety and return to work issues to small businesses. The aim of the service is to provide employers and workers with the necessary knowledge and skills to manage workplace health issues for themselves.

Workplace Health Connect is a collaborative service, set up in partnership with the Health and Safety Executive, offering a telephone Adviceline for England and Wales, and workplace visits from qualified Workplace Health Connect advisers. The workplace visits are currently available in the North East, North West, West Midlands, South Wales and Greater London, covering approximately 38 per cent. of small businesses in England and Wales.

Owners of small businesses and their employees can access the service by calling the Workplace Health Connect Adviceline on 0845 609 6006. They can talk to an expert adviser about their own particular workplace challenges to help them find appropriate solutions.

Further information on the service can be found at: www.workplacehealthconnect.co.uk and www.hse.gov.uk/workplacehealth

Workplace Stress

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of how many days were lost due to stress in the workplace in each of the last 20 years. [72626]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The most reliable and comparable data on days lost due to stress in the workplace in Britain are provided by the surveys of self-reported work-related illness (SWI) in 2001-02, 2003-04 and 2004-05. They relate to sickness absences taken by people who believed that they were suffering from work-related stress, depression or anxiety and are given in the following table:

	Estimated full day equivalent working days lost (in millions) due to work-related stress, depression or anxiety
2001-02	12.9
2003-04	12.8
2004-05	12.8

Data from an earlier SWI survey in 1995 provides an estimate of 4.6 million days lost due to work-related stress, depression or anxiety in Britain. This is not comparable with later SWI survey estimates because of differences in design, coverage and the level of information collected. Indications suggest that if it was possible to put this estimate on the same basis as later SWI data it could be up to 3 to 4 million lost working days lost different. Despite this uncertainty it is clear that days lost to work-related stress, depression or anxiety were lower in 1995 than 2001-02 and subsequent years.

Young Carers

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to review the eligibility of young carers undertaking more than 21 hours of supervised study to claim carers' allowance. [69390]

Mrs. McGuire: Carer's allowance is available to young carers aged 16 or over who undertake training or part-time education, but it is not available to those in full-time education involving 21 hours or more of supervised study a week. This is because young people aged 16 or over who remain in full-time non-advanced education are regarded as financially dependent on their parents, who can receive child benefit and child tax credits on their behalf. Support for those who choose to undertake full-time advanced education is provided by the student support system rather than by social security benefits. We keep social security rules under constant review, but we have no current plans to change the full-time education rule in carer's allowance.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking to ensure that Jobcentre Plus supports young carers. [69985]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend, the former Minister of State for Employment and Welfare Reform, on 10 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1793W.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Absenteeism

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total number of days lost due to *(a)* sickness absence and *(b)* unauthorised absence in (i) his Department, (ii) its agencies and (iii) its non-departmental public bodies was in each year since 2000. [71538]

Barry Gardiner: DEFRA was created in June 2001, and the answer given relates to full calendar years since then.

The total number of working days lost due to sickness absence in DEFRA and its Agencies is shown in the following table.

Department/Agency	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
DEFRA	89,800	60,500	56,100
CEFAS	2,800	4,000	3,300
CSL	4,200	4,700	4,400
PSD	1,200	1,000	1,100
RPA	11,900	38,900	30,600
VLA	10,100	11,200	10,900
VMD	800	1,000	600

Note:
All figures rounded to the nearest 100.

Statistics on the average number of working days lost per staff-year for all Government Department and Agencies each year since 1999 is published on the civil service website at: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/conditions_of_service/publications/index.asp#sickness

The Analysis of Sickness Absence in the Civil Service in 2005 is due to be published in August 2006.

Animal Welfare

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps his Department has undertaken to explore alternatives to animal testing. [71199]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA policy on using animals in research covers five main areas and is designed to:

promote and require full compliance with the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986; the "3 Rs" (reduction, replacement and refinement); other relevant protective legislation; and respect for relevant advice on animal welfare (e.g. the Farm Animal Welfare Council's 'Five Freedoms');

ensure that animals are only used in research when there are no appropriate replacement alternatives, and where the protocols applied reflect all reasonably and practically available reduction and replacement strategies to minimise any suffering that is likely to result;

actively seek alternatives to using live animals through funding of research;

encourage data sharing between contractors to prevent duplication of animal research and reduce numbers of experiments;

ensure that all individuals involved in the commissioning of DEFRA-funded research—including DEFRA scientific and policy staff, independent advisers and research contractors—are fully aware of DEFRA's policy and approach.

DEFRA is particularly active in looking for alternatives to using live animal experiments. Examples are:

funding research to develop, validate and replace existing test methods which use animals with in vitro tests;

development of non-invasive monitoring procedures to obviate the need for blood and tissue sampling;

funding the collection and archiving of tissues from experimental animals so that these can be used in future research by the same and other researchers, thereby reducing the need for further animal experiments;

greater use of statistical analysis of previously published animal experimental data to reduce the need for further experimentation;

strongly encouraging contractors to publish the results of DEFRA-funded research to avoid unnecessary duplication of animal experimentation.

Further information on DEFRA's policy on the use of animals in research can be found on our website.

Emissions Trading

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the emissions target is for carbon dioxide emissions for each EU country under the EU emissions trading scheme for 2006; and what targets are planned for each of the next five years. [72436]

Ian Pearson: The following table, published on the European Commission website[1], shows the total allowances allocated by member states for phase I (2005-07) in their national allocation plans. Most countries have allocated these allowances evenly over the three years.

Member state	*Phase I CO_2 allowances (million tonnes)*	*Percentage share of EU allowances*
Austria	99.0	1.5
Belgium	188.8	2.9
Czech Republic	292.8	4.4
Cyprus	16.98	0.3
Denmark	100.5	1.5
Estonia	56.85	0.9
Finland	136.5	2.1
France	469.5	7.1
Germany	1,497.0	22.8
Greece	223.2	3.4
Hungary	93.8	1.4
Ireland	67.0	1.0
Italy	697.5	10.6
Latvia	13.7	0.2
Lithuania	36.8	0.6
Luxembourg	10.7	0.2
Malta	8.83	0.1
Netherlands	285.9	4.3

Member state	Phase I CO_2 allowances (million tonnes)	Percentage share of EU allowances
Poland	717.3	10.9
Portugal	114.5	1.7
Slovak Republic	91.5	1.4
Slovenia	26.3	0.4
Spain	523.3	8.0
Sweden	68.7	1.1
United Kingdom	736.0	11.2
Total	6,572	100.0

[1] http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/84&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en

Member states are currently preparing plans for phase II (2008-12) in which they will determine their total allocations for the five year period. European Commission guidance states that the emissions caps must use the phase I allocation as a starting point and must make steps towards each member state's Kyoto protocol target under the burden sharing agreement. Member states must submit final installation level allocation plans to the Commission by 31 December 2006.

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will estimate the yield to the Exchequer from a UK auction of 10 per cent. of allowances under the EU Emissions Trading Scheme at a price of *(a)* 10, *(b)* 15, *(c)* 20 and *(d)* 30 euros per tonne of carbon from 2008. [72522]

Ian Pearson: The total number of allowances to be allocated in phase II of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (2008-12) has yet to be decided. The draft UK National Allocation Plan, currently out for public consultation, explains that the final figure will represent a reduction against Business As Usual emissions of between 3 and 8 MtC a year. The projections for Business As Usual are currently being evaluated following consultation. It is not therefore possible at this stage to precisely calculate the yield from auction at these prices.

Entry Level Stewardship Scheme

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when he will reply to Question *(a)* 68580, *(b)* 68578, *(c)* 68579 and *(d)* 68581, on the entry level stewardship scheme, tabled by the hon. Member for St. Ives. [72740]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* I replied to the hon. Member on the 22 May 2006.

Environmental Liability Directive

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which UK sites of special scientific interest do not fall within the scope of the environmental liability directive and would not be protected under UK implementing laws unless its scope were to be extended. [71457]

Barry Gardiner: Sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) overlap with sites protected under EU legislation (council directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds; council directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora). As a result, the 25 per cent. of SSSI areas in England that are not also EU-protected sites, would not be covered by legislation implementing the environmental liability directive unless the Government exercised the discretion provided in that directive. I shall write to my hon. Friend with the detailed information.

This is in respect of England only as policy on the environment and nature conservation is a devolved matter and therefore for the respective Administrations in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

Fisheries Agreements

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what position the UK will take on the forthcoming EU-Morocco fisheries agreement in the Western Sahara. [72435]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The UK will vote in favour of the regulation on the basis that there are no fisheries objections and that there is nothing in the regulation that is inconsistent with international law.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations were made to the EU Council of Ministers opposing commercial fishing in the waters of the Western Sahara; and if he will make a statement. [72606]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The EU Council of Ministers has not previously discussed the relevant proposal for a regulation establishing a bilateral fisheries agreement between the EU and Morocco. However, it is expected that the Council will adopt this regulation on 22 May 2006. The UK will vote in favour of the regulation on the basis that there are no fisheries objections and that there is nothing in the regulation that is inconsistent with international law.

Flood Prevention

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how much the chairman of the Wessex Flood Defence Committee received in travel costs in the last two years; and from what residential location his travel costs were calculated; [70242]

(2) how many official journeys the chairman of the Wessex Flood Defence Committee undertook in the last two years. [70243]

Ian Pearson: The Chairman of the Wessex Regional Flood Defence Committee undertook 73 official trips in 2004-05 and 48 official trips in 2005-06. His travel costs in that period totalled £7,640.

The Chairman can claim travel and subsistence expenses incurred away from his normal place of work, and any other expenses necessarily incurred on business in line with the expenses guidance for Committee Chairmen issued by the Environment Agency.

Forest Certification

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what account his Department took in deciding its policy on the programme for the endorsement of forest certification schemes of representations made by the Prime Minister of Australia to *(a)* the Prime Minister and *(b)* other Government Ministers. [72426]

Barry Gardiner: The UK Government's decision to wait until it reviews all the forest certification schemes it first assessed in 2004 before reaching a conclusion on the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes' amendments remains unchanged. An interim report explaining this rationale behind this decision can be seen at www.proforest.net/cpet

Global Monitoring for Enviroument and Security

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what support his Department is giving to the European Commission and EU Space Agency Respond Programme within the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security Initiative; and if he will make a statement. [71042]

Ian Pearson: Defra is the policy lead for the Government on the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) initiative of the European Commission and the European Space Agency (ESA).

We have been working closely with the Commission and ESA in the development of GMES and the Government has subscribed to Phase-1 of the ESA GMES Space Component Programme, which will provide satellite data for a range of GMES applications.

We continue to take a close interest in all areas of GMES, especially the service related elements, including RESPOND.

Defra will continue to engage with the Commission and ESA, other Government departments and UK stakeholders to ensure, as far as possible, that GMES meets UK needs at good value for money.

Greenhouse Gases

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what change there has been in greenhouse gases since 1997; and what assessment he has made of the reasons for the change. [71035]

Ian Pearson: The following table shows UK emissions for the six greenhouse gases, carbon dioxide (CO_2) methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF_6), and total emissions in million tonnes of carbon equivalent, for each year since 1997. These figures are taken from this year's UK greenhouse gas inventory.

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
CO_2	149.6	150.0	147.5	149.0	153.1	148.6	151.8	152.5
CH_4	20.2	19.1	17.2	16.3	14.8	14.2	12.9	12.5
N_20	16.5	15.7	12.1	12.1	11 .5	11.0	10.9	11.1
HFCs	5.2	4.7	3.0	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.4
PFCs	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
SF_6	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3
Total	191.6	189.8	180.1	180.3	182.4	177.0	178.7	179.0
Percentage change since 1997	0.0	-0.9	-6.0	-5.9	-4.8	-7.6	-6.7	-6.6

The Government's UK Climate Change Programme, published on 28 March 2006 outlined the reasons for the reduction. The decrease in greenhouse gas emissions since 1990 has mainly been driven by restructuring, especially in the energy supply industry, energy efficiency, pollution control measures in the industrial sector and other policies that reduced emissions of non-carbon dioxide greenhouse gases.

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will list the industries which are the 10 largest emitters of greenhouse gases; and how much and what proportion of total emissions of such gases they emitted in the last year for which figures are available. [71433]

Ian Pearson: The UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory provides a specific breakdown of greenhouse gas emissions from the following industrial sectors:

Power Generation

Petroleum Refining

Manufacture of Solid Fuels and other energy industries

Iron and Steel Production

Non Ferrous Metal Production

Offshore Oil and Gas Extraction

Production of Cement, lime and fletton brick

The contribution of these processes to UK greenhouse gas emissions, expressed in millions tonnes of carbon equivalent (MtCe), and percentage of total UK greenhouse gas emissions, is given in the following table. These data are taken from the UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory for 2004, which is the latest year for which data are available.

UK greenhouse gas emissions 2004

Sector	*GHG emissions in 2004/MtCe*	*Percentage of total UK GHG emissions in 2004*
Power Generation	46.93	26.2
Petroleum Refining	5.03	2.8
Manufacture of Solid Fuels and other energy industries	2.02	1.1
Non Ferrous Metals	1.04	0.6

UK greenhouse gas emissions 2004

Sector	*GHG emissions in 2004/MtCe*	*Percentage of total UK GHG emissions in 2004*
Offshore Oil and Gas	6.05	3.4
Non Ferrous Metals	1.04	0.6
Cement, lime and fletton brick production	3.13	1.7

Emissions from the chemicals industry are estimated to be of the order of 3 million tonnes of carbon per year (approximately 1.8 per cent. of total UK greenhouse gas emissions). A more precise figure for this sector will be available when European Union Emissions Trading Scheme figures for 2005 can be formally reconciled with the 2005 inventory dataset, which will be published in 2007.

Verified emissions of UK installations included in the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme are available, by sector, on the Defra website. The EU ETS covers installations responsible for approximately 50 per cent. of UK CO_2 emissions.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* percentage and *(b)* actual change in carbon dioxide emissions was between 1990 and the most recent year for which figures are available based on (i) Kyoto Treaty criteria and (ii) Kyoto Treaty criteria together with emissions from international aviation and international shipping. [70314]

Ian Pearson: The figures requested are taken from the UK Greenhouse Gas inventory 2006 and are given in the following table. They show emissions between 1990 and 2004, the latest year for which full data are available.

Greenhouse gas emissions in Kyoto base year and 2004

Source	*Emissions in base year/MtCe*[1]	*Emissions in 2004/MtCe*[1]	*Absolute change/MtCe*[1]	*Percentage change*
All emissions included under Kyoto	209.5	178.9	-30.1	-14.6
Emissions of CO2 included in above	160.6	152.5	-8.1	-5.0
Emissions of CO2 from international aviation	4.3	9.0	+4.7	+109
Emissions of CO2 from international shipping	1.8	1.6	-0.2	-11

[1] Million tonnes of Carbon equivalent

Hunting with Dogs

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many responses were received to the Government's consultation on hunting with dogs. [71836]

Barry Gardiner: The Government received over 14,000 responses to its consultation on the issue of hunting with dogs in 2002, and has received at least 14,000 further representations from members of the public on this issue since then.

Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Regime

Mr. Ilsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment his Department has made of the capability of individual local authorities adequately to implement and enforce the integrated pollution prevention and control regime; [64152]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of standards of compliance with integrated pollution prevention and control SG2 for new glass-making facilities. [64155]

Mr. Bradshaw: The local authority industrial pollution regimes are regularly reviewed, including local authority performance reviews. Such a review, involving just over 100 local authorities was undertaken in 2004 and a follow-up review has just been completed and the report will be published shortly.

The Department has for the past year been working with local authority stakeholders to improve the training and competence framework for local authority personnel undertaking this work. Local authorities have regularly been made aware of the options of out-sourcing, joint working, or obtaining expert advice when carrying out these functions. I am told that Chester city council have employed consultants to assist them in determining this latest application from Quinn Glass.

The Department encourages local authorities to share expertise and experience in regulating different sectors by establishing 'link' groups. There is such a link group for the glass manufacturing sector, the co-ordinator of which works for Barnsley metropolitan borough council. Officials in the Department keep in periodic touch with her and with the trade association, British Glass. Chester city council are a member of the group.

The local authority unit of the Environment Agency, which advises the Department on technical issues relating to the local authority industrial pollution regimes, has met the link group and also visited glass manufacturing installations. The unit has reported back to the Department following these activities.

I cannot comment on the recent High Court judgment because I understand that it is subject to an appeal.

Pest Control

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what provision of pest control services his Department requires of local authorities. [71619]

Mr. Bradshaw: It is for local authorities to decide on the most appropriate pest control programme in their own area, while having regard to their duties under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949.

Radiative Forcing

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportionate contribution to the overall UK-attributable radiative forcing total is accounted for by *(a)* residential properties, *(b)* business premises, *(c)* industrial processes, *(d)* power generation, *(e)* cars, *(f)* buses and *(g)* aviation; what the radiative forcing multiplier is for each category; and what the range of uncertainty is in estimates of the multiplier for each category. [71434]

Ian Pearson: Table 1 gives the contribution of each sector listed to total UK greenhouse gas emissions in 2004. The first column of numbers gives percentage contributions with emissions from power generation shown separately. The second column of numbers shows percentage contributions with emission from power generation reallocated to the sectors which use the power generated.

The data are consistent with the UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory published in 2006, which contains data to 2004, the most recent year for which data are available for all gases by sector. The aviation estimate covers domestic flights only because international aviation is not included in the UK emissions total, in accordance with international guidelines.

The estimates include emissions from carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, the hydrofluorocarbons, the perfluorocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride. Radiative forcing is accounted for by using Global Warming Potentials (GWPs) as weighting factors in adding together emissions estimates of the different gases.

The GWPs are listed in table 2 and apply by gas and not by sector. The effect of emissions from aviation at altitude may be significantly greater than at ground level. This would increase the radiative forcing effect from aviation but there is no agreed value to account for this and it remains a matter of scientific investigation. The IPCC Third Assessment Report estimates uncertainty in the GWPs relative to carbon dioxide as +/-35 per cent.

Table 1: 2004 emissions of greenhouse gases included in the Kyoto protocol, by sector

Sector	Proportion of total UK greenhouse gases emissions by source	Percentage Proportion of total UK greenhouse gases emissions by end user
Residential Properties	14.1	24.4
Business Premises	16.3	33.8
Industrial Processes	2.9	3.0
Power Generation	34.3	—
Cars	11.5	14.1
Buses	0.3	0.6
Domestic Aviation	0.4	0.4

Table 2: The global warming potential of greenhouse gases included in the Kyoto protocol basket

Gas	Global warming potential (100 year time horizon)
Carbon dioxide	1
Methane	21
Nitrous Oxide	310
Hydrofluorocarbons	140-11,700
Perfluorocarbons	6,500-9,200
Sulphur hexafluoride	23,900

Tallow

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs why his Department banned the use of tallow as a fuel; whether a similar ban is being introduced in all countries of the EU; what assessment his Department has made of the impact of the cost of this measure to *(a)* the rendering industry and *(b)* the farming industry in removing fallen stock. [71878]

Ian Pearson: My Department has not banned the use of tallow as fuel, so no assessments of this kind have been made.

The effect of the EU Animal By-Products Regulation (ABPR) is to require a range of animal by-products, and substances derived from them (e.g. tallow), to be disposed of as waste. Where the method of disposal is incineration or co-incineration (i.e. use as a fuel), the ABPR requires it to be carried out in compliance with the Waste Incineration Directive (WID). Installations may burn tallow provided they comply with these requirements. The ABPR is directly applicable in all EU member states.

In response to representations by the UK Government, the European Commission has set up a study to help establish whether such controls are proportionate and necessary to the protection of the environment. The study is expected to report by the autumn, and the Government are pressing the Commission for the study to be completed as soon as possible.

CABINET OFFICE

Diversity Training

Mr. Hands: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the contribution of diversity training across Government to the efficient development of Government policy; and if she will make a statement. [70118]

Mr. McFadden: Diversity training plays a key role in raising awareness of diversity and equality issues among staff. It is the responsibility of individual Departments to decide on their approach to diversity training and, as with all training, evaluate its effectiveness and impact on organisational performance. There is no centrally collated information on this.

Russell Commission

Chris Grayling: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster which company was used to recruit the chairman of the Russell Commission. [71593]

Hilary Armstrong: Following a competitive tender exercise under Office of Government Commerce (OGC) best practice guidance, Veredus was selected to recruit the chairman, chief executive and board members for v.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Anti-Semitism

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many anti-Semitic incidents were reported in each police force area in England in each of the last 10 years. [73207]

Mr. McNulty: The police treat anti-Semitic incidents as racist incidents. Their definition when recording such incidents is:

"any incident which is regarded as racist by the victim or any other person."

This is the definition recommended by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. The statistics available centrally do not distinguish between religiously and racially aggravated crime, or, more specifically, anti-semitic incidents.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* EU foreign nationals and *(b)* non-EU foreign nationals have been employed in his Department in each of the last five years; what vetting procedures are in place for each category of staff; and whether these include liaison with foreign law enforcement agencies. [68016]

Mr. Byrne: The Department only collects data on non-EU nationals. In the past five financial years we have employed two non-EU nationals; one in 2003-04 and one in 2004-05. All candidates are subject to the same pre-appointment checks regardless of nationality. Our pre-appointment checks ensure that we only select those that pass eligibility in accordance with the Cabinet Office nationality requirements—www.civilservice.gov.uk\nationality. The need for an individual to undergo national security vetting, and the level of vetting that is appropriate, will depend on the particular post they are going to fill. Where necessary, this will include a check of time spent overseas.

Domestic Violence

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females have reported a physical assault by a (i) current and (ii) former partner in the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [65183]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The British Crime Survey (BCS) routinely provides information on the number of incidents of domestic violence against men and women (but not on the actual number of victims), but this is not broken down by whether the perpetrator is a current or former partner.

The British Crime Survey (BCS) also collects information on whether victims report crimes to the police, but this is not broken down by victim's sex or by whether it was a domestic violence incident or not. Reporting rates for 2004-05 are available from the latest annual crime statistics publication.

The 2004-05 British Crime Survey estimated that there were, in total 308,000 incidents of domestic violence against women in England and Wales, and 92,000 against men. The number of incidents of domestic violence as measured by the BCS has decreased by 48 per cent. from 1999 to 2004-05 BCS interviews.

The BCS figures are estimates only. As they are derived from a sample they are subject to sampling error, also the context of the face-to-face BCS interview means the estimates are certain to be underestimates of the true extent due to the fact that some respondents may be unwilling to reveal experience of domestic violence to interviewers. To address this, self-completion components for those aged 16-59 on domestic violence have been included in the 1996, 2001, 2004-05, and 2005-06 BCS. Results from the 2001 BCS self-completion module on domestic violence were published in Home Office Research Study No. 276. According to this more confidential approach to measurement prevalence (per cent. of population victim at least once) rates for last year domestic assault were approximately five times higher than in the main face-to-face BCS. Also according to this report, 80 per cent. of the domestic violence incidents suffered by women in the 12 months prior to interview were from current spouses or partners, and 20 per cent. from ex-spouses/partners. The respective figures for men were 86 and 14 per cent. It also showed that the police came to know about the (worst) incident of domestic violence suffered in the 12 months prior to interview in 23 per cent. of cases suffered by women, and 8 per cent. of cases suffered by men. Overall, in 72 per cent. of the cases that the police came to know about, the victim reported it (rather than someone else such as family member or friend, or police came to know about in another way).

Number of BCS incidents of domestic violence, 1999 to 2004-05

England and Wales	*Women*	*Thousand Men*
1999	560	194
2001-02 ints	514	122
2002-03 ints	366	135
2003-04 ints	298	150
2004-05 ints	308	92

Sources:
2000, 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 British Crime Surveys

Electronic Monitoring

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been subject to electronic monitoring in each year since 1999; and if he will make a statement. [58241]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Figures are available for the financial year 1998-99 onwards and are presented in the following table:

	Number monitored
1998-99	3,503
1999-2000	19,073
2000-01	19,962
2001-02	21,796
2002-03	37,924
2003-04	46,472
2004-05	53,230
2005-06	54,329
Total	256,289

Notes:
1. Figures for 1998-99 are from 28 January 1999.
2. Figures for 2005-06 are until 28 February 2006.
3. The number monitored is the number of new starts on electronic monitoring, rather than the caseload at any one time.

Feltham Young Offenders Institution

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how often psychiatric risk assessment tests are conducted on inmates at Feltham Young Offenders' Institution; [17797]

(2) what proportion of offenders at Feltham Young Offenders Institution are recognised as having *(a)* mild and *(b)* severe psychiatric disorders; [17798]

(3) what post-release psychiatric care prisoners receive who have been diagnosed with psychiatric disorders whilst detained at Feltham Young Offenders Institution. [17799]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Information on the frequency of psychiatric risk tests at Feltham Young Offenders Institution is not collected centrally. Although inmates may be referred to the community mental health in-reach team, in line with national policy, information is not then collected that would allow a count of the number of psychiatric risk assessment tests that are carried out.

Information on the proportion of offenders with psychiatric disorders at Feltham is not available centrally.

On release, offenders who meet the appropriate criteria are subject to the care programme approach, and leave prison with a full care plan for their future mental health care.

Firearms

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria were used in drawing up proposals *(a)* to restrict the use of .338 and .50 calibre rifles and *(b)* to ban the use of semi-automatic shotguns and .22 calibre weapons. [65426]

Mr. McNulty: Proposals are based on a recommendations by the Firearms Consultative Committee that weapons of excessive power, including those chambered for .50 calibre BMG rounds, should not be permitted for target shooting.

Identity Cards

Mrs. Lait: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance he has issued on the level of facial recognition required for wearers of burkas and other facial coverings applying for *(a)* an identity card and *(b)* a travel freedom pass. [72088]

Joan Ryan: The identity card will be an international travel document and will have to comply with passport photograph standards, which require a full-face image. Enrolment facilities will be designed so that this can be handled sensitively.

The freedom pass is managed by the Association of London Government on behalf of all London councils, not by the Home Office.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 758W, on identity cards, whether the second identity card issued to the same standard but not for the purposes of travel will be issued automatically; and whether a charge will be imposed. [71711]

Joan Ryan: Arrangements regarding the surrender of an identity card valid for travel by an individual subject to a football banning order will be specified closer to the time of introduction of identity cards. An identity card which will not be valid for travel will be issued to the same standard as a card which will be valid for travel.

Identity Theft

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many instances of identity theft were recorded in *(a)* Suffolk and *(b)* the East of England in each of the last five years. [72636]

Mr. Coaker: The information requested is not available centrally. Offences of identity theft cannot be separately identified in the recorded crime series.

Illegal Vehicles

Mr. Touhig: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what additional powers have been made available for *(a)* police officers and *(b)* local authorities to confiscate (i) illegal off-road vehicles and (ii) untaxed motor vehicles since 1997. [71370]

Mr. Coaker: Section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002 empowers the police to seize vehicles being driven inconsiderately or carelessly on road contrary to section three of the Road Traffic Act 1988, or off-road without authority, contrary to sections 34 of the Act if at the same time they are being driven in such a manner as to cause or be likely to cause alarm, distress or annoyance to members of the public.

Section 152 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005, creates a power for the police to seize immediately vehicles, including off-road vehicles, which

are detected being used on the road by someone who does not have appropriate insurance or driving licence.

The Vehicle Excise Duty (Immobilisation, Removal and Disposal of Vehicles) Regulations 1997 authorise the clamping and impounding of unlicensed vehicles on the public road. Regulation three allows the Secretary of State to authorise local authorities, police forces or any other person to use these powers.

Sections 79 to 82 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 empower local authorities to seize off-road vehicles causing a noise nuisance. Since 1997 local authorities have acquired no other vehicle seizure powers.

Independent Monitoring Boards

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the performance of each Independent Monitoring Board; and if he will make a statement. [16373]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Each Independent Monitoring Board's annual report provides detail and analysis of Board activity during the year as well as the Board's observations of issues of concern and good practice in the running of the prison or immigration removal centre. In addition Boards undertake an annual team performance review, an exercise that involves all members in taking stock of the Board's performance over a period of time to identify good practice and recognise where there is scope for improvement.

Legislation

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received about the operation of sections 4, 4A, 4B and 4C of the Theft Act 1968; and whether he has plans to amend this Act. [70376]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have not received any representations recently about the operation of any part of section four of the Theft Act 1968. I have no current plans to amend this part of the 1968 Act.

MI5 (Northern Ireland)

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any *(a)* disciplinary and *(b)* criminal investigations are under way into the failure of MI5 to pass threat information to the Police Service of Northern Ireland on a possible bombing at Omagh prior to 15 August 1998. [66525]

John Reid: There are no such investigations.

The Chief Constable, for the Police Service of Northern Ireland, made it clear in his statement of 1 March to the Policing Board that the Security Service did not withhold intelligence that was relevant or that would have progressed the Omagh inquiry.

Motoring Offences

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the police take to contact insurers to trace the owners of vehicles wanted for moving road traffic offences. [70181]

Mr. Coaker: The police have access to the motor insurers' database. What further investigation they undertake is an operational matter for individual chief officers.

National Criminal Intelligence Service

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what complaints were received about the recruitment process for National Criminal Intelligence Service posts at the new regional office in Belfast advertised in autumn 2003; and what changes have been implemented as a result. [64732]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Belfast, North (Mr. Dodds) on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 377W.

National Hi-Tech Crime Unit

Margaret Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to replace the contact service formerly provided via the National Hi-Tech Crime Unit website. [72507]

Mr. Coaker: The National Hi-Tech Crime Unit (NHTCU), as part of the National Crime Squad, became part of the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) on 1 April 2006 and now operates under the title of SOCA e-Crime.

The NHTCU was never a crime recording centre and always requested members of the public to contact their local police force. The NHTCU provided a website that contained a great deal of advice relating to harm reduction and awareness surrounding the use of computers and the internet. The content of the website has been saved and discussion is ongoing as to the most appropriate location for this to be available. Organisations and members of the public who wish to report a crime should continue to contact their local police force in the normal way.

National Identity Register

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there exists a prohibition in law on supplying data from the National Identity Register to a foreign government for purposes connected with *(a)* national security and *(b)* the prevention and detection of crime. [67293]

Joan Ryan: Section 18 of the Identity Cards Act 2006 allows information to be provided to overseas authorities, for example law enforcement agencies, for the purposes of criminal proceedings and investigations, as provided for in section 17 of the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001. This is subject to safeguards provided in section 21 of the Identity Cards Act and section 18 of the 2001 Act.

Other than that, there is no provision, or power to make provision, in the Identity Cards Act for information from the NIR to be provided, without consent, overseas.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the National Identity Register will include information and data supplied by *(a)* the Valuation Office Agency, *(b)* Ordnance Survey, *(c)* HM Revenue and Customs, *(d)* electoral registers held by local authorities and *(e)* the Co-ordinated Online Record of Electors. [70713]

Joan Ryan: The National Identity Register will not be an amalgam of information held on existing Government databases. It is intended to be populated with identity information provided by applicants as they apply for an identity card, either as an individual card or in conjunction with an application for a designated document.

Section 9 of the Identity Cards Act 2006 does permit the Identity and Passport Service (IPS) to verify identity information provided by applicants against data held by other organisations as part of the enrolment process, subject to secondary legislation. Details of such steps to validate the information provided by applicants and its results may be held on the National Identity Register, as stated in paragraph 7 of Schedule 1 of the Act. However, as stated, such checks cannot occur unless they have received the prior approval of Parliament in secondary legislation under the affirmative resolution procedures.

IPS is currently working with other Government Departments, including Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs to identify which government data sources would provide the most accurate verification of identity information provided by applicants. Ordnance Survey information may be used as a secondary check to verify that an address provided by an applicant exists.

It is also possible that data sources used as part of this check may in turn have verified their data through conducting a check against electoral roll registers. For example, the Personal Information Process being introduced to validate passport applications includes a check of identity information against credit reference agency records, which were checked against information on electoral registers.

However, there are no plans to verify identity information provided by applicants with information held by the Valuation Office Agency or the proposed Co-ordinated Online Record of Electors.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what secure remote authentication in connection with the National Identity Register will be available over the *(a)* telephone and *(b)* internet; and what technological options have been proposed for these purposes. [73167]

Joan Ryan: At present, the Identity and Passport Service is working with experts to review various alternatives that allow the implementation of secure remote authentication. This includes research into the concept of a 'challenge response' process, which allows for the generation of a one-off password for a person to use in a single transaction.

However, the purpose of this research is to inform requirement setting as the National Identity Scheme prepares for the start of a procurement process as well as to provide a basis on which to judge solutions proposed by potential suppliers.

Thus, as it will be for bidders to propose technical options that meet the Scheme's requirements for secure remote authentication, no definitive options have been proposed, nor can they be, until the procurement process is underway.

Offences Against the Person Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department under what circumstances an offender found guilty of an offence under section 18 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 would be released from prison without *(a)* consultation with the police and *(b)* supervision; and if he will make a statement. [65009]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The police are routinely informed of the release of all prisoners. Police are partners in multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA), which are statutory arrangements operated by criminal justice and social care agencies to manage serious sexual and violent offenders and protect the public. The police are therefore involved in the management of potentially dangerous offenders, generally those sentenced to 12 months or more for a sexual or violent offence. All fixed-term prisoners serving 12 months or more, or aged less than 22 years at the point of release, and all prisoners serving an indeterminate sentence are subject to statutory supervision upon release. The only exception is the small number of prisoners released at the end of their custodial term under the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1967.

Parking Fines

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate the Government have made of the total revenue raised from parking fines in England in the most recent year for which figures are available. [70721]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Information on the total revenue from parking fines is not collected centrally.

However estimates are given in the table based on information collected by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of fixed penalties issued and fines given at court for 2004 (latest available). This information is published in the Home Office publication "Offences relating to motor vehicles, England and Wales Supplementary tables". Copies of the publication are available in the Library.

The Court Proceedings Database and the Fixed Penalty Notices collection do not distinguish between obstruction, waiting and parking contraventions. The decision as to whether to issue a fixed penalty notice is a matter for the police and where the offence is decriminalised, a matter for the local authority.

Not all fines and fixed penalties will have been paid.

Information for 2005 will be available early in 2007.

Under the Road Traffic Act 1991, Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) powers allow local authorities to take over responsibility for enforcing parking contraventions from the police. Not all local authorities operate decriminalised parking enforcements so such data on fixed penalty charges issued under DPE powers are not included within the table. Data on penalty charge notices (PCNs) from local authorities operating Decriminalised Parking Enforcement can be found in the Home Office publication "Offences relating to motor vehicles, England and Wales 2004, Supplementary tables". The latest publication 2004 (Tables 22(a)-22(b)) lists data by local authorities partaking in the scheme. Copies of the publication are available in the Library. The publication can also be accessed on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics (RDS) website.

Parole

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many convicted murderers released on parole in each of the last 15 years have broken the terms of their release; [53126]

(2) how many convicted rapists released on parole in each of the last 15 years have subsequently broken the terms of their release; [53130]

(3) how many convicted burglars released on parole in each of the last 15 years have subsequently broken the terms of their release. [53132]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Information on the number of convicted rapists and convicted burglars released on parole in each of the last six years who have subsequently been recalled is provided in the following table. This information is as recorded on the Prison Service IT system. Information prior to 1999-2000 is only available at disproportionate cost.

Information on the number of murderers released on life licence who have subsequently been recalled is available only at disproportionate cost. Table 10.9 of Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2004 gives the number of recalls from life licence (for any offence) between 1999 and 2004.

Number of recalls of determinate sentenced prisoners of four years or more released on parole—rape and burglary

	Rape	*Burglary*
1999-2000	8	41
2000-01	7	27
2001-02	13	52
2002-03	15	74
2003-04	16	97
2004-05	17	110

Passports

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many passport applications were refused on the grounds of the inability of the applicant to produce his or her father's marriage certificate in each of the last three years for which figures are available; [72268]

(2) when he plans to review the documentation requirements for the issue of new 10-year passports. [72269]

Joan Ryan: The documentation required from passport applicants is that which establishes the person's claim to British nationality. For persons born in the UK since the British Nationality Act 1981 came into force on 1 January 1983, this depends on a parent having been a British citizen or settled in the UK at the time of the birth. The Act provides that for the purposes of determining British nationality, the relationship of father and child shall be taken to exist only between a man and any legitimate child born to him. Therefore a passport applicant who wishes to establish that he is a British citizen because his or her father was a British citizen when the applicant was born needs to provide his or her father's marriage certificate. To establish the number of applications which were unsuccessful because this certificate could not be provided would require a search of individual case records and could not be done without disproportionate expense.

This provision of the 1981 Act is to be amended by Section nine of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 when that provision is brought into force but it will not apply retrospectively. This will extend the definition of father for the purposes of the 1981 Act to include any person who satisfies prescribed requirements as to proof of paternity. The requirements for passport applications will be reviewed when this change in the law on nationality comes into effect.

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many British passports have been issued in each of the last five years. [72382]

Joan Ryan: The number of British passports issued for each of the last five years is as follows:

Financial Year	*Issued by IPS*	*Issued by FCO*	*Total*
2001-02	5,588,550	460,000	6,048,550
2002-03	5,354,348	465,000	5,819,348
2003-04	5,723,473	447,000	6,170,473
2004-05	6,031,325	453,000	6,484,325
2005-06	6,453,095	460,000	6,913,095

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many UK Passports were reported *(a)* lost and *(b)* stolen in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years. [73202]

Joan Ryan: It is not possible for the UK Passport Service to identify exactly how many passports were reportedly lost or stolen in Northern Ireland. However, the Belfast passport office, which serves the Northern Ireland area, processed the following reports of *(a)* loss and *(b)* theft of a passport for the calendar years of 2004, 2005 and 2006 to date.

	Belfast	
	Lost	*Stolen*
2004	9,496	1,959
2005	9,615	1,117
2006 (to date)	3,615	402

The total figures across the UK for the last three years are as follows:

	Lost	Stolen	Other	Total
2003	—	—	—	[1]184,301
2004	212,745	50,737	11,558	275,040
2005	230,011	45,709	11,268	286,988
2006	83,289	14,328	[2]4,064	101,681

[1] Combined total
[2] To date

People Trafficking

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps are being taken by his Department to tackle organised criminal gangs engaged in trafficking. [70133]

Mr. Coaker: The Government set up the Serious Organised Crime Agency with effect from 1 April 2006 to prevent and detect serious organised crime, and to reduce the harm it causes. Among its top priorities are tackling class A drugs trafficking and organised immigration crime. Also with effect from 1 April 2006 we introduced new powers to:

compel individuals to produce documents and provide explanations;

offer sentence reductions or immunity from prosecution to offenders who co-operate against their criminal colleagues.

We continue to tackle trafficking through Reflex, a multi-agency task force aimed at tackling organised immigration crime. In February, a Reflex funded multi-agency initiative, Operation Pentameter, was launched to tackle the trafficking of human beings for sexual exploitation. All UK police forces and the Immigration Service have been involved in this initiative which has already made a real impact and to date has rescued 75 women from traffickers and made 180 arrests.

Police Community Support Officers

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many community support officers have been recruited in *(a)* Cheshire and *(b)* Warrington in each year since the scheme was introduced. [66948]

Mr. McNulty: Information relating to the number of full-time equivalent police community support officers (PCSOs) in each police force area have been collected by RDS since 2003 and is provided in the table.

Data on PCSOs within Basic Command Units (BCU) is only collected annually. As at 30 June 2005, the Northern Area of Cheshire constabulary, which includes Warrington, had 46 PCSOs.

Deployment of PCSOs within Cheshire Division is an operational matter for the Divisional Commander.

Police community support officer strength in Cheshire, (2003-05)

	Cheshire[1]
As at 31 March 2003	2
As at 31 March 2004	50
As at 30 September 2004	47
As at 31 March 2005	81
As at 30 September 2005	77

[1] The figures in this table are based on full-time equivalent figures including staff on career breaks or maternity/paternity leave, and have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Police Stations/Vehicles

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has for constructing new police stations in Greater London. [67081]

Mr. McNulty: Decisions whether or not to construct new police buildings in London are for the City of London as police authority for the City and for the Metropolitan Police Authority for Greater London.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police vehicles were stationed in *(a)* Romford, *(b)* Havering and *(c)* Greater London in each of the last eight years, broken down by vehicle type. [67097]

Mr. McNulty: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Prisons

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what proportion of entrants to each prison had *(a)* drug and *(b)* mental health problems in the latest period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement; [58224]

(2) what assessment he has made of the extent of *(a)* drug and *(b)* mental health problems in each prison; and if he will make a statement. [58225]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The proportion of entrants to each prison with *(a)* drug and *(b)* mental health problems is not collated. Instead NOMS relies on epidemiological surveys which show that:

(a) around 55 per cent. of those received into prison report a serious drug problem, with 80 per cent. reporting some misuse prior to prison;

(b) 90 per cent. of prisoners have a least one mental health disorder (ONS survey of mental ill health in the prison population in England and Wales 1997).

The extent of *(a)* drug and *(b)* mental health problems is not collected in each prison but is a direct reflection of those entering prison.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of prison education schemes; and if he will make a statement; [44301]

(2) what plans he has to extend the range of vocational training and provision in prisons; and if he will make a statement; [44340]

(3) if he will review the methods for initial assessment of prisoners' educational needs to take account of how progression is encouraged, supported and realised; and if he will make a statement; [44341]

(4) what plans he has to change the formal curriculum for prisoner education; and if he will make a statement; [44348]

(5) what steps he is taking to ensure integrated management of learning in prisons; and if he will make a statement; [44366]

(6) what action *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Prison Service is taking to promote learning in prisons; and if he will make a statement. [44361]

Mr. Sutcliffe: On 15 December 2005, my Department, together with the Department for Education and Skills and the Department for Work and Pensions, published the Green Paper "Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment". The document sets out a strategy for concerted action to improve offenders' skills and job prospects, including through better quality education and training.

The Green Paper makes clear that delivery of learning and skills for all offenders is changing, with the Learning and Skills Council taking responsibility for its planning and funding. This new role introduces a number of substantial changes, including an early, significant focus on assessing the offender learner's needs, and recording them on an Individual Learning Plan that will follow the offender as they progress through the criminal justice system. The Individual Learning Plan will encourage, support and record progress.

A new, broader curriculum for offender learners supports the new delivery arrangements, setting out clear quality requirements and a strong focus on learning needs that will help more offenders into suitable and sustained jobs by meeting the needs of employers. A juvenile version of the curriculum acknowledges the specific needs of younger learners.

A Head of Learning and Skills—who is a member of the establishment's senior management team—oversees delivery of the learning and skills arrangements in each prison. Heads of Learning and Skills work closely with the Learning and Skills Council and with the Regional Offender Manager.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment he has made of the level of contraband in each prison; and if he will make a statement; [44368]

(2) what quantities of *(a)* mobile phones, *(b)* drugs and *(c)* alcohol have been found in each prison in each month over the last year; and if he will make a statement. [44369]

Mr. Sutcliffe: An item of contraband is any item or article that a prison governor identifies or considers to pose a risk to security or the good order of the prison. Contraband does not form a specific group on the Incident Reporting System (IRS). In the last two months alone, 394 miscellaneous incidents were recorded on IRS a small proportion of these incidents relate to contraband, analysing this would be at a disproportionate cost.

Information on the level of restricted items in each prison is not collated centrally. However, the number of drug incidents, finds of mobile phones (and associated equipment) and alcohol (including "home brewed alcohol") are detailed in tables placed in the Libraries of the House.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners underwent treatment for drugs dependence in *(a)* Kingston upon Hull North constituency, *(b)* the Humberside police area and *(c)* England and Wales in each of the last five years. [69773]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Figures for prisoners undergoing drug treatment in each of the last five years are given in the following table.

There are no prisons in *(a)* Kingston upon Hull North constituency. Figures for programme completion were not collected prior to 2004-05.

	2001-02	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*[1]
Humberside police area[2]					
CARATs	943	1,527	1,625	1,497	1,787
Detox	1,194	1,236	1,676	1,462	1,389
Programmes entrants	72	102	95	105	319
completions	n/a	n/a	n/a	68	247
England and Wales					
CARATs	39,338	51,896	54,125	59,025	74,588
Detox	41,765	50,701	57,891	53,903	53,323
Programmes entrants	4,691	4,386	4,703	7,609	10,729
completions	n/a	n/a	n/a	4,902	8,036

[1] Provisional
[2] HMP Hull, HMP Everthorpe, HMP Wolds and HMP Full Sutton

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been spent at each prison by the Prison Service on drug treatments in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [71838]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Individual prison drug treatment spend is not recorded centrally. Prisons have instead focused on drug treatment delivery against high-level targets. Additional drug treatment funding allocated to prisons globally over the past five years is shown in the following table:

£ million

Intervention	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
Clinical services (detoxification and/or maintenance-prescribing)	7.30	7.30	11.30	11.30	11.30
CARATs (Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice & Through-care services)	12.91	14.30	17.40	23.20	26.70
Drug rehabilitation programmes	7.09	7.10	9.00	13.90	19.40
Juvenile substance-misuse service (JSMS)	—	—	—	2.30	3.10
Total	27.30	28.70	37.70	50.70	60.50

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the annual cost was of keeping a category A prisoner in gaol in the last year for which figures are available. [72350]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Prison Service does not collect cost data by prisoner security classification but by cost per classification of prison establishment. The cost of keeping a prisoner in a high security prison during the 2004-05 was £47,513.

This information is contained in the Prison Service annual report and accounts for 2004-05, a copy of which is in the Library of the House or can be viewed via the Service's website www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he is taking to improve the take-up of correspondence courses in prisons. [66566]

Phil Hope: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 4 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1851W.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on provision for vulnerable prisoners at HM Prison Lewes of offending behaviour programmes. [66573]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Vulnerable prisoners held at Lewes prison are housed on F wing which closes later this year for refurbishment. The number of vulnerable prisoners held at Lewes will be substantially reduced to around 40 and none will be eligible for the Sex Offenders Treatment Programme (SOTP). Since December 2002 this treatment has been provided at Maidstone and Elmley with Lewes as the feeder establishment working together to assess and prepare sex offenders to undertake treatment. Following refurbishment in 2008 it is expected that Lewes will no longer house a vulnerable prisoner population.

The vulnerable prisoner unit at Lewes is supported by the area psychology team and staff working on the unit are SOTP awareness trained. Prisoners are assessed and, if ready and suitable, are transferred to Elmley or Maidstone where specialist cognitive behavioural courses are available. Since 2004 the prisoners addressing substance related offending (PASRO) course has been available at Lewes and will continue.

Probation Service

Mrs. Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what evidence he has received to support his conclusion that there will be benefits to *(a)* offenders, *(b)* the public purse and *(c)* communities of realising the proposals for changes to the structures and role of the Probation Service; and if he will meet representatives of the National Association of Probation Officers to discuss that evidence. [68119]

Mr. Sutcliffe: In October 2005 the Government published a consultation paper, "Restructuring Probation to Reduce Re-offending", which set out proposals for the introduction of commissioning and contestability in the provision of probation services. This document was accompanied by a Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment which set out the benefits these proposals are expected to deliver and why.

Trade Union representatives, including from NAPO, have access to ministers and senior officials through the Stakeholder Forum and the Joint Council, as well as bi-lateral meetings. In addition there are scheduled regular meetings of the Probation Service's Consultative Council, which includes officials and the three probation trade unions:

NAPO;
Unison;
GMB (Scoop).

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many expressions of interest he has received from *(a)* private companies, *(b)* not-for-profit and voluntary organisations and *(c)* faith-based organisations on obtaining contracts for the end-to-end management of offenders. [57187]

Mr. Sutcliffe: There are a number of established fora through which the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) engages with NOMS service providers from the public, private and voluntary sectors. Through these contacts, some expressions of interest in providing future NOMS services have been received from providers of all sectors. However these indications have been informal and non-specific in nature and therefore at this time, clarity as to the commercial and legal status of these organisations has not been obtained. In due course a more formal process will be undertaken in accordance with European Union procurement rules.

Reoffending

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of criminals re-offended within *(a)* 12 months, *(b)* 24 months and *(c)* 36 months of their original conviction in (i) England and Wales and (ii) Hartlepool constituency in 2005-06. [72595]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information requested is not available.

The most recent information on the re-offending of adults in England and Wales was published in December as 'Adult re-offending: results from the 2002 cohort'. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 25/05'. The report is available on line at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb2505.pdf and covers offenders starting community sentences or being discharged from prison in the first quarter of 2002. Table A1 shows the re-offending rate for adults at 12 months and 24 months.

Re-offending data are not routinely collected on a sub-national basis, nor are they available for periods of over 24 months.

Road Traffic Offences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what evidence defendants are entitled to receive in relation to penalties or prosecutions for allegedly driving in a bus lane; if he will list the occasions when a penalty notice has been wrongly sent in each of the last five years for which information is available; what advice he issues to individuals who have been wrongly accused of driving in a bus lane; and if he will make a statement. [70066]

Mr. Coaker: Outside London, the police are at present solely responsible for the enforcement of bus lane infringements in England and Wales. Civil enforcement is expected to begin in some areas in the autumn. Suspected offenders will be told that a vehicle of which they are the registered keeper has been detected committing a bus lane offence. The provision of further information is a matter for individual chief officers of police. Guidance from the Association of Chief Police Officers is that the registered keeper or person named by the keeper as driver at the time of the alleged offence should be allowed to view photographic evidence on request. Any person who receives a fixed penalty notice for a bus lane offence and wishes to dispute the alleged offence is required to request a court hearing, the procedure for which is explained on the notice. If a case went to court, the prosecution would have to furnish the evidence to support the proceedings and relevant material would be disclosed under the provisions of the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act.

In London, the police can still enforce bus lane infringements if they consider it appropriate. Most enforcement is however undertaken by Transport for London and the London boroughs under the overall co-ordination of the Association of London Government's Transport and Environmental Committee (ALGTEC). Recipients of penalty charge notices issued for bus lane offences are entitled to view the record of the contravention free of charge at the offices of the issuing authority. Alternatively a copy of the recording can be provided at a small cost. Penalty charge notices describe the procedure for making representations against a notice to the enforcing authority and for appealing to adjudicators.

Information is not held centrally on the number of occasions when a penalty charge notice or a fixed penalty notice has been issued in error.

Security Industry

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter of 22 February from Mr. Patrick Somerville of the International Professional Security Association on the implementation of the Private Security Industry Act 2001. [71146]

Mr. Coaker: Mr. Somerville was sent a reply on 11 May.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people are employed by the Security Industry Authority to process licences. [62260]

Mr. Coaker: The Security Industry Authority (SIA) has contracted out the checking and processing of licence applications to BT who is their managed service provider. The final decision to grant or refuse a licence is then made by SIA staff. A mix of permanent and temporary staff is employed to manage the volume variations caused by the late response of the security industry to the introduction of licensing. To help manage the late rush of application the SIA have opened two temporary processing units, one managed by BT and one by the SIA. In total there are 186 staff employed by BT and the SIA to deliver licensing to applicants.

Sentencing

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the criminal offences for which people can be sentenced to prison terms of up to two years. [65580]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information requested is not available centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Victim Support Compensation

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to include access to victim support compensation payments for victims of offences that result in a caution to the perpetrator. [70303]

Mr. Sutcliffe: No plans are needed. Such victims are already eligible for compensation provided the injury is sufficiently serious to qualify for the minimum award payable under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme (CICS).

The standard of proof required by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA) in determining claims under the Scheme is 'the balance of probabilities'. That is the standard of proof required in the civil courts. For CICS purposes, that means it is not necessary for the offender to have been convicted of the crime causing the injury, and compensation may be paid in cases where the offender is not caught or even identified.

Violent Crime

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government are taking to tackle violent crime in Coventry, South and the Midlands. [72302]

Mr. McNulty: The Government are currently taking forward a very full range of work which will continue to reduce violent crime.

Through the Tackling Violent Crime Programme (TVCP), we are working intensively with practitioners in a small number of local areas with high volumes of more serious violent crime—in particular alcohol-related and domestic violence—with a view to identifying, developing, disseminating and embedding good practice. Activities to tackle alcohol-related disorder have included intervening early in the evening with a view to preventing the escalation of violence, and conducting multi-agency visits to problem licensed premises. We are working to improve investigation of domestic violence with a view to bringing more domestic violence offences to justice.

In the Midlands, Coventry is one of the areas that has been involved in the TVCP (along with Wolverhampton and Nottingham) and two more areas (Birmingham, and Leicester) are due to join the programme over the next couple of months. In addition, the regional Government office for the West Midlands is planning a regional TVCP in up to 11 areas during 2006-07.

Coventry has an existing specialist domestic violence court and is included in the Specialist Domestic Violence Court Programme's roll out plan to implement the nationally agreed core components of a specialist domestic violence court system across all of West Midlands over the coming year.

We are introducing new measures which will give police and local communities the powers they need to tackle guns, knives and alcohol-related violence in the Violent Crime Reduction Bill which is currently before Parliament, and, for example, plans have been developed with the Association of Chief Police Officers for a nation-wide knife amnesty, which will begin in late May.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Advertising

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent on advertising by his Department in each of the last three years. [70475]

Mr. Dhanda: DfES expenditure on advertising for the last three years is set out as follows:

	Advertising spend (£ million)
2003-04	17.0
2004-05	11.8
2005-06[1]	8.3

[1] Formal departmental resource accounts for 2005-06 are not yet finalised.

Note:
All expenditure is exclusive of VAT.

Blind and Partially Blind Children

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the statutory provisions relating to the teaching of blind and partially blind children; and if he will make a statement. [72453]

Mr. Dhanda: Local authorities have important and extensive duties to identify, assess and make provision for children with special educational needs, including blind and partially blind children, and to keep their arrangements for doing so under review. Schools, early education settings, local authorities and others must have regard to the special educational needs code of practice, which gives guidance on carrying out their statutory duties under the 1996 Education Act.

The Government published in February 2004 its SEN strategy "Removing Barriers to Achievement", which sets out a long-term programme to improve SEN provision and to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEN. As part of this strategy, the Department is promoting more consistent practice through a team of national SEN advisers.

In addition to holding qualified teacher status, a person employed by a school as a teacher of a class of pupils with a visual impairment is required by regulations to hold an additional specialist qualification, approved by the Secretary of State, known as a mandatory qualification.

Chat Rooms

Margaret Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether he plans to seek to introduce measures to ensure that where chat room moderators are employed outside the jurisdiction of UK courts this is displayed on the relevant site. [72502]

Mr. Dhanda: Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Bill currently before Parliament, people will be barred where they present a risk of harm to children and/or vulnerable adults. The Bill makes it a requirement for chat-room moderators operating in England and Wales to be vetted.

We will continue to work with representatives of the industry in the Home Office's Internet Task Force to support the industry's approach to maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding. This might include an indication of the standards used by UK-based providers.

Child Protection

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1630W, on sex offender vetting, if he will take steps to agree with the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Home Office procedures to enable local councillors and police authorities to bar councillors on the sex offenders register from access to local authority schools and vulnerable adults; what discussions have taken place on the subject; and if he will make a statement. [71381]

Mr. Dhanda: Under the new vetting and barring scheme, people will be barred where they present a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults. Inclusion on the sex offenders register will be one of the reasons for barring. The police and local authorities will be required to provide relevant information to the scheme, on which the Independent Barring Board may decide to place that individual on the children's or vulnerable adults' barred list. Inclusion on the children's list would prevent the individual from working closely with children including frequently working in key children's establishments such as local authority schools or holding positions of authority in relation to children such as local councillors with responsibilities in relation to children's services.

Departmental Credit Cards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what facility is available for senior civil servants in his Department to use credit cards supplied by the Department. [70478]

Bill Rammell: Government Procurement Cards are available for use by any member of Departmental staff

with purchasing responsibilities. In addition, the Private Office team also have access to Company Barclaycards for members of their staff. The Department has utilised the national framework contracts established by OGCBuying.Solutions in setting up these card schemes.

Disabled Children

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate he has made of the number of children of each *(a)* sex and *(b)* ethnic group with a disability. [71223]

Mr. Dhanda: Currently, the Department collects information about the numbers of pupils in the country with different types of special educational need (SEN) but specific information on pupils with a disability is not collected.

Many pupils identified as having SEN will also be disabled as the definition of SEN includes:

"Children who have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority"

Work is in progress to identify a common disability data set that can be used to collect information across children's services to better inform planning, policy development and the monitoring of outcomes for disabled children.

Information given in the following table shows numbers of pupils of each sex and ethnic group who have special educational needs (SEN):

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: number of pupils with special educational needs by ethnic group[2], [3]January 2006[4], England

Pupils of compulsory school age and above

	Maintained Primary				*Maintained Secondary*			
	Pupils with SEN without statement[5]		*Pupils with statements of SEN*		*Pupils with SEN without statement[5]*		*Pupils with statements of SEN*	
	Number[5]	*Percentage[6]*	*Number*	*Percentage[7]*	*Number[5]*	*Percentage[6]*	*Number*	*Percentage[7]*
White	531,440	19.5	49,650	1.8	415,500	15.0	63,040	2.3
White British	507,640	19.4	47,930	1.8	400,340	15.0	61,170	2.3
Irish	2,460	20.0	260	2.1	1,830	14.9	290	2.4
Traveller of Irish Heritage	1,750	57.7	80	2.5	490	46.0	70	6.8
Any other White Background	17,090	19.4	1,240	1.4	11,880	15.8	1,330	1.8
Gypsy/Roma	2,490	47.9	150	2.8	960	41.8	190	8.2
Mixed	23,630	20.1	2,020	1.7	14,180	16.8	1,850	2.2
White and Black Caribbean	9,380	23.4	740	1.8	6,380	20.9	800	2.6
White and Black African	2,630	21.0	190	1.5	1,390	17.3	150	1.9
White and Asian	3,730	15.4	340	1.4	1,990	11.8	310	1.8
Any other Mixed Background	7,900	19.4	750	1.9	4,430	15.4	600	2.1
Asian	50,610	19.0	4,020	1.5	33,160	15.0	3,910	1.8
Indian	10,780	13.9	910	1.2	7,500	9.6	940	1.2
Pakistani	25,720	23.3	2,060	1.9	16,530	19.9	2,010	2.4
Bangladeshi	9,630	20.7	700	1.5	5,760	17.6	660	2.0
Any other Asian Background	4,480	14.4	350	1.1	3,380	12.6	300	1.1
Black	37,420	25.2	2,880	1.9	24,890	21.2	2,530	2.2
Black Caribbean	13,860	28.5	1,080	2.2	10,470	24.3	1,330	3.1
Black African	19,550	23.3	1,440	1.7	11,580	19.1	870	1.4
Any other Black Background	4,010	25.4	360	2.3	2,850	20.6	330	2.4
Chinese	1,160	10.5	150	1.3	1,190	9.2	140	1.1
Any other Ethnic Group	7,500	20.1	520	1.4	5,150	17.3	410	1.4
Classified	651,770	19.7	59,240	1.8	494,080	15.3	71,880	2.2

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: number of pupils with special educational needs by ethnic group[2, 3] January 2006[4], England

Pupils of compulsory school age and above

	Maintained Primary				Maintained Secondary			
	Pupils with SEN without statement[5]		Pupils with statements of SEN		Pupils with SEN without statement[5]		Pupils with statements of SEN	
	Number[5]	Percentage[6]	Number	Percentage[7]	Number[5]	Percentage[6]	Number	Percentage[7]
Unclassified[8]	10,750	23.4	910	2.0	12,560	16.2	2,050	2.6
All pupils[2]	662,520	19.8	60,150	1.8	506,630	15.3	73,930	2.2

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed
[2] Pupils of compulsory school age and above
[3] Excludes dually registered pupils
[4] Provisional
[5] Includes pupils at School Action and School Action Plus
[6] The number of pupils with SEN without statements expressed as a percentage of all pupils (aged 5 and over) of the same ethnic origin.
[7] The number of pupils with statements of SEN expressed as a percentage of all pupils (aged 5 and over) of the same ethnic origin.
[8] Information was not sought or refused
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Maintained Primary and Secondary Schools[1]: Pupils with special educational needs by gender January 2006[2]

	Maintained Primary		Maintained Secondary	
	Pupils with SEN without a statement[3]	Pupils with a statement of SEN	Pupils with SEN without a statement[3]	Pupils with a statement of SEN
Female	249,200	18,070	190,440	20,120
Male	467,560	46,850	316,220	53,820
Total	716,750	64,910	506,670	73,930

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed and excludes dually registered pupils
[2] Provisional
[3] Includes pupils at School Action and School Action Plus
Source: Annual Schools Census.

Dyslexic Children

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what resources are allocated in *(a)* Southend on Sea and *(b)* England to the training of teachers in detecting and teaching dyslexic children; and if he will make a statement; [71983]

(2) what estimate he has made of the number of dyslexic *(a)* children and *(b)* adults in each of the last 10 years; [71984]

(3) what recent research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on dyslexia; and if he will make a statement; [71985]

(4) what figures his Department collects on the number of children under 16 years of age with dyslexia; and if he will make a statement. [72451]

Mr. Dhanda: To be awarded qualified teacher status (QTS), all trainee teachers must demonstrate that they understand their responsibilities under the statutory SEN code of practice, know how to seek advice from specialists where necessary, and can differentiate their teaching to meet the needs of pupils, including those with SEN.

The National Standards for qualified teachers status and the Induction Programme for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT) both cover SEN, including specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia. NQTs are required to demonstrate that they can plan effectively to meet the needs of pupils in their class with SEN, with or without a statement, and in consultation with the school's SEN Co-ordinator, contribute to the preparation and implementation of individual pupils' education plans or the equivalent.

The Department is working with the Training and Development Agency for Schools to take forward a range of specific initiatives designed to improve the skills and confidence of trainee, newly qualified, and established teachers in supporting pupils with SEN and disabilities.

All schools have a school development grant that they can use, amongst other things, for the purposes of supporting the continuing professional development of teachers in relation to their understanding and knowledge of SEN and disability issues. A wide variety of courses are available covering SEN, including dyslexia, ranging from awareness-raising through to in-depth studies leading to specific qualifications. It is, however, a matter for individual teachers and their schools to determine their own particular training and development needs.

No information is collected centrally which would enable the Government to make an estimate of the number of children and adults with dyslexia. However, since 2004, the Department for Education and Skills have collected data on pupils by type of SEN as part of the annual school census. Dyslexia is included within specific learning difficulties (SpLD)—which also covers dyscalculia and dyspraxia. We have data on pupils with SEN at 'School Action Plus' and with a statement of SEN where SpLD is recorded as their primary need. The number of pupils aged under 16 with SpLD in maintained schools in 2006 was just under 77,000. We do not have data on pupils whose needs are met at 'School Action' or where SpLD is a secondary or other need.

The Department has not commissioned any recent research on dyslexia.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the capacity of further education institutions to administer the education maintenance allowance in-house from 2007-08. [50934]

Mr. Dhanda: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, who operate education maintenance

allowances for the DfES. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive has written to the hon. Member with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 15 February 2006:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question that asked 'how much has been spent on administration of educational maintenance allowance in each year since the scheme was piloted; and how much is expected to be spent in each year until 2009-10'.

EMA Pilots

It is not possible to be precise about the expenditure on administration during the pilot period. The table below shows the total expenditure and the approximated administration expenditure on the Education Maintenance Allowance pilots by financial year.

					£ million
	1999-2000	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*
Full costs	11	52	109	120	142
Administration costs (approximate)	0.44	2.08	4.4	4.8	5.7

EMA pilots were administered through local authorities in areas identified as having low percentages of young people staying on in education post-16. Administration costs were agreed on the basis of type of pilot and volumes, and were subject to audit. Payments varied across the local authorities but on average administration costs were around 3-4 % of the full claim made by the local authority.

EMA Main Scheme

The table below shows the main scheme EMA provision for future years made in Annually Managed Expenditure (AME) by financial year.

						£ million
	(Actual) 2004-05	*(Planned) 2005-06*	*(Planned) 2006-07*	*(Planned) 2007-08*	*(Planned) 2008-09*	*(Planned) 2009-10*[1]
Full Costs	260	432	570	591	598	595
Administration costs (approximate)	42.7	53.1	52.5	35.8	[1]—	[1]—

[1] The figures for 2008-09 and 2009-10 are dependent on the outcomes of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

The EMA main scheme commenced from the beginning of the 2004/05 academic year and is administered through schools and colleges. The costs shown include set-up and publicity expenditure, payments to colleges and schools for them to set up administrative arrangements, and payments to the Assessment and Payment Body for processing.

Roll-out of the scheme is continuing, with consequent planned increases in volumes. From April EMA is also being extended to young people on Entry to Employment (E2E) and Programme Led Pathways. This expansion is covered within the figures for 2006-07 and 2007-08, and unit costs decrease as the scheme beds in.

I hope this information is helpful and addresses your question. If you would like further details please contact Philip Brewins at the LSC National Office on 0114 207 4513 or Philip.Brewins@lsc.gov.uk

Dan Norris: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many residents of Wansdyke constituency are *(a)* eligible for and *(b)* in receipt of the education maintenance allowance. [54391]

Mr. Dhanda: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, who operate education maintenance allowances for the DfES and hold the information about take-up of the scheme. Mark Haysom, the council's chief executive, has written to my hon. Friend with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom dated 15 March 2006:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question regarding Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

Information on the number of young people who have applied, enrolled and received EMA is available at Local Education Authority (LEA) level, but not at constituency level. EMA take-up is defined as young people who have received one or more EMA payment in the academic year 2005/06.

Projections of the number of young people eligible for EMA are formed by applying income distributions (derived from the Family Resources Survey) and expected numbers in full-time further education. When applied to individual localities the figures may be subject to some variation but they provide a useful estimate.

The following table displays the data for South Gloucestershire and Bath and North East Somerset.

Take-up of EMA in 2005/06 (by the end of January 2006)

LEA	*Projected number eligible*	*Actual take-up*
South Gloucestershire	1,950	1,387
Bath and North East Somerset	1,320	1,011

In modelling EMA take-up we also produce projections for the number of young people expected to receive one or more EMA payment in each LEA. In producing these projections we have taken account of the take-up in the first year of the national scheme and factored an expected increase for year two. The following table displays this data.

Take-up of EMA in 2005/06 (by the end of January 2006)

LEA	*Projected take-up of EMA*	*Actual take-up*
South Gloucestershire	1,530	1,387
Bath and North East Somerset	1,040	1,011

I hope this information is helpful and addresses your question.

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils in Cumbria are in receipt of the education maintenance allowance. [67331]

Mr. Dhanda: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, who operate education maintenance allowances for the DfES and hold the information about take-up of the scheme. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive has written to my hon. Friend with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 5 May 2006:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question that asked "How many pupils in Cumbria are in receipt of the education maintenance allowance?"

By the end of March 2006, 3,611 young people in the Cumbria local education authority area had applied, enrolled and received one or more EMA payment during the academic year 2005/06.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will raise the threshold of parental income for the payments of education maintenance allowance (EMA); and what assessment he has made of the impact of replacing the entry to employment scheme with EMA. [72246]

Mr. Dhanda: I can confirm that the household income thresholds that are used to determine eligibility for receipt of education maintenance allowance (EMA) have been increased. The household income thresholds (for applications based on the tax year 2005-06) have been increased in line with the retail prices index as follows:

	EMA award (£)
£0 to £20,817	30
£20,818 to £25,521	20
£25,522 to £30,810	10

To respond to the second part of your question, I need to clarify that the Entry to Employment scheme is still being operated and will not be replaced by EMA.

From April 2006, the package of financial support provided to 16 to 19-year-old learners in school sixth forms/further education colleges, has been extended to young people participating in unwaged training programmes (Entry to Employment and Programme led Pathways) funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The extension of EMA to unwaged trainees should not be regarded as simply the replacement of the training allowance by EMA. It is a full package of financial support which will extend EMA to unwaged trainees and extend child benefit and child tax credit to their parents/carers. This will mean more money for the majority of unwaged trainees and their families, who are typically low to middle income households. Those young people who are estranged from their parents/carers, and entitled to claim benefits in their own right, will also be much better off as they will be able to claim income support in addition to their EMA.

The LSC will monitor and evaluate the impact of these reforms and will report progress on implementing them to my officials at the Department for Education and Skills.

Education Spending

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent on *(a)* nursery, *(b)* primary and *(c)* secondary education in (i) Cornwall and (ii) England in 2005-06. [72783]

Jim Knight: The information requested is not yet available. The Department is due to collect the section 52 Outturn data relating to the 2005-06 financial year from August 2006.

Former Civil Servants (Consultants)

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many former members of his Department have notified the civil service authorities under civil service regulations that they are working for *(a)* lobbyists and *(b)* consultants; which companies are involved in each case; and whether the company is employed by his Department. [68627]

Mr. Dhanda: The information in the form requested could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

All staff who leave the Department are subject to the Business Appointment Rules issued by the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments.

A list of all Business Appointment applications considered by the advisory committee is published in the committee's annual report, copies of which can be obtained from the Library.

Foster Care

Jim Sheridan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in England are waiting to be placed with foster parents. [73175]

Mr. Dhanda: There is currently no central collection of data regarding the number of children in England who are waiting to be placed with foster carers.

However, work to develop an annual return on foster care is currently being taken forward by the Commission for Social Care Inspection, with a view to collecting data from all fostering providers from summer 2006.

Leased Land

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* land and *(b)* property his Department (i) leases and (ii) leased in (A) 1979, (B) 1983, (C) 1987, (D) 1992 and (E) 1997 in (1) the Southend, West constituency, (2) Essex, (3) Hertfordshire and (4) the Metropolitan Police area of London. [72119]

Mr. Dhanda: The Secretary of State for Education and Skills does not currently lease any land or property in any of the areas in question. Historical information is not available.

Merseyside Learning and Skills Council

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he expects the restructuring of the Merseyside Learning and Skills Council to be completed; and what consequential effects he expects on costs. [72829]

Bill Rammell: The Learning and Skills Council is making good progress in implementing its restructuring proposals, and has announced a number of senior level appointments in Merseyside, including the Area Director and Local Partnership Directors. The timescale for completing the restructuring programme is a matter for the LSC, but we would expect implementation across the whole organisation to be complete by March 2007. The LSC estimates that nationally these changes will save up to £40 million, including in property and related costs.

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what consultation is being carried out concerning the restructuring of the Merseyside Learning and Skills Council. [72830]

Bill Rammell: The Learning and Skills Council has consulted staff and unions on its proposals. The formal consultation ended on 8 February, following a short extension to the agreed 90 day consultation period. The Learning and Skills Council is continuing to discuss the changes with staff and Unions at both national level and local level. We expect implementation to be complete by March 2007.

Milton Keynes University

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what role *(a)* the Higher Education Funding Council and *(b)* his Department will have in (i) establishing links between West Midlands universities and (ii) developing a university for Milton Keynes. [72987]

Bill Rammell: The DfES and the Higher Education Funding Council for England do not have a formal role in establishing links between Universities or for developing new Universities. However, HEFCE do work closely with and contribute funding towards the West Midlands Higher Education Association whose aims are to promote West Midlands HEIs and to facilitate collaboration between HEIs and provide a forum for sharing, communicating and disseminating good practice.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for Ministers of State in his Department on foreign visits in each of the last three years; [69033]

(2) on how many occasions Ministers of State in his Department stayed overnight in *(a)* five star, *(b)* four star and *(c)* three star hotels on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [69034]

Mr. Dhanda: Costs for overnight accommodation for all Ministers on foreign visits in each of the last three years are in the following table:

	Cost (£)
2003-04	4,170
2004-05	2,487
2005-06	3,286

Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. This information includes accommodation costs. Copies are available in the Library.

Records of the star ratings of hotels stayed in by Ministers are not held centrally and could be collected only by incurring disproportionate cost.

All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

Prison Education

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will ensure that every adult prison has *(a)* a learning support assistant and *(b)* a special educational needs co-ordinator. [65801]

Phil Hope: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary on 2 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1425W.

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much has been paid in *(a)* salary, *(b)* travelling expenses, *(c)* subsistence allowance and *(d)* removal expenses to special advisers in his private office in each of the last five years. [69038]

Mr. Dhanda: Since 2003, the Government have published on an annual basis the names and overall cost of special advisers and the number in each payband. For information relating to the last financial year I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement made by my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 158-61WS.

Information on special advisers for this financial year is currently being collected and will be published in the normal way when it is ready.

The following table shows special advisers' travel expenses for the last five years:

	Amount (£)
2001-02	3,051
2002-03	4,080
2003-04	2,445
2004-05	1,345
2005-06	2,123

The Department does not hold records of special advisers' subsistence in the format requested. This information could be provided only by incurring a disproportionate cost.

According to records, there have been no removal costs paid to special advisers in this Department in the last five years.

All official travel by special advisers is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the ministerial code and the civil service management code.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of his private office staff is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled. [69041]

Mr. Dhanda: The following table shows the percentage of *(a)* male and *(b)* female staff in the Department for Education and Skills' ministerial private offices.

	Percentage
Male	45
Female	55

Information on staffs disabilities is not held.

Promotion Boards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many promotion boards have been held in his Department in each of the last five years. [70474]

Mr. Dhanda: The number of promotion boards held in the Department in each of the years requested are set out in the following table:

	Promotion boards
2001	HEO
2002	Senior Civil Service
2003	SEO
2004	Senior Civil Service
2005	Grade 6 and Grade 7

These promotion boards were open to internal candidates only.

Pupil/Teacher Ratio

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average pupil:teacher ratio in primary schools in *(a)* Cornwall, *(b)* the South-West Region and *(c)* England was in each year since 2001. [72705]

Jim Knight: The following table provides the pupil: teacher ratio in maintained primary schools in Cornwall local authority, the South West government office region and England, in each January from 2001 to 2006. Information for 2006 is not yet available at local authority level.

Pupil:teacher ratios in maintained primary schools in Cornwall local authority, South West government office region and England, as at January of each year

	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*[1]
Cornwall	22.9	22.3	22.4	22.6	22.6	n/a
South West	23.0	22.4	22.4	22.6	22.5	21.8
England	22.9	22.5	22.6	22.7	22.5	22.0

n/a = Not available.
[1] Provisional.
Source:
Annual School Census

Racial Abuse Complaints

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many complaints of racial abuse have been *(a)* investigated and *(b)* upheld in his Department in each of the last five years. [70476]

Mr. Dhanda: The Department's investigation procedure, to consider allegations of racial abuse, has been initiated less than five times in each of the last five years. On this basis, we regret that the information is suppressed on grounds of confidentiality.

The DfES believes that everyone should have an equal opportunity to meet their aspirations, realise their full potential and improve their life chances and we aspire to be an exemplary equal opportunities employer, and create a workplace which values diversity and is free from any form of unfair discrimination.

The Department does not tolerate unacceptable behaviour towards others. Formal complaints of racial abuse are investigated quickly and thoroughly and where complaints are upheld, appropriate disciplinary action is taken.

School Day

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average length of the school day in England was in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [71963]

Mr. Dhanda: The requested information for England is not collected centrally.

Student Accommodation

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what support his Department provides for the provision of student accommodation. [72444]

Bill Rammell: The Department for Education and Skills does not provide any direct support to higher education institutions for the provision of student accommodation. Institutions are able to use other funding available to them to secure the provision of appropriate accommodation for their students.

Student Finances

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what evaluation he has

undertaken of the impact of regional variations in students' cost of living on the number of students *(a)* going to university and *(b)* completing their course. [72442]

Bill Rammell: Since 1999/2000 the initial entrants to HE have increased from 246,000 to 271,000 in 2004/05 and we now have world class completion rates of 86 per cent. I am not aware of any evidence to demonstrate that regional variations in living costs are correlated with participation or completion rates, and in the most recent Student Income and Expenditure Survey (SIES 2004/05) commissioned by the DfES 4 out of 5 of students thought the benefits of HE were greater than the costs. We are already making £2 billion a year available in student support, abolishing up front tuition fees and institutions will become more responsible for providing additional support for deserving students through bursaries which will be worth over £300 million.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research his Department has *(a)* undertaken and *(b)* assessed on the (i) levels of rent in student accommodation and (ii) impact of rent levels on levels of participation. [72443]

Bill Rammell: The recently published the Student Income and Expenditure Survey (SIES) 2004/05 questioned students on their expenditure on rent and mortgage, this has increased by 29 per cent. on average across all full-time students in real terms since the last comprehensive study in 1998/09.

Since 1999/2000 initial entrants to HE have increased from 246,000 to 271,000 in 2004/05 and we now have world class completion rates of 86 per cent. I am not aware of any evidence to demonstrate that accommodation costs are correlated with participation rates although SIES 2004/05 showed that 4 out of 5 of students thought the benefits of HE were greater than the costs. We are already making £2 billion a year available in student support, abolishing up front tuition fees and institutions will become more responsible for providing additional support for deserving students through bursaries which will be worth over £300 million.

Teaching

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many state-maintained schools offer Mandarin as a language option from Key Stage 3; and how many state-funded colleges offer A and AS level Mandarin. [71877]

Jim Knight: Information is not collected on the subjects offered at any Key Stage by schools and colleges. However, it is possible to provide figures on the number of schools where at least one pupil has been entered for an examination in a particular subject at Key Stage 4 and Post-16 education (but not for Key Stage 3) and these are given as follows.

In 2005, the number of maintained schools where at least one 15-year-old[1] pupil was entered for a GCSE full course in Chinese[2] was 500. In the same year, 183 maintained schools and 70 FE Sector Colleges had at least one student entered for A or AS level Chinese.

[1] Age at start of academic year i.e. 31 August.

[2] GCSE and A/AS level Chinese qualifications are accessible to both Mandarin and Cantonese speakers.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which foreign languages are taught in schools in each local authority in England; and how many children between the ages of 14 and 16 years are studying each language. [72839]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* Information is not collected on the subjects taught in schools, however it is possible to provide figures to show where at least one pupil has been entered for a particular subject. It is not possible, however, to say whether the school has actually taught the subject or whether the pupil has been entered privately.

A table showing the number of 15-year-old pupils[1] entered for GCSE full course languages examinations in 2004/05[2], by local authority has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in the Ribble Valley have been taught at home in each of the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [73208]

Jim Knight: Parents may exercise their right to educate their children at home on a temporary or permanent basis. We do not collect information about the numbers of children whose parents provide education at home, and it would be impractical to do so given the transient nature of some of this type of provision.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Access to Justice

Anne Milton: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps her Department is taking to improve access to justice for those who *(a)* are not eligible for legal aid and *(b)* are unable to find a solicitor who will take on their case via legal aid. [71567]

Vera Baird: The information is as follows: *(a)* Conditional Fee Agreements (CFAs) enable solicitors to undertake cases on the basis that they will only charge their fee in the event of success and nothing in the event of failure. The Government have extended the use of CFAs so that they are now available for all civil proceedings, except family proceedings. We recently completed a major simplification of the regulation of CFAs to make the process easier for consumers to understand. In January this year the Government launched a straightforward guide for consumers to help them to get the information they need to make an informed choice about the most appropriate legal adviser for them. My Department is working closely with Community Legal Service Direct to develop this guidance further to ensure that those consumers that are not eligible for legal aid have the confidence to shop effectively for their legal services. The Government's proposals for legal service reform will also improve access to justice by promoting competition within the legal profession and building consumer confidence in the sector.

(b) The Legal Services Commission (LSC) continues to work with suppliers to fill potential gaps where possible through outreach services and telephone advice. The LSC consulted last year on its strategy for

the Community Legal Service (CLS), Making Legal Rights a Reality. The Commission's final strategy for the CLS was launched on 23 March 2006. One of the proposals is the development of Community Legal Advice Networks which will be particularly beneficial in less densely populated and larger geographical areas, as they will operate to ensure that services are joined up so as to provide a wider range of services to the client than previously available. Clients can find a local legal adviser through the Community Legal Service (CLS) Direct telephone helpline. Their telephone number is: 0845 345 4345 or alternatively their website is www.clsdirect.org.uk

Advertising

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much was spent on advertising by her Department in each of the last three years. [70513]

Vera Baird: Since its inception in June 2003, my Department, the Department for Constitutional Affairs has conducted the following advertising on:

A regional poster campaign on buses to promote recruitment to the lay magistracy

A national campaign to promote recruitment to the lay magistracy

Radio and press adverts to target court fine defaulters (under the title Operation Payback)

Press adverts to promote voting fraud prevention

Lord Carter's Review of Legal Aid Procurement

	Project	*Expenditure on advertising (£)*
2003	Operation Payback (Phase 1)	230,000
	Magistrate recruitment	342,000
2004	Operation Payback (Phase 2)	292,000
	Magistrate recruitment	102,000
2005	Postal voting	185,270
	Magistrate recruitment	741,000
	Operation Payback (Phase 3)	263,082
2006	Magistrate recruitment	162,493
	Lord Carter's Review of Legal Aid Procurement	24,200

Departmental Consultations

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many public consultations her Department undertook in the last 12 months; and what the cost was *(a)* in total and *(b)* of each consultation. [70511]

Vera Baird: During the calendar year 2005, the Department for Constitutional Affairs undertook 16 formal public consultations in order to inform the department's policy development. Information on the cost of all consultations could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Credit Cards

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what facility is available for senior civil servants in her Department to use credit cards supplied by the Department. [70516]

Bridget Prentice: The Department for Constitutional Affairs has adopted the OGCbuying.solutions National Framework for the Government Procurement Card (GPC) and Government Fuel Card (GFC) facilities in line with best practice. These are available to identified staff in the Department including senior civil servants.

Unlike a consumer credit card, which offers consumers extended credit facilities, both GPC and Fuel Cards were introduced to consolidate high-occurrence small value purchases, with Procurement Card invoices to be settled in full at the end of each billing period.

There are no other credit cards supplied by the Department for use by staff.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what *(a)* land and *(b)* property her Department (i) leases and (ii) leased in *(A)* 1979, *(B)* 1983, *(C)* 1987, *(D)* 1992 and *(E)* 1997 in (1) the Southend West constituency, (2) Essex, (3) Hertfordshire and (4) the Metropolitan Police area of London. [72110]

Vera Baird: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Information Technology

Chris Huhne: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much was spent on information technology (IT) sourced from outside her Department in each of the last five years; who is responsible for such projects in her Department; and what IT *(a)* expertise and *(b)* qualifications they possess. [71804]

Bridget Prentice: For my Department, the expenditure on IT systems since 2001 is contained within three main areas; Crown and county courts, magistrates courts and headquarters. These three areas which are sourced from outside the Department, are covered by separate contracts: LOCCS, ARAMIS and the LIBRA contracts.

The total IT spend under these contracts over the last five years is as follows:

	£ million
2001-02	73.8
2002-03	110.24
2003-04	149.6
2004-05	121.38
2005-06	158.51

The Chief Information Officer, Annette Vernon CBE, advises the Permanent secretary on IT matters for the Department. She has more than 20 years experience in public sector IT based change. She has successfully delivered important and award-winning projects such as LINK (supplying infrastructure to the

courts), XHIBIT (exchanging Hearing Information By Internet Technology), and MCOL (Money Claim OnLine). She has formal qualifications in programme and project management.

Legal Aid

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the total cost of legal aid for supporting prisoners appealing parole board decisions was in each of the last five years. [69743]

Vera Baird *[pursuant to the reply, 18 May 2006, Official Report c. 1185W]:* The figures in my answer of 18 May related to the cost of legal aid only for parole board hearings. They did not include the costs of judicial reviews of parole board hearings.

The Legal Services Commission is not able to readily provide specifically the cost of legal aid for supporting prisoners seeking judicial reviews of parole board decisions as judicial reviews are not centrally recorded to that level of specification.

Ministerial Travel (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for Ministers of State in her Department on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [69023]

Vera Baird: Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year, this information includes accommodation costs. Copies are available in the Library.

I am unable to provide the requested information for Minister of State without incurring disproportionate costs.

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) on how many occasions Ministers of State in her Department stayed overnight in *(a)* five-star, *(b)* four-star and *(c)* three-star hotels on foreign visits in each of the last three years; [69024]

(2) on how many occasions *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in her Department have stayed overnight in (i) five-star, (ii) four-star and (iii) three-star hotels in each of the last three years. [69025]

Vera Baird: Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year, this information includes accommodation costs. Copies are available in the Library.

I am unable to provide the requested information for Minister of State, special advisors or civil servants without incurring disproportionate costs.

Postal Voting Fraud

Mr. Evans: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many incidents of postal vote fraud were recorded in the Limehouse ward of Tower Hamlets on 4 May. [70530]

Bridget Prentice: The Government are aware that a number of allegations have been made concerning the conduct of the May 2006 local elections in the Limehouse ward of Tower Hamlets.

The Government are also aware that these allegations are the subject of an ongoing police investigation, and that any comment on these particular allegations cannot be made until the investigation has reached a conclusion.

Staff Surveys

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many staff surveys have been conducted in her Department in each of the last three years. [70515]

Vera Baird: My Department has an established policy of surveying staff satisfaction. Such surveys are by questionnaire, which are sent to all staff on an annual basis. However, 2004-05 was a transitional year leading up to the DCA's merger with the 42 magistrates courts committees in April 2005 and no survey took place that year.

In the last three years, two surveys have been conducted: one in 2003-04 one in 2005-06.

HEALTH

Abortion

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions were performed on pregnancies of 18 weeks or more gestation in England and Wales in the last year for which figures are available; what the *(a)* age of mother, *(b)* residency of mother, *(c)* grounds for abortion, *(d)* marital status of mother, *(e)* number of previous children and *(f)* number of previous abortions were in each case; and how many and what percentage of those abortions were performed in the (i) public and (ii) private sector. [70882]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is shown in the table.

Abortions 18 weeks and over to residents of England and Wales and non-residents, by age, residency of mother, grounds, marital status, number of previous live or stillbirths and number of previous terminations, each by purchaser, 2004

	NHS[1]		*Private*		
	Total	*Percentage*	*Private total*	*Percentage*	*Total*
Age at termination					
Under 16 years	179	88	25	12	204

Abortions 18 weeks and over to residents of England and Wales and non-residents, by age, residency of mother, grounds, marital status, number of previous live or stillbirths and number of previous terminations, each by purchaser, 2004

	NHS[1]		Private		
	Total	Percentage	Private total	Percentage	Total
16	228	89	27	11	255
17	328	89	40	11	368
18	374	88	49	12	423
19	370	82	82	18	452
20	370	85	63	15	433
21	304	79	79	21	383
22	277	82	60	18	337
23	256	78	71	22	327
24	243	81	57	19	300
25	181	78	50	22	231
26	179	84	33	16	212
27	156	79	41	21	197
28	169	83	35	17	204
29	144	80	36	20	180
30	148	86	25	14	173
31	132	80	33	20	165
32	139	83	28	17	167
33	127	85	23	15	150
34	113	82	25	18	138
35	102	84	19	16	121
36	81	84	15	16	96
37	88	86	14	14	102
38	78	86	13	14	91
39	65	86	11	14	76
40 years and over	164	80	41	20	205
Residency of mother					
Residents[2]	4,871	90	563	10	5,434
Other	124	22	432	78	556
Grounds for termination					
Section 1(1)(a)[3]	4,049	81	978	19	5,027
Other	946	98	17	2	963
Marital status					
Single no partner	1,262	82	275	18	1,537
Single with partner	821	83	166	17	987
Single status not stated	925	81	215	19	1,140
Married	824	86	129	14	953
Divorced/widowed separated	126	81	30	19	156
Not known	1,037	85	180	15	1,217
Number of previous live or stillborn pregnancies					
0	2,810	81	648	19	3,458
1	1,098	86	175	14	1,273
2	648	86	106	14	754
3	267	85	48	15	315
4 and more	172	91	18	9	190
Number of previous terminations					
0	3,656	83	755	17	4,411
1	1,074	85	185	15	1,259

Abortions 18 weeks and over to residents of England and Wales and non-residents, by age, residency of mother, grounds, marital status, number of previous live or stillbirths and number of previous terminations, each by purchaser, 2004

	NHS[1]		Private		
	Total[2]	Percentage	Private total	Percentage	Total
2 and more	265	83	55	17	320
Gestations					
18 weeks and over	4,995	83	995	17	5,990

[1] Includes abortions performed in NHS hospitals and the independent sector under an NHS contract.
[2] Residents of England and Wales.
[3] That the pregnancy has not exceeded its twenty-fourth week and that the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk, greater than if the pregnancy were terminated, of injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman or any existing children of her family.
Note:
Specific groups shown only where there are 10 or more cases in total.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has *(a)* undertaken and *(b)* assessed on (i) the earliest point in its development an unborn child will experience pain, (ii) the earliest gestational age at which an unborn child may be capable of being born alive, (iii) the number of occasions when an unborn baby is wrongly diagnosed as being handicapped and is subsequently born without disability or handicap and (iv) the suicide rate among women who have had an abortion; and if she will make a statement. [70409]

Caroline Flint: The Department has not undertaken research on the following issues. However:

The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologist's (RCOG) report 'Fetal Awareness, Report of a Working Party (1997)' concluded that before 26 weeks gestation the nervous system has not developed sufficiently to allow the fetus to experience pain.

Guidance from the British Association of Perinatal Medicine introduces the concept of a threshold of viability as being from 22 to 26 weeks gestation. At low gestation age, even if the fetus is born alive, there are high risks of death due to immaturity. Indeed, while the possibility of survival of extremely pre-term babies has improved, data suggest that, even with modern intensive care, chances of survival at 22 weeks gestation are only approximately 1 per cent.

There are currently variations in antenatal screening practice across England. The Government's aim is to move towards a more integrated policy to give women more informed choice in this area.

Research shows that newer tests will lead to more accurate screening results. The aim of the research has been to identify the most effective and safe method of antenatal screening.

In the confidential inquiry into maternal and child health's 2004 triennial report 'Why Mother's Die 2000-2002', none of the maternal suicides are attributed to abortion.

The RCOG's evidence-based guideline 'The Care of Women Requesting Induced Abortion (2004)' recommends that referral for further counselling should be available for the small minority of women who experience long-term post-abortion distress.

Anti-depressants

Dr. Naysmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescription items of *(a)* benzodiazepines and *(b)* each other anti-depressant were dispensed in England in 2005. [71954]

Andy Burnham: In 2005 the number of prescription items dispensed in the community in England were 29.4 million for antidepressants and 11.3 million for benzodiazepines. More detailed information is obtainable from www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/prescostanalysis2005.

Bedford Hospital NHS Trust

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people employed in Bedford Hospital NHS trust have been on *(a)* short-term and *(b)* temporary contracts in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [71707]

Andy Burnham: Information is not available in the format requested. However, the information in the following table shows the number of locum staff working in Bedfordshire hospitals national health service trust for the period that data is available covering the 2002 to 2005.

Hospital and community health services (HCHS): locum staff[1] working in Bedford hospitals NHS trust by grade and year

	Number (headcount)			
	Data as at 30 September each year			
	2002	2003	2004	2005
All staff	9	14	14	13
Of which:				
Consultant	3	6	8	10
Associate specialist/staff grade	1	2	2	0
Registrar group	2	2	3	1
Senior house officer	2	4	0	1
House officer and foundation programme year one	0	0	1	0
Hospital practitioner/ clinical assistant	1	0	0	1

[1] Excludes staff that hold a substantive contract.
Source:
The Information Centre for health and social care, medical and dental workforce census

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Government are taking to improve patient care at the Riverbank children's ward at Bedford hospital NHS trust; and if she will make a statement. [71709]

Andy Burnham: Improvements to the children's ward at Bedford hospital trust are in line with the Department's National Service Framework (NSF) for Children, Young People and Maternity Services which includes a standard on hospital care. This states that examples of good practice already exist but we expect all hospitals providing services to children to consider how to follow the best practices available. It is for NHS trusts to decide in the light of local priorities how to implement the hospital standard of the NSF. There are a number of good practice examples already on the Department of Health's emerging practice database, which is online at www.childrensnsfcasestudies.dh.gov.uk/children/nsfcasestudies.nsf. The NSF can be viewed at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/06/72/51/04067251.pdf

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many full-time equivalent staff have been employed in children's wards at Bedford hospital NHS trust in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [71710]

Andy Burnham: Information is not available in the format requested. However, the information in the following table gives the numbers of medical and dental staff with a paediatric specialty working in Bedford hospital national health service trust by grade and year.

Hospital and community health services: medical and dental staff with a paediatric specialty working in Bedford hospital NHS trust by grade and year

Full-time equivalents

	Data as at 30 September each year								
	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
All staff	14	14	15	14	18	14	18	10	19
Consultant	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5
Associate specialist/staff grade	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	2	1
Registrar group	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	6
Senior house officer	5	5	6	6	7	4	8	1	7

Source:
The Information Centre for health and social care, medical and dental workforce census

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment has been made of the impact on patient care of the staff reductions proposed by Bedford Hospital NHS Trust; what representations she has received about this; and if she will make a statement. [71713]

Andy Burnham: The Department has made no assessment of the proposed job cuts at Bedfordshire Hospital National Health Service Trust. The trust has said that any reduction in posts will be achieved through natural wastage and should any staff be displaced every effort will be made to redeploy them elsewhere in the trust. Every effort will be made to ensure that any reduction in staffing levels does not impact on patient care.

Choose and Book System

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 10 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1812W, on the Choose and Book System, how many bookings were made through the Choose and Book system in each month between July 2004 and July 2005, broken down by geographical area; and how many bookings were made through the *(a)* directly and *(b)* indirectly bookable service in each month since July 2005, broken down by geographical area. [63117]

Caroline Flint: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Connecting for Health

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the status is of the Connecting for Health IT project. [69866]

Caroline Flint: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 16 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 939-40W.

Dentistry

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* new general dental services contracts and *(b)* new personal dental services agreements which have been offered to dentists have been (i) signed and (ii) rejected in (A) each primary care trust and (B) England; and what percentage of the previous NHS dentistry service level is now offered in (1) each primary care trust and (2) England. [64934]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* Data on provisional management estimates on the number of signed and rejected contracts which also set out the estimated level of national health service services associated with accepted contracts compared with that of rejected contracts, based on weighted courses of treatment or units of dental activity have been placed in the Library.

A contract may be for either a practice or an individual dentist.

Primary care trusts are using the funding associated with rejected contracts to commission additional services from other dentists.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the merits of permitting dentists trained in *(a)* the USA and *(b)* Canada to work in the NHS; and if she will make a statement. [69630]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The General Dental Council is responsible for the registration of dentists who wish to practise in the United Kingdom. There is a long tradition of dentists from overseas coming to work here to extend their training and experience and contribute to national health service dental care and we intend that this practice should continue.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* formal and *(b)* informal advice her Department received from the British Dental Association following the meeting on 14 February 2006 to discuss the new NHS dental contracts. [60388]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The British Dental Association (BDA) met departmental officials on 22 February to discuss in more detail some of the issues raised at the meeting on 14 February 2006. The BDA is now represented on the implementation group that has been set up to review the impact of the reforms and identify any issues that need to be addressed.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average remuneration per full-time equivalent NHS general dental practitioner was in the East Hull and West Hull Primary Care Trust area in each year since 1997. [64093]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Average remuneration per full-time equivalent national health service general dental practitioner in the Eastern Hull and West Hull Primary Care Trust area alone is not identifiable from data available centrally.

All estimated average annual net incomes, between 1997-98 and 2004-05, of general dental services (GDS) dentists with a reasonable commitment to the GDS are shown in the following table. These are calculated by first estimating average gross GDS income of a dentist with a reasonable NHS commitment and then applying estimates of the expenses to earnings ratio covering all dentists.

Estimated average GDS net income for dentists with a reasonable GDS commitment, 1997-98 to 2004-05, England and Wales.

Financial year	*Estimated average net GDS income (£)*
1997-98	51,200
1998-99	54,300
1999-2000	55,700
2000-01	59,200
2001-02	60,500
2002-03	63,300
2003-04	66,700
2004-05	70,000

The income figures cover both estimated fees for treatments and patient capitation as well as other estimated payments such as seniority payments and commitment payments and payments for maternity and sickness. Income from private sources is excluded from these estimates.

When account is taken of the lower expenses ratio for dentists with a higher NHS commitment, the estimated average net GDS income for 2004-05 in the table would be about £74,000. In 2005-06, after allowing for the 3.4 per cent. fee increase, the average would be about £76,500 for a dentist with a reasonable NHS commitment.

Separate information from tax returns provided to HM Revenue and Customs gives new income after expenses from all self-employed work, both NHS and private. For the 2003-04 tax year, average net income for non-associate dentists with very high NHS commitment was £78,600. This average will include some dentists working part-time. Non-associate dentists work either on their own or else in a partnership arrangement with other dentists.

NHS dentists benefit from a contributory pension scheme. Dentists working privately have to fully fund their own pension arrangements.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of *(a)* adults and *(b)* children are registered with an NHS dentist in each primary care trust in England; and how many were registered in each category in 1997. [67670]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Destroyed Documents (Blood Products)

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her Department has carried out an internal review into the destruction in the 1990s of documents held by her Department relating to national health service blood and plasma products infected with HIV and hepatitis C; and if she will make a statement. [65509]

Caroline Flint: During the HIV litigation many papers were recalled, and following that we understand papers were not adequately archived and were unfortunately destroyed in error.

Officials subsequently established during the hepatitis C litigation that documents relating to the advisory committee on the virological safety of blood between 1989 and 1992 had been destroyed in error. Following this discovery, an internal investigation was undertaken in April 2000 by the Department's internal audit.

Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate she has made of the savings to the NHS consequent on changes to the procurement arrangements for the Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin; [71822]

(2) what the cost is per copy of the Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin; [71823]

(3) how many NHS employees on average she estimates read each edition of the Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin; [71826]

(4) what methods for disseminating information will replace the Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin. [71827]

Andy Burnham: The cost to the Department for the purchase and distribution of Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin in 2005-06 was £1.4 million.

Under the terms of the Department's contract with the Consumers' Association, the Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin was distributed free of charge to all 120,000 national health service doctors in England 12 times a year. The cost of the contract in 2005-06 was £1.4 million which equates to a cost of approximately £0.97 per copy.

The Department has no information about the number of NHS employees who read each edition of the Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin.

Doctors and other prescribers have access to a wide variety of information resources to support their prescribing. These include the British National Formularies, advice and training from the National Prescribing Centre, guidance from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, the National Electronic Library for Health, the various on-line databases and reference resources, such as Medline, and various academic and professional journals.

Electromagnetic Fields

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has commissioned into the effect of electromagnetic fields on public health in the last five years. [71576]

Caroline Flint: The Department supports two broad programmes of research into the potential effects of electromagnetic fields (EMF) and health: one on radiofrequency fields (as emitted by mobile phones) and the other largely on extremely low frequency (ELF) fields (such as associated with power lines and domestic electrical supply).

The mobile telecommunications and health research (MTHR) programme has been running since 2001. It is funded jointly by Government and industry and is managed by an independent scientific committee. A description of the programme and a list of ongoing and completed studies are available on the MTHR's website at www.mthr.org.uk.

The Department's radiation protection research programme supports a number of studies investigating the possible health effects of other electromagnetic fields (largely ELF-EMF). These range from laboratory work investigating possible cellular effects to large population studies. Descriptions of these studies are available on the World Health Organisation (WHO) EMF research database at www.who.int/peh-emf/research/database/en/.

In addition, the Department, along with the Health and Safety Executive, has supported the WHO's international EMF project since it started in 1997. Information about the EMF project is available on its web site at www.who.int/peh-mf/project/en/.

In the United Kingdom, the Health Protection Agency's radiation protection division (HPA-RPD) keeps the world-wide research findings on EMF and health continually under review. In 2004, the HPA-RPD, previously the National Radiological Protection Board, published a comprehensive review of scientific evidence in support of its current advice on limiting EMF exposure which is available on HPA's website at: www.hpa.org.uk/radiation/publications/documents_of_nrpb/abstracts/absd15-3.htm.

Emergency Contraception

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many morning-after pills have been distributed by the Greater Peterborough Primary Care Partnership in each of the last five years. [69047]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information available is shown in the tables. Information on emergency hormonal contraception (EHC) supplied under a patient group direction (PGD) is not held centrally.

Family planning clinic services for the Peterborough area are provided by North Peterborough primary care trust (PCT). The total number of occasions on which clinics run by this PCT prescribed post-coital contraceptives is published annually but the published figures include some instances where an intrauterine device was fitted.

EHC via family planning clinics is collected by financial year:

Occasions on which hormonal post-coital contraceptives dispensed at family planning clinics provided by North Peterborough PCT, 2000-01 to 2004-05

	Number
2000-01	116
2001-02	85
2002-03	128
2003-04	67
2004-05	38

Source:
Information Centre for health and social care, return KT31

EHC via general practice is collected by calendar year:

Total number of items (prescriptions) for hormonal post-coital contraception prescribed in North and South Peterborough for the last four years

	Number
2002	1,626
2003	1,506
2004	1,433
2005	1,314

Source:
ePACT

Food Businesses (EU Accreditation)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many food businesses in England have *(a)* been accredited with ISO 22000 in line with EU regulation 852/2004 and *(b)* failed to meet ISO 22000 standard. [72068]

Caroline Flint: ISO 22000 accreditation is not required by Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs. The legal requirement is for a permanent procedure or procedures based on the hazard analysis and critical control point principles.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her assessment is of the British food industry's ability to comply with EU regulation 852/2004. [72158]

Caroline Flint: New hygiene legislation, including Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004, applied from 1 January 2006. It modernises, simplifies and consolidates the requirements previously contained in 17 European Union food hygiene directives. The United Kingdom negotiated for flexible legislation that enables businesses to apply effective, proportionate risk-based controls to protect consumer health. The Food Standards Agency has provided guidance and support to industry and food enforcement bodies to ensure that industry's ability to meet the requirements is maintained.

Funding (Northamptonshire)

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the capital expenditure on the *(a)* breast screening unit, *(b)* chest pain clinic, *(c)* intensive treatment unit, *(d)* stroke unit, *(e)* secure mental health unit, *(f)* integrated surgery unit and *(g)* orthopaedic theatres in Northamptonshire has been since 1997; [70815]

(2) what the capital expenditure on health services in Northamptonshire was in each year between 1990 and 2005; [70819]

Andy Burnham: Information on capital expenditure by individual national health service organisations is not held centrally. The table shows total capital expenditure across the Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area.

Total capital expenditure by organisations within the Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Strategic Health Authority area

	£000
1997-98	28,478
1998-99	23,047
1999-2000	27,773
2000-01	36,093
2001-02	73,403
2002-03	95,078
2003-04	72,771
2004-05	73,065

Notes:
1. Revenue expenditure by strategic health authority area is taken as the total expenditure of the strategic health authority, predecessor health authorities and primary care trusts within the strategic health authority area. Capital expenditure includes NHS trusts within the area.
2. Capital expenditure is the expenditure on the purchased additions of fixed assets.
3. Levels of capital expenditure vary from year to year depending on local investment decisions.
4. Expenditure on general dental services and pharmaceutical services accounted for by the Dental Practice Board and Prescription Pricing Authority, respectively, are excluded. This expenditure cannot be included within the figures for the individual health bodies as they are not included in commissioner accounts.

Sources:
Audited accounts of relevant health authorities 1997-98 and 1998-99
Audited summarisation forms of relevant health authorities 1999-2000 to 2001-02
Audited summarisation schedules of relevant primary care trusts 2000-01 to 2004-05
Audited summarisation schedules of NHS Trusts 1997-98 to 2004-05
Audited summarisation forms of Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA 2002-03 to 2004-05

Health Care Products

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will publish the responses to her Department's consultation on arrangements for the provision of dressings, incontinence appliances, stoma appliances, chemical re-agents and other appliances to primary and secondary care; and if she will make a statement. [72843]

Andy Burnham: A summary of responses to the consultation has been published. It can be found on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/Consultations/ResponsesToConsultations/fs/en.

This summary also sets out next steps.

Health Services (Essex)

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many full-time equivalent nursing posts there are at Essex Rivers Healthcare Trust; how many are filled by agency staff; how many such posts were filled by agency staff on average in each of the past five years; and if she will make a statement. [68889]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of hospital and community health services qualified nurses employed at Essex Rivers Healthcare Trust for the last five years for which data is available is:

	Number
2001	1,014
2002	1,117
2003	1,009
2004	1,092
2005	1,100

The Department does not collect data in relation to the numbers of agency staff directly employed in the NHS. However, the Department does collect details of expenditure information on non-NHS staff.

The table shows the total nursing, midwifery and health visiting spend on agency staff for Essex Rivers Healthcare Trust for the previous five years.

	Agency nurse spend (£ million)	Total NHS nurse spend (£ million)	Percentage Agency of total nurse spend
2000-01	2.5	27.4	8.4
2001-02	2.3	25.7	8.1
2002-03	2.8	27	9.4
2003-04	2.2	29.8	6.8
2004-05	0.7	36.4	1.8

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many consultants per capita there were in Essex in each year since 1997; what the national average was in each year; and if she will make a statement. [68892]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the number of medical and dental consultants by organisation within Essex strategic health authority area per head of population and the average for England for each year since 1997 to 2005, which is the latest data available.

Hospital and Community Health Services (HCHS) : medical and dental consultants by organisation within Essex SHA and England , as at 30 September 2005

Number (headcount) and number per population[1]

		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
England		21,474	22,324	23,321	24,401	25,782	27,070	28,750	30,650	31,993
Per 100,000 population		44.1	45.7	47.6	49.6	52.1	54.5	57.7	61.2	63.9
Essex SHA		467	478	481	496	526	582	600	667	686
Per 100,000 population		29.6	30.1	30.1	30.9	32.5	35.9	36.8	40.8	41.9
Basildon and Thurrock general hospital NHS Trust	RDD	65	66	61	58	77	91	95	108	113
Basildon PCT	5GR	0	0	0	0	0	4	5	6	5
Billericay, Brentwood and Wickford PCT	5GP	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	1
Castle Point and Rochford PCT	5JP	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Chelmsford PCT	5JN	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	1
Colchester PCT	5GM	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	3	4
Essex and Herts Community NHS Trust	RQV	21	19	16	7	0	0	0	0	0
Essex Rivers Healthcare NHS Trust	RDE	75	75	83	84	90	95	98	114	117
Essex SHA	Q03	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	5	5
Maldon and South Chelmsford PCT	5GL	0	0	0	0	6	7	3	3	2
Mid Essex Community and Mental Health NHS Trust	RP3	9	9	9	9	0	0	0	0	0
Mid Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust	RQ8	88	95	97	97	102	116	121	135	138
New Possibilities NHS Trust	RDH	4	4	4	4	5	4	0	0	0
North East Essex Mental Health NHS Trust	RDJ	17	16	15	18	0	0	0	0	0
North Essex HA	QAX	7	6	7	5	6	0	0	0	0
North Essex Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	RRD	0	0	0	0	31	32	37	37	39
South Essex HA	QAY	7	7	6	8	8	0	0	0	0
South Essex Partnership NHS Trust	RWIN	0	0	0	28	26	29	30	41	39
Southend Community Care NHS Trust	RDK	17	16	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
Southend Hospital NHS Trust	RAJ	90	89	92	100	97	106	113	118	122
Southend on Sea PCT	5AK	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Tendring PCT	5AH	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	2
Thameside Community Health Care NHS Trust	RG8	11	12	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust	RQW	56	64	62	78	78	82	81	88	93
Thurrock PCT	5GQ	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	2	2
Uttlesford PCT	5GN	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Witham, Braintree and Halstead Care Trust	TAG	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2

[1] 2004 population figures from the 2001 ONS resident estimates have been used for 2005 calculations, as population figures for 2005 at organisation level are not yet available, this figure is therefore subject to change.

Source:

The Information Centre for health and social care medical and dental workforce census 2001 ONS Population Census

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the per capita funding for *(a)* Colchester and *(b)* Tendring Primary Care Trust was in each year since 1997; what the national average was in each year; and if she will make a statement. [68894]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Revenue allocations were first made to primary care trusts in 2003-04. Prior to this, funding was allocated to health authorities (HAs).

Funding per head of population in each year since 1997-98 for Colchester PCT, Tendring PCT, the former North Essex HA and the national average is shown in the following table.

Funding per head of population

£

	Colchester PCT	Tendring PCT	North Essex HA	England average
1997-98	—	—	398	443
1998-99	—	—	414	464
1999-2000	—	—	578	629
2000-01	—	—	634	688
2001-02	—	—	674	738
2002-03	—	—	744	817
2003-04	758	961	—	903
2004-05	830	1,068	—	986
2005-06	993	1,289	—	1,172
2006-07	1,079	1,455	—	1,274
2007-08	1,178	1,610	—	1,388

Notes:
It is not possible to compare allocations rounds for the following reasons:
1. organisational changes and changes made to the weighted capitation formula for each allocations round, mean that comparisons between allocations rounds would not be on a like with like basis;
2. services for which PCTs are responsible for funding change over time. For example, 2006-07 is the first year that primary medical services were incorporated into revenue allocations.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the financial outturn for the Essex Rivers Healthcare Trust has been in each of the last 10 years; and if she will make a statement. [68895]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the following table.

	Surplus/(deficit) (£000)
1997-98	(2,384)
1998-99	(2,897)
1999-2000	(2,705)
2000-01	8,505
2001-02	30
2002-03	22
2003-04	(5,843)
2004-05	293

Source:
Audited summarisation schedules of the Essex Rivers Healthcare National Health Service Trust

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time for *(a)* in-patient and *(b)* out-patient treatment at Essex Rivers Healthcare Trust was in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [68896]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The following table shows mean and median times waited in days based on elective finished admission episodes, waiting list and booked cases, at Essex Rivers Healthcare NHS Trust for each year since 1997-98 to 2004-05 which is the latest data available. However, data on outpatient treatment times is not held centrally.

Waiting time in days

	Mean	Median
1997-98	138	74
1998-99	155	73
1999-2000	153	75
2000-01	137	69
2001-02	135	79
2002-03	134	81
2003-04	131	85
2004-05	103	75

Notes:
Finished admission episodes
A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
Time Waited (days)
Time waited statistics from hospital episode statistics (HES) are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time waited as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.
Ungrossed Data
Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data that is the data is ungrossed.
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), The Information Centre for health and social care

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners per capita there were in *(a)* Colchester and *(b)* Tendring Primary Care Trust in each year since 1997; what the average ratio was for primary care trusts in each year; and if she will make a statement. [68899]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data relating to the number of general medical practitioners, which excludes retainers and registrars, one per 100,000 head of population, for Essex Strategic Health Authority and specified primary care trusts from 1997-2005 are shown in the table.

General medical practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars)[1] per 100,000 head of population, for Essex Strategic Health Authority and specified primary care trusts, 1997-2005, England

Number (headcount)

		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005[2]
Q03	*Essex*									
	All Practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars)[1]	821	830	831	829	816	803	866	915	959
	All Practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars)[1] per 100,000 head of population	52.0	52.3	52.0	51.6	50.5	49.5	53.1	55.9	58.6
	Of which:									
5GM	*Colchester PCT*									
	All Practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars)[1]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	87	87	85	91	102
	All Practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars)[1] per 100,000 head of population	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	55.0	54.7	52.8	55.9	62.6
5AH	*Tendring PCT*									
	All Practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars)[1]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	65	61	73	77	77
	All Practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars)[1] per 100,000 head of population	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	47.5	44.2	52.6	55.3	55.3

n/a = Data not applicable

[1] General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars) includes Contracted GPs, GMS Others and PMS Others. Prior to September 2004 this group included GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs, PMS Salaried GPs, Restricted Principals, Assistants, Salaried Doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS Other, Flexible Career Scheme GPs and GP Returners.

[2] 2004 population figures from the 2001 ONS resident estimates have been used for 2005 calculations, as population figures for 2005 at organisation level are not yet available, this figure is therefore subject to change.

Note:
Data as at 1 October 1997-1999 and 30 September 2000-05

Source:
The Information Centre for health and social care, general and personal medical services statistics 2001 ONS Population Census

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the star rating that the Essex Rivers Healthcare Trust received for the number of cancelled operations was due to *(a)* clinical and *(b)* administrative causes; how many cancelled operations there were in (a) 2005-06 and (b) each of the previous 10 years; and if she will make a statement. [68900]

Andy Burnham: Essex Rivers Healthcare National Health Service Trust was given the lowest band of performance by the Healthcare Commission for the cancelled operations performance indicator in the 2004-05 star ratings. The Trust cancelled 2.97 per cent. of operations at the last minute for non-clinical reasons. Trusts that cancelled fewer than 0.5 per cent. of operations were given a score of five (good), trusts that cancelled fewer than 1.5 per cent. of operations were given a score of three and all other trusts were given a score of one (poor) by the Commission.

Requested information on cancelled operations is shown in the table.

Cancelled operations for non-clinical reasons—Essex Rivers Healthcare NHS Trust (RDE)

	Number of last minute cancellations for non-clinical reasons in the quarter
2001-02	444
2002-03	741
2003-04	815
2004-05	800

Notes:
Data were collected by Health Authority only prior to 2001-02. Trust level data were collected from 2001-02 onwards. Data for 2005-06 are not yet available.

A last minute cancellation is one that occurs on the day the patient was due to arrive, after they have arrived in hospital or on the day of their operation. For example, you are to be admitted to hospital on a Monday for an operation scheduled for the following day (Tuesday). If the hospital cancels your operation for non-clinical reasons on the Monday then this would count as a last minute cancellation. This includes patients who have not actually arrived in hospital and have been telephoned at home prior to their arrival.
An operation which is rescheduled to a time within 24 hours of the original scheduled operation should be recorded as a postponement and not as a cancellation. The quarterly monitoring of cancelled operations collection does not record the number of postponements.
Some common non-clinical reasons for cancellations by the hospital include: ward beds unavailable; surgeon unavailable; emergency case needing theatre; theatre list over-ran; equipment failure; admin error; anaesthetist unavailable; theatre staff unavailable; and critical care bed unavailable.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many incidences of abuse of staff by patients were reported in Essex Rivers Healthcare Trust in 2005-06; what the average number for trusts was in that year; and if she will make a statement. [68905]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data relating to the average number of incidences of abuse by trust are not held centrally. Information on incidences of abuse on staff by patients relating to Essex River Healthcare can be obtained by writing to the Chief Executive of that trust.

Hospitals (Lancashire)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people resident in West Lancashire were treated at *(a)* the Royal Liverpool Broadgreen NHS Trust, *(b)* Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust, *(c)* the Cardiothoracic centre, *(d)* Alder Hey Children's hospital, *(e)* Liverpool Women's hospital, *(f)* Walton Neuro centre and *(g)* Mersey Care in each of the last five years broken down by treatment received. [66845]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Insulin

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the preliminary guidance of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence not to recommend the use of insulin inhalers. [72066]

Andy Burnham: The preliminary recommendation issued by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), on the use of insulin inhalers, that inhaled insulin should not be recommended for the treatment of type one or type two diabetes mellitus, except in the context of clinical studies, is not final guidance to the national health service, but a draft for consultation.

The consultation period concluded on 10 May 2006. Concerns raised by the responses to the consultation will be considered by NICE at its appraisal committee on 25 May. NICE expects to issue final guidance to the NHS later in the year.

Intensive Care

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many intensive treatment unit beds there were in Northampton General Hospital in *(a)* 1996 and *(b)* 2005. [70814]

Andy Burnham: The average daily number of available intensive care beds at Northampton General Hospital for the years specified is shown in the table. Data are not yet available for 2005-06.

	Intensive care beds available
1996-97	18
2004-05	21

Source:
Department of Health form KH03

Maternity Care

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of maternity care within the West Hertfordshire NHS Trust; and if she will make a statement. [70993]

Andy Burnham: The Department has made no assessment of maternity care within West Hertfordshire National Health Service Trust. However, there is a maternity services review currently being undertaken by West Hertfordshire Hospital Trust. The review is expected to conclude and report in late June of this year.

The review group is made up of health professionals, community representatives, that is local authorities, NHS managers, voluntary groups (including Dacorum Hospital action group) and the National Childbirth Trust (NCT). As part of its work, the review team has commissioned the NCT to conduct a postal survey involving every one of the 5,000 women who gave birth in West Hertfordshire last year. Every woman who gave birth last year has been sent a survey form and some have been asked to take part in more intensive focus groups.

The review's overall remit is to consider and make recommendations on future provision of safe and cost-effective maternity services which meet current national best practice.

Midwives

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many vacant midwife posts there are in *(a)* the Sussex Downs and Weald and *(b)* the Eastbourne Downs Primary Care Trust area; and what plans her Department has to recruit midwives in these areas. [71992]

Caroline Flint: A range of work force supply strategies have been developed to support the recruitment and retention of more healthcare professionals across England, including midwives. These include:

promoting careers in the national health service through NHS Careers and national, and local, recruitment campaigns;

attracting back former staff to the service; and

improving retention by becoming a better, more flexible and diverse employer.

The information on midwife vacancies is not available in the format requested. The information in the table gives midwife numbers and vacancies by NHS trust in the Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority (SHA) region.

		Midwives (March 2005)		*Staff in post (September 2004)*	
		Three month vacancy rate (percentage)	*Three month vacancy (number)*	*Full-time equivalent*	*Headcount*
England		1.8	348	18,854	24,844
Surrey and Sussex SHA area total	Q19	1.4	12	797	1,076
Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Trust	RTK	0.0	0	77	106

		Midwives (March 2005)		Staff in post (September 2004)	
		Three month vacancy rate (percentage)	Three month vacancy (number)	Full-time equivalent	Headcount
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust	RXH	0.0	0	154	203
East Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust	RXC	0.0	0	143	179
Frimley Park Hospital NHS Trust	RDU	1.5	2	106	141
Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	RPC	0.0	0	1	1
Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Trust	RA2	11.3	10	79	141
Royal West Sussex NHS Trust	RPR	0.0	0	66	77
Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust	RTP	0.0	0	102	128
Worthing and Southlands Hospitals NHS Trust	RPL	0.0	0	70	100

Notes:
Three month vacancy:
1. Three month vacancy information is as at 31 March 2005.
2. Three month vacancies are vacancies which trusts are actively trying to fill, which had lasted for three months or more (whole-time equivalents).
3. Three month vacancy rates are three month vacancies expressed as a percentage of three month vacancies plus staff in post.
4. Three month vacancy rates are calculated using staff in post from the non-medical work force census September 2004.
5. Percentages are rounded to one decimal place.
Staff in post
Staff in post data are from the non-medical work force census September 2004.

MMR Vaccination

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the percentage uptake of the MMR vaccination was in *(a)* the North East, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency in each year since 1997. [67184]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Immunisation data by primary care trust, strategic health authority and nationally are published annually in the statistical bulletin, 'NHS Immunisation Statistics, England', which is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Statistics/StatisticalWorkAreas/fs/en Data are not available by local authority or by electoral ward.

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has undertaken on the effectiveness of the dosage of the MMR vaccine in preventing mumps. [71903]

Caroline Flint: A single dose of a mumps-containing vaccine used in the United Kingdom confers between 61 per cent. and 91 per cent. protection against mumps. Although there is limited information on the effectiveness of a second dose of mumps vaccine, a two dose schedule of measles mumps and rubella vaccine should protect most people who do not respond to the first dose[1].

[1] Plotkin and Orenstein, 2004

NHS (Future Demand)

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate she has made of the level of demand for NHS provision in *(a)* 2007, *(b)* 2010 and *(c)* 2020. [62068]

(2) what planning assumptions are made in relation to the demand for health service provision. [62429]

Andy Burnham: Estimates of demand for national health service provision in 2007 are being made by strategic health authorities (SHAs) in line with "National Standards, Local Action: Health and Social Care Standards and Planning Framework 2005/06-2007/08" published by the Department in July 2004. This included the new national targets set out in the public service agreement arising out of the 2004 spending review.

The Department's role is to agree with SHAs their local delivery plans in the form of data trajectories to achieve national targets. These then form the basis of a business agreement with the SHA against which they are performance managed and held to account for the performance of the NHS within their area.

SHA plans are aggregated from local primary care trust (PCT) plans and must, as a minimum, meet national target levels and, where appropriate, SHA shares of targets, to be signed off by the Department. Changes may occur during the three year planning period in the light of fresh information and new factors.

Assessment of demand for 2010 will form part of the 2007 spending review process. The assumptions made in relation to the demand for health service provision in the longer term, including for 2020 are set out in the Wanless Report: "Securing Our Future Health: Taking a Long-Term View" and are subject to further consideration in the light of new developments and information.

NHS Finance

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the expenditure of strategic health authorities (SHA) in the last year for which figures are available was, broken down by major cost area *(a)* in total and *(b)* for each SHA. [66000]

Andy Burnham: Strategic health authority (SHA) expenditure for 2004-05, the latest year available, is shown in the table. The majority of expenditure by SHAs relates to training and education and there will be variation in expenditure because SHAs fund training on behalf of other health bodies.

£000

SHA name	Salaries and wages	Training[1]	Other expenditure	Total expenditure
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	8,148	133,632	4,657	146,437
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	5,484	67,205	2,867	75,556
Birmingham and The Black Country	16,941	240,451	5,055	262,447
Cheshire and Merseyside	7,077	170,540	5,464	183,081
County Durham and Tees Valley	3,505	120,696	1,861	126,062
Cumbria and Lancashire	5,991	87,714	5,883	99,588
Dorset and Somerset	4,028	45,030	2,396	51,454
Essex	6,757	68,981	4,059	79,797
Greater Manchester	14,088	237,034	6,886	258,008
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	10,902	123,955	4,064	138,921
Kent and Medway	6,128	125,634	6,346	138,108
Leics, Northants and Rutland	5,139	114,769	1,710	121,618
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	7,387	201,632	1,022	210,041
North and East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire	4,365	75,099	2,862	82,326
North Central London	7,735	195,850	3,798	207,383
North East London	8,588	226,312	5,673	240,573
North West London	7,623	189,951	4,059	201,633
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	5,828	75,330	10,580	91,738
Shropshire and Staffordshire	5,631	59,970	1,392	66,993
South East London	7,900	193,127	4,667	205,694
South West London	7,159	113,559	4,019	124,737
South West Peninsula	6,000	85,378	21,124	112,502
South Yorkshire	26,080	164,837	25,572	216,489
Surrey and Sussex	7,655	114,748	17,056	139,459
Thames Valley	9,215	115,611	7,620	132,446
Trent	4,458	160,148	2,622	167,228
West Midlands South	6,818	61,502	6,948	75,268
West Yorkshire	7,141	197,497	(652)	203,986
England totals	223,771	3,766,192	169,610	4,159,573

[1] Work force development confederations

Source:
Audited summarisation forms of the strategic health authorities 2004-05

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what formula her Department uses to determine the payment made to each primary care trust under payment by results. [66534]

Andy Burnham: Revenue allocations are made to primary care trusts (PCTs) on the basis of the relative needs of their populations. A weighted capitation formula calculates target shares of available resources for each PCT based on the age distribution, additional need and unavoidable geographical variations in the cost of providing services. The 2006-07 allocations have been adjusted to reflect non-recurrently the transitional arrangements for PCTs to support the implementation of payment by results.

NHS Hospital Trusts

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Answer of 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 743W, on NHS Hospital Trusts, if she will set out the figures for fixed costs identifying those that arise in relation to private finance initiative projects. [65944]

Andy Burnham: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 12 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 988-89W. The table which has been placed in the Library gives the annual payments by each trust to its private sector partner on private finance initiative schemes which have reached financial close. This table has now been updated to reflect the Barts and London Hospital and the Hull and East Yorkshire private finance initiative schemes reaching financial close since then.

NHS IT Programme

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what models of IT provision were considered for the NHS IT programme. [63945]

Caroline Flint: Five commercial and organisational models were considered for delivering a national information

technology programme for the national health service before the national programme was launched in its current form. Briefly, these models were to:

Outsource the whole programme, including local implementation arrangements;

Selectively outsource major components, whilst delivering some components at a national level via the NHS Information Authority;

Deliver all major components at a national level, primarily via the NHS Information Authority;

Decentralise the management of NHS information technology to strategic health authorities; and

Continue local implementation - the status quo option.

All the options were considered and scored against a range of key criteria.

The options, and the option appraisal process, are described in greater detail in 'Delivering 21st century IT support for the NHS: national strategic programme', published in June 2002, which is available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk.

Nursing (Thames Valley)

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many student places there are for *(a)* nursing and *(b)* community nursing at universities in the Thames Valley strategic health authority area. [72260]

Caroline Flint: Analysis of standard registration population data provided by the Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA) for 2004-05 shows that there were 2,909 students on pre-registration nurse training courses at Thames Valley University and 790 at Oxford Brookes University. Thames Valley strategic health authority may not have commissioned all of these training places.

No information is currently available from the HESA data on students enrolled on community nursing courses.

Obesity

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her most recent estimate is of how many children in Torbay constituency are obese. [72183]

Caroline Flint: The data are not available in the exact format requested. The main source of data on the prevalence of obesity is the Health Survey for England (HSE). The sample size of the HSE does not allow figures to be produced to the level of Torbay constituency. We do however hold data by Government Office Region (GOR). Torbay falls under the South West GOR. The latest figures for the obesity prevalence of children in South West GOR are taken from 'The Health Survey for England 2002'.

For children aged two to fifteen in 2001-02 (2001 and 2002 combined), 4.5 per cent. of boys are classified as being obese in the South West. The figure for girls aged two to fifteen is 5.9 per cent.

Orthodontic Services

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many orthodontists were practising in *(a)* England, *(b)* West Yorkshire and *(c)* Huddersfield in each of the last 10 years. [70307]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of orthodontists in England is not available centrally as orthodontists are not separately identified within general dental services contracts or personal dental services agreements.

Paediatric Specialists

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many paediatric specialists are employed in each strategic health authority area. [67643]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The following table shows the paediatric specialists working in the national health service in each current strategic health authority (SHA) area.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services: Medical staff within the paediatric group of specialties by SHA—England at 30 September 2005

		All staff			*Of which: Consultant*		
			Of which:			*Of which:*	
		Paediatric group of specialties	*Paediatrics*	*Paediatric cardiology*	*Paediatric group of specialties*	*Paediatrics*	*Paediatric cardiology*
England		6,770	6,680	90	2,033	1,985	48
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Q20	275	269	6	92	87	5
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	Q02	160	160	[1]—	48	48	[1]—
Birmingham and The Black Country	Q27	253	247	6	77	71	6
Cheshire and Merseyside	Q15	333	326	7	83	79	4
County Durham and Tees Valley	Q10	142	142	[1]—	54	54	[1]—
Cumbria and Lancashire	Q13	190	190	[1]—	46	46	[1]—
Dorset and Somerset	Q22	102	102	[1]—	24	24	[1]—
Essex	Q03	140	140	[1]—	40	40	[1]—
Greater Manchester	Q14	411	410	1	121	121	[1]—
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Q17	209	198	11	74	74	[1]—
Kent and Medway	Q18	205	205	[1]—	52	52	[1]—
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	Q25	216	213	3	59	56	3
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	Q01	267	267	[1]—	94	94	[1]—

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services: Medical staff within the paediatric group of specialties by SHA—England at 30 September 2005

		All staff			Of which: Consultant		
			Of which:			Of which:	
		Paediatric group of specialties	Paediatrics	Paediatric cardiology	Paediatric group of specialties	Paediatrics	Paediatric cardiology
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	Q11	160	160	[1]—	44	44	[1]—
North Central London	Q05	319	314	5	113	108	5
North East London	Q06	286	286	[1]—	71	71	[1]—
North West London	Q04	436	420	16	131	126	5
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Q09	220	207	13	77	72	5
Shropshire and Staffordshire	Q26	169	169	[1]—	51	51	[1]—
South East London	Q07	396	389	7	130	124	6
South West London	Q08	227	227	[1]—	65	65	[1]—
South West Peninsula	Q21	152	152	[1]—	44	44	[1]—
South Yorkshire	Q23	184	184	[1]—	56	56	[1]—
Surrey and Sussex	Q19	269	269	[1]—	72	72	[1]—
Thames Valley	Q16	264	260	4	76	72	4
Trent	Q24	288	288	[1]—	82	82	[1]—
West Midlands South	Q28	156	156	[1]—	48	48	[1]—
West Yorkshire	Q12	341	330	11	109	104	5

[1] Denotes zero.

Source:
The information Centre for health and social care medical and dental workforce census

Physiotherapy

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many physiotherapists were employed within the Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority area in the last year for which figures are available; and how many physiotherapy training places were available in that year. [71192]

Caroline Flint: Information on number of physiotherapists employed within Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area is shown in the table. 2,391 national health service physiotherapy training places were commissioned in 2004-05.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified physiotherapy staff in the Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA area by organisation as at 30 September 2005

	Headcount
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA total	1,076
Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	31
Bath and North East Somerset PCT	40
Bristol North PCT	8
Bristol South and West PCT	27
Cotswold and Vale PCT	77
Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	169
Gloucestershire Partnership NHS Trust	25
Kennet and North Wiltshire PCT	72
North Bristol NHS Trust	140
North Somerset PCT	11
Royal National Hospital For Rheumatic Diseases NHS Foundation Trust	25
Royal United Hospital Bath NHS Trust	53
Salisbury Health Care NHS Trust	34
South Gloucestershire PCT	36
South Wiltshire PCT	30
Swindon and Marlborough NHS Trust	5
Swindon PCT	89
United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust	122
West Gloucestershire PCT	2
West Wiltshire PCT	48
Weston Area Health NHS Trust	32

Source:
The Information Centre for health and social care, non-medical workforce census

Primary Care Trusts

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department is taking to ensure that Guildford and Waverley Primary Care Trust meets the Government's commitment that *(a)* 80 per cent. of people with diabetes receive comprehensive retinopathy screening and *(b)* 70 per cent. of people with diabetes have received comprehensive retinopathy screening by June 2006. [71864]

Caroline Flint: The Department has a range of work in hand to support the national health service in delivering this target. The Department actively performance manages the strategic health authorities (SHAs) to ensure they have arrangements in place to ensure delivery. All primary care trusts (PCTs) are monitored on their progress towards achieving the target. The target is included within the local delivery agreements between SHA and PCTs which are reviewed quarterly through a data return.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the effect will be on consultations on major service changes being undertaken by existing primary care trusts if they are not completed before those primary care trusts are dissolved. [72752]

Andy Burnham: Where matters such as consultations have not been completed by the time the existing primary care trusts are dissolved, each successor primary care trust will have to decide whether, and if so how, to continue with them.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what powers primary care trusts have to direct the commissioning choices of general practitioners under practice-based commissioning. [72753]

Caroline Flint: Practice-based commissioning gives additional freedoms to general practitioner practices to commission innovative services.

Under practice-based commissioning, primary care trusts (PCTs) remain accountable for all funds allocated to them. Therefore, PCTs retain the power to ensure that all services commissioned meet all relevant quality standards and accreditation, as well as national and local priorities.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether new primary care trusts established on 1 October 2006 will be bound by decisions taken by existing primary care trusts that have not been implemented by that date. [72755]

Andy Burnham: Where any decisions have not been implemented by the time the existing primary care trusts (PCTs) are dissolved, each successor PCT will have to consider whether, and if so how, to continue with them.

Referral Management Schemes

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many primary care trusts operate referral management schemes; what representations she has received from *(a)* hon. Members, *(b)* NHS organisations and *(c)* other interested parties on the operation of such schemes; what the content of these representations was; and when they were received; [60396]

(2) pursuant to the oral answer of 7 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 71, on Clinical Advisory Liaison Services, to the hon. Member for Banbury (Tony Baldry), if she will place in the Library a copy of the letter sent by her Department's Director of Access to primary care trust chief executives in July 2005. [60414]

Andy Burnham: A copy of the letter has been placed in the Library. It is also available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Bulletins/ChiefExecutiveBulletin/BulletinCE/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4115298&chk=9VoVmr

Information on the number of primary care trusts operating referral management schemes is not collected centrally.

Conducting a comprehensive trawl for all representations received by the Department for references to referral management schemes would incur disproportionate cost. However, a brief search has identified representations from:

Type of representation?parliamentary questions

(a) hon. Members

From	*Date received*	*Content of representation*
Tony Baldry MP	7 March 2006	The advice given primary care trusts about the use of clinical advisory liaison services Use of Referral
John Penrose MP	13 and 15 March 2006	Management Centres in North Somerset
Andrew Lansley MP	22 March 2006	Clinical advisory liaison services
Steve Webb MP	3 May 2006	How many primary care trusts are operating general practitioner referral centres

Restrictive Interventions

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if her Department will develop a framework for restrictive physical interventions in line with the Welsh Assembly Government's document Framework for Restrictive Interventions Policy and Practice. [70986]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department commissioned the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to produce guidelines on the "Short-term management of disturbed (violent) behaviour in in-patient psychiatric settings" in as early as 2002. The guidelines were published in February 2005 and are available on NICE'S website at www.nice.org.uk/.

The National Institute for Mental Health in England (NIMHE) published guidance in 2004 entitled "Developing positive practice to support the safe and therapeutic management of aggression and violence in mental health inpatient settings" which is available on NIMHE's website at www.nimhe.org.uk.

NIMHE and National Patient Safety Agency project on the prevention and management of violence will publish guidance and a checklist in 2006 to ensure that all restraint procedures meet rigorous standards. The project team is also developing proposals for the accreditation and regulation of physical intervention trainers.

Sandwell and West Birmingham Acute Trust

Mr. Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the salary costs of the chief executive of Sandwell and West Birmingham Acute Trust have been in each year since 2001. [66504]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Annual salary of chief executive of Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust

	Salary band
2005-06	£135,000-£140,000
2004-05	£130,000-£135,000
2003-04	£125,000-£130,000
2002-03	£100,000-£105,000

Note:
Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust was created in 2002-03.

The figures show the full annual salary. In 2002-03, the chief executive was paid a lower salary since he was carrying out some work for the West Midlands regional health authority. The chief executive was appointed in July 2002, and was accordingly paid a proportion of the salary shown in 2002-03.

School Nurses

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many school nurses are employed in each primary care trust by *(a)* headcount and *(b)* whole-time equivalent. [69396]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The September 2005 census showed that there were 2,887 (1,913 full-time equivalent (fte)) qualified nurses working in the school nursing service, an increase of 478 (19.8 per cent.) since 2004.

Of these 943 (665 fte) have a post registration school nursing qualification, an increase of 87 (10 per cent.) since 2004.

Data on the total headcount and full-time equivalent number of qualified nurses in the school nursing area of work by primary care trust is available in the Library.

TB

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the incidence of tuberculosis in the United Kingdom in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [67433]

Caroline Flint: Tuberculosis (TB) rates per 100,000 population for England, Wales and Northern Ireland from 1999-2004 are shown in the table.

	TB cases
1999	10.8
2000	11.8
2001	12.4
2002	12.7
2003	12.5
2004	13.1

Notes:
1. The Scottish Executive's system for enhanced tuberculosis surveillance differs in some respects and is not entirely comparable with England, Wales and Northern Ireland data.
2. HPA ETS data is only available from 1999 onwards.

Sources:
Health Protection Agency (HPA) enhanced tuberculosis surveillance (ETS) scheme. Office for National Statistics mid-year population estimates. Data as at 10 May 2005

The Department is working with key partners and stakeholders to deliver the objectives of the chief medical officer's action plan for stopping tuberculosis in England (October 2004).

The plan includes a commitment to have a high quality surveillance system which aims to provide the information required at local, national and international levels to prevent and control TB. Following consultation with various stakeholders, the HPA intends to create a new web-based system for TB surveillance within the next financial year. The new surveillance system will enable the provision of information on TB cases at local, regional and national level that is timely, relevant, complete and accurate. It will facilitate monitoring of disease trends and treatment outcomes and will help with commissioning services for TB.

Type 2 Diabetes

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children have been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in each of the last 10 years. [69355]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The data requested is not held centrally. However, data on the number of type 2 diabetes-related hospital treatment for children under the age of 18 are shown in the table.

All diagnoses count of finished consultant episodes (FCE) for selected diagnoses national health service hospitals England, 1995-96 to 2004-05

	Count of FCEs
1995-96	206
1996-97	226
1997-98	223
1998-99	216
1999-2000	242
2000-01	248
2001-02	296
2002-03	350
2003-04	459
2004-05	447

Notes:
Finished Consultant Episode (FCE)
An FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one health care provider. Please note that the figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.
Diagnosis (Primary Diagnosis)
The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002-03) diagnosis fields in the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.
Secondary Diagnoses
As well as the primary diagnosis, there are up to 13 (six prior to 2002-03) secondary diagnosis fields in Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) that show other diagnoses relevant to the episode of care.
Definition of Selected Diagnoses (ICD-10 Codes)
Type 2 diabetes defined as:
E11 (non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus) or O241 (pre-existing diabetes mellitus, non-insulin-dependent) recorded in primary diagnosis or in any of the secondary diagnoses fields.
Ungrossed Data
Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Health and Social Care Information Centre

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were waiting for more than six months for an NHS inpatient operation at the end of each month from November 2005 to April 2006, broken down by hospital trust. [70898]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* The information requested, apart from the data for April 2006, which are not yet available, has been placed in the Library.

Figures at provider level include patients resident in Wales waiting for treatment in England, where local health groups have instructed the hospital to apply Welsh waiting time standards. The numbers of patients resident in Wales are not separately identifiable from the provider level data. Consequently, the provider level figures sum to a higher total than the primary care trust/strategic health authority level figures, which do not include patients resident in Wales.

Any breaches of the waiting time standards are unacceptable and the Department will continue to work closely to support the small number of national health service organisations where patients are waiting over six months.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Answer of 28 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 967W, on NHS finance, what level of increased activity in 2006-07 will be necessary for the delivery of the 18-week waiting time target by 2008. [69606]

Andy Burnham: To meet the 18-week patient pathway target for the end of December 2008 a series of milestones have been established. The milestones for March 2007 are maximum waits of 11 weeks for first out-patient appointments following general practitioner (GP) written referral, 13 weeks for diagnostics tests and procedures, and 20 weeks for elective in-patient treatment.

Last spring, the national health service submitted activity plans for 2006-07. These were for 8.2 million first out-patient attendances following GP referral (all specialties), 12.0 million total consultant-led first out-patient attendances (general and acute specialties), and 5.9 million elective hospital admissions (general and acute specialties). Activity plans for 2006-07 are currently being updated and resubmitted by the NHS.

Walk-in Health Care

John Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* minor injuries departments, *(b)* accident and emergency departments and *(c)* walk-in centres were operational in England in each of the last five years. [65431]

Ms Rosie Winterton: National health service trusts self-report the number of accident and emergency (A&E) departments that they provide against definitions that the Department has set for each type of A&E. Separate information is also collected specifically on the number of walk-in centres in England. The information available is shown in the table.

	Number of type one (major) A&E departments[1,2,4]	*Number of type three A&E departments (minor injury and illness services including minor injury units)*[1,2,4]	*Number of walk-in centres*[3,4]
2001-02	196	149	42
2002-03	209	214	42
2003-04	208	225	44
2004-05	207	238	64
2005-06	204	252	69

Notes:
1. QMAE data used for type one and type three A&E departments for years 2002-03 to 2005-06.
2. KH03 data used for type one and type three A&E departments for year 2001-02.
3. Walk-in centre figures were not collected in QMAE prior to 2003-04, therefore figures from the walk-in centre monthly service report have been used for 2001-02 and 2002-03.
4. As at end March of relevant year except 2005-06 where position is at end December.

Work Force Statistics

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will break down the Health and Social Care Information Centre NHS workforce statistics for *(a)* 1995 and *(b)* 2005 by Government office region. [69658]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 9 May 2006]:* The national health service workforce statistics for 1995 and 2005 by Government office region have been placed in the Library.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 24 May 2006

PRIME MINISTER

Ministerial Visits

Q15. **Norman Baker:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to visit Lewes constituency. [73156]

The Prime Minister: This is a matter for my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Asbestos-related Cancer

9. **Mr. Hepburn:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent assessment he has made of the death rate attributable to asbestos-related cancer in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [72228]

Paul Goggins: The number of asbestos-related cancers cannot be assessed directly, since asbestos-related lung cancers are clinically indistinguishable from other lung cancers. However figures are available on the cancer mesothelioma, which is almost always caused by asbestos exposure.

In 2004, the last year for which validated figures are available, 51 deaths were registered in Northern Ireland where the underlying cause was recorded as mesothelioma. This represents a death rate of 3.0 per 100,000 population.

Education Provision

10. **Jim Dobbin:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to improve education provision and support for looked-after children and vulnerable adults in Northern Ireland. [72229]

Maria Eagle: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave earlier.

Power-sharing Initiatives

11. **Mr. Robathan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the likely effectiveness of continuing to pay salaries and expenses as an inducement to encourage members of the Northern Ireland Assembly to rejoin power-sharing initiatives. [72230]

Mr. Hanson: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave earlier.

Provisional IRA

12. **Daniel Kawczynski:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps the Government are taking to encourage the Provisional IRA to disband. [72231]

Mr. Hanson: The Independent Monitoring Commission 10th report published on 26 April, states that "PIRA has taken a strategic decision to follow a political path" and that it does not in its view "present a terrorist threat". This is consistent with the chief constable's assessment.

Decommissioning

13. **Mr. David Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the decommissioning of arms and explosives held by paramilitaries. [72232]

Paul Goggins: The IICD has stated that it will submit a full report on armaments when its mandate is complete.

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what types of weapons were decommissioned by the Provisional IRA in the recent act of decommissioning. [71318]

Paul Goggins: On 26 September 2005 the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning

"determined that the IRA had met its commitment to put all its arms beyond use in a manner called for by the legislation."

The Government expect a full report on armaments to be published when the IICD have fully concluded their work.

Antisocial Behaviour Strategy

14. **Gordon Banks:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what co-operation there is between local authorities, the Police Service of Northern Ireland and housing authorities in respect of implementing an antisocial behaviour strategy in Northern Ireland. [72233]

Mr. Hanson: Tackling antisocial behaviour is part of the broader community safety strategy for Northern Ireland. The Police Service of Northern Ireland, local councils and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive work together on all 26 Community Safety Partnerships to deal with the community safety matters, including antisocial behaviour, which have been identified as priorities in their local community safety strategies and action plans.

Arts Council

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been allocated to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland in each year since 1997; and how much this represents per head of population in Northern Ireland. [71049]

Maria Eagle: Funds allocated to the Arts Council from DCAL since the Department came into existence in 1999 are shown in the tables below. Figures for earlier years are not readily available.

Government grants to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland since 1999

	£
1999-2000	7,249,090
2000-01	6,956,000
2001-02	8,053,000
2002-03	7,960,000
2003-04	10,974,000
2004-05	11,949,223
2005-06	10,832,074

Per capita expenditure since 1999

	£
1999-2000	4.31
2000-01	4.13
2001-02	4.76
2002-03	4.69
2003-04	6.44
2004-05	6.98
2005-06	6.33

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how long each member of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland has been in post. [71050]

Maria Eagle: The information you have requested is as follows:

Membership of the Arts Council

Date of appointment/member	*Currently in post* *Years*	*Months*
1 July 2003		
Mrs. Rosemary Kelly (Chair)	2	9
Mr. Martin Bradley (Vice-Chair)	2	9
Mrs. Eithne Benson	2	9
Mrs. Kathleen Bond	2	9
Mr. Will Chamberlain[1]	1	11
Ms Lucia (Lucy) Finnegan	2	9
1 February 2005		
Mr. Raymond Fullerton	1	3
1 July 2003		
Ms Jill Amanda Holmes	2	9
Mr. Anthony Kennedy	2	9
Mr. Tim Kerr	2	9
Mr. Adrian McDowell[2]	?	8

[1] Resigned June 2005.
[2] Resigned March 2004.

Classroom Assistants

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the evaluation of classroom assistants' jobs in Northern Ireland commenced; and if he will make a statement on the evaluation. [71366]

Maria Eagle: Classroom assistants are part of the Education and Library Boards' overall Job Evaluation exercise that commenced in 1995. Since that time, Boards have been conducting a range of job evaluations for some 25,000 staff in total. It was acknowledged at the start that this would be a complex exercise that would take a considerable amount of time. It was therefore agreed that the effective date of any re-grading would be 1 January 1995 so that no member of staff would be disadvantaged by having to wait for the evaluation of their post.

Classroom assistants are the last major group of staff (some 7,000) for which Job Evaluation agreement remains outstanding and I am told that negotiations between the Education and Library Boards and the trade union side on the job evaluation process for classroom assistants are at an advanced stage. A total of £25.7 million has already been made available to cover costs resulting from the evaluation exercise. My Department has made clear to the Boards, as employers, the importance of reaching a speedy settlement that is affordable within those sizeable resources already provided and awaits further details from them as to how this objective will be delivered.

Credit Card Fraud

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the change in credit card fraud in Northern Ireland since the introduction of the Chip and PIN technology. [69185]

Paul Goggins: Chip and PIN has had a phased introduction into Northern Ireland, with some outlets offering the facility prior to 14 February. After that date, the use of PIN became mandatory with some exceptions, including cases where cardholders had not received upgraded cards or where outlets had not yet introduced the appropriate technology. It is therefore early to make a sound estimate of the impact of Chip and PIN.

The PSNI have provided the figures which are an estimate of criminal benefit obtained as a result of credit card fraud, from 2002 to date in the table. These figures are based on incidents reported to the PSNI for investigation; however it is accepted that the true figure could be significantly higher, as many incidents are reported directly to financial institutions that in turn may not make a report to police.

	Investigation files	Criminal Benefit
2002	626	1,279,286
2003	597	330,774
2004	551	281,512
2005	646	449,100
2006 to date	321	159,763

There are many types of 'plastic card fraud' and while early indications suggest that chip and PIN has made an impact on 'Card Present Fraud' where a PIN is required, there could be a migration to other forms of card fraud such as CNP (Card Not Present). An example of CNP fraud is internet, mail order type transactions where a PIN is not required.

In 2005, 'Plastic losses' (including ATM fraud such as skimming, account/identity takeover, fraudulent application fraud and compromised card use) amounted to approximately £532,000; the level of cheque crime for 2005 was estimated to be £4,128,000.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many staff in *(a)* each Northern Ireland Department and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Office, have had (i) five or more, (ii) four, (iii) three and (iv) two periods of sick leave of less than five days in each of the last three years. [73083]

Mr. Hanson: The following tables set out the number of staff who have *(a)* five or more, *(b)* four, *(c)* three and *(d)* two periods of sick absence of less than give days in each of the past three years.

Number of staff with periods of sick leave of less than five days by Department: 2004-05

Department	Five or more occasions	Four occasions	Three occasions	Two occasions
DARD	23	49	111	418
DCAL	7	9	37	67
DE	7	12	30	120
DETI	4	13	38	133
DFP	26	45	138	405
DEL	10	20	51	199
DHSSPS	15	18	50	142
DOE	24	54	103	315
DRD	13	23	98	422
DSD	52	97	347	1,166
OFMDFM	3	7	24	64
NIO	9	29	88	192

Number of staff with periods of sick leave of Less than five days by Department 2003-04

Department	Five or more occasions	Four occasions	Three occasions	Two occasions
DARD	64	65	212	528
DCAL	11	15	51	77
DE	7	20	46	90
DETI	6	18	69	142
DFP	48	61	191	467
DEL	21	28	101	281
DHSSPS	29	31	76	173

Number of staff with periods of sick leave of Less than five days by Department 2003-04

Department	Five or more occasions	Four occasions	Three occasions	Two occasions
DOE	39	63	185	402
DRD	66	94	249	657
DSD	71	160	544	1,382
OFMDFM	9	12	33	70
NIO	11	22	76	199

Number of staff with periods of sick leave of less than five days by department: 2002-03

Department	Five or more occasions	Four occasions	Three occasions	Two occasions
DARD	79	87	207	457
DCAL	15	17	41	75
DE	5	20	40	97
DETI	15	34	74	134
DFP	62	87	245	457
DEL	44	49	138	304
DHSSPS	39	38	92	166
DOE	31	78	189	364
DRD	77	111	316	756
DSD	96	156	603	1,440
OFMDFM	6	15	29	55
NIO	10	21	75	166

Diversiton Multi-faith Calendar

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was donated to the diversiton multi-faith calendar 2006 by the *(a)* Northern Ireland Office and *(b)* Police Service of Northern Ireland. [65351]

Mr. Hain: As sponsors of the 2006 multi-faith calendar *(a)* Northern Ireland Office purchased 500 calendars at a cost of £2,375 and *(b)* the Police Service of Northern Ireland purchased 250 calendars at a cost of £1,500. The calendars were widely distributed throughout each organisation as part of ongoing work to improve understanding of diversity.

Eid-ul-Adha Reception

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total travelling and subsistence costs were associated with the attendance by civil servants from the Northern Ireland Office and Northern Ireland departments at the recent Eid-ul-Adha reception in London hosted by the Civil Service Islamic Society. [65350]

Mr. Hain: The total travelling and subsistence costs for three Northern Ireland Office officials to attend the Reception were £338.

IRA Army Council

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland who he has identified as the members of the Army Council of the Provisional IRA. [71319]

Paul Goggins: The hon. Gentleman will be aware that it is the long-standing policy of the Government not to comment on matters of intelligence or individual cases.

National Stadium

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what work has been carried out by each of the responsible Northern Ireland Departments in respect of preparing an estimate of the costs of building a new national stadium. [71117]

Mr. Hanson: An economic appraisal has been carried out by independent consultants on behalf of the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) and the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) on the costs of building a multi-sports stadium in Northern Ireland and was completed in September 2005. This estimated the costs of building a new 42,000 seater stadium to be c.£88 million in April 2005 prices.

Raymond McCord

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects to receive the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland's report on her investigation into the 1997 murder of Raymond McCord Jr. [72714]

Paul Goggins: The Police Ombudsman has advised that at report of the investigation into matters related to the murder of Raymond McCord Jr. is nearing completion. The Police Ombudsman's investigation is as a result of a complaint from Raymond McCord Sr. about the handling of the police investigation of his son's murder, not about the murder itself.

South Eastern Music Centre

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding was made available by the Department for Education to the South Eastern Music Centre in each of the past five years for which figures are available; and what plans he has to increase funding. [72511]

Maria Eagle: The music service is funded from within the South Eastern Education and Library Board's (SEELB) Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS) budget. It is therefore a matter for the SEELB to decide how to distribute their overall funding across the services that they provide.

The budget allocated to the music service by the SEELB in each of the last five years was as follows:

	Amount (£)
2001-02	942,000
2002-03	856,000
2003-04	800,000
2004-05	790,000
2005-06	600,000

Special Advisers

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been paid in *(a)* salary, *(b)* travelling expenses, *(c)* subsistence allowance and *(d)* removal expenses to special advisers in the Northern Ireland Office in each of the last five years. [69228]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is as follows.

(a) Since 2003, the Government have published on an annual basis the names and overall cost of special advisers and the number in each pay band. For information relating to the last financial year I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement made by my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 158-61WS.

Information on special advisers for this financial year is currently being collected and will be published in the normal way when it is ready.

(b) in 2005-06 travel costs for special advisers totalled £42,536.18.

(c) in 2005-06 subsistence costs for special advisers totalled £1,641.23.

(d) in 2005-06 there was no expenditure on removal expenses.

All official travel by special advisers is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Ministerial Code and the Civil Service Management Code.

Information on prior years could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

University of Ulster

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many non-EU students have been enrolled at each University of Ulster campus in each of the last three years. [73203]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is as follows.

Non-EU domiciled enrolments at the University of Ulster by campus 2002-03 to 2004-05

Academic year	*University of Ulster Campus*				
	Belfast	*Coleraine*	*Jordanstown*	*Magee*	*Total*
2002-03	9	256	289	44	598
2003-04	10	269	300	38	617
2004-05	6	229	250	58	543

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

HESA data relating to the 2005-06 academic year are not available at this time.

Unpaid Fines (Imprisonment)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people spent time in prison for unpaid *(a)* fines and *(b)* other forms of fixed penalty in Northern Ireland during 2005. [70912]

Paul Goggins: In 2005, there were 1,814 prison receptions for fine default in Northern Ireland. The

number of individuals received into prison for fine default was 1,599. The majority served only one period in custody for fine default; 175 individuals served multiple periods in custody (one up to seven periods).

Of the 1,599 individuals received into prison for fine default, 16 related to failure to pay fixed penalties; each served one period in custody.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Alternative Education

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what policy he has for alternative education for the socially excluded; and if he will make a statement. [72840]

Jim Knight: Every person of compulsory school age has a right to education. For those who cannot be educated in mainstream schools for whatever reason, local authorities have a duty to make arrangements for these children to receive suitable alternative education. Where alternative education is provided, local authorities must ensure the appropriateness of the education taking account of the learners' age, ability, and aptitude and to any other educational needs they may have.

Accommodation

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discounts are available in relation to hotel accommodation used by *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department. [69037]

Mr. Dhanda: The Department uses a formal contract with a hotel booking agent to book rooms required for overnight stays on official business. On average the Department receives 8 per cent. discount on room bookings and is charged a management fee by the Agent for the administration of the contract.

PE Teachers

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many sports and physical education teachers have been employed in schools in England in each year since 1997. [73234]

Jim Knight: Information on subject teaching is collected in periodic staffing surveys. Estimates from the two most recent surveys show that number of full-time teachers in maintained secondary schools teaching physical education, to year groups 7 to 13, was 20,000 in 1996 and 21,400 in 2002.

School Sports

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much his Department has spent on school sports facilities in each year since 1994. [73235]

Jim Knight: Central records on capital expenditure are held from 1996-97. Information on capital expenditure on school sports facilities is not held centrally, as decisions on how resources should be invested in schools, including sports facilities, are taken by each local authority and its schools in accordance with their priorities and locally prepared asset management plans.

The following table sets out the total capital resources allocated to local authorities and schools since 1996-97.

	£ billion
1996-97	0.5
1997-98	0.6
1998-99	1.3
1999-2000	1.6
2000-01	2.5
2001-02	2.5
2002-03	3.3
2003-04	4.2
2004-05	4.9
2005-06	5.5
2006-07	5.8

Capital allocations to local authorities and schools are higher than ever before, and are planned to rise to £6.3 billion in 2007-08.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Asian Tsunami

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the total amount of *(a)* relief and *(b)* development overseas aid Sri Lanka has received since the tsunami in December 2004. [71635]

Mr. Thomas: The total cost of tsunami rehabilitation and recovery in Sri Lanka has been estimated at £1.3 billion. Support in excess of £1.7 billion has been pledged, plus a further £800 million from non-governmental organisations. The Government of Sri Lanka's Development Assistance Database records most major recovery programmes and shows that to date approximately £650 million has been disbursed on 686 projects and programmes. There will also be a range of programmes, particularly in the NGO sector, which are not recorded on the database. Within these figures, DFID has committed £19.8 million for tsunami relief of which some £18.6 million has been disbursed. In addition we have pledged some £41 million for debt relief, of which approximately £4 million has been spent.

At present, the database does not record non-tsunami expenditure and there is no consolidated and up to date record of all donor flows. The latest figures available are for 2003, during which Sri Lanka received approximately £395 million in Official Development Assistance. The UK contributed £7.2 million of this amount.

Burma

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take to assist the internally displaced Karen, Karenni and Shan people in eastern Burma. [71177]

Mr. Thomas: DFID provides direct support to the internally displaced Karen, Karenni and Shan people in eastern Burma through the International Committee of the Red Cross, to which we provide £500,000 a year, of which approximately 75 per cent. is attributable to work with displaced people in this area. These funds are able to reach internally displaced people in areas where fighting is actually occurring.

In addition, our health, education and rural livelihood projects provide assistance in eastern Burma, and support internally displaced people who have resettled there, as well as other vulnerable people. For example, in Karen State, our fund for HIV/AIDS in Myanmar enables World Vision to deliver projects in two townships, Save the Children UK in four townships and Care in five townships, as well as funding other national NGOs. DFID-funded projects supporting the development of rural livelihoods, and pre-primary education are both about to start in Karen State.

In response to the growing numbers of internally displaced people in eastern Burma, we are providing finance which enables the provision of emergency support through local community groups. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and assess whether we need to supplement those funds.

Consultants

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the companies which were paid consultancy fees by his Department in 2005-06; how much each was paid; and what each of the companies was used to accomplish. [69691]

Hilary Benn: I have arranged for copies of the document entitled 'Paid Consultant Fees: 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006' which gives details of the companies and the fees paid to them by the Department for International Development (DFID), to be placed in the Libraries of the House. The terms of reference are specific to each contract and are generally part of a larger project which has been agreed by overseas partners. The contract titles on the report reflect the type of activity carried out. The report does not include low value contracts issued by DFID's overseas offices, of which there are no consolidated central records. It would require disproportionate cost to produce a list of these contracts.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the work his Department is undertaking in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. [72811]

Hilary Benn: DFID has a rapidly increasing programme of development assistance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In 2001-02 the UK had a £7 million programme of humanitarian aid. In 2005-06, the UK spent approximately £57 million on a package of emergency humanitarian aid and longer term development activity. We have £63 million available this financial year. Since October 2005, DFID has had a fully devolved office of 33 staff in the DRC (11 UK based and 22 staff appointed in country). The UK is committed to supporting poverty reduction and sustainable development in the DRC in the long-term.

Our current programme in the DRC is divided into four themes that reflect the transition context in the country—the first democratic elections for 40 years are due to be held this summer. As the DRC moves out of transition, the nature of our engagement will evolve accordingly. Where possible, we work in a collaborative or harmonised way with other partners and, as far as we can, in support of the Government's processes and systems.

We are in the process of developing a full Country Assistance Plan for the DRC—which will be completed over the course of 2006, after discussion with the new Government. We will do this as much as possible in conjunction with other donors.

Our current transition programme follows the following themes:

Security and the Rule of Law

Support for the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants through the Multi-Country Demobilisation and Re-integration Programme (MDRP), support to army integration, reform of the police and justice sector, and local level peace building and dialogue initiatives through non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Functioning State

This includes support for the transition institutions (such as the Parliament, Electoral Commission and High Media Authority), the establishment of a professional and impartial media sector, and preparation for elections. The UK is the largest bilateral donor to the electoral process in the DRC.

Reconstruction

Support for infrastructure within the Government's reconstruction plan, especially transport links; the development of a poverty reduction strategy (PRSP); support to the social sectors (health, education and water) largely through NGOs; and the fight against HIV/AIDS through UNAIDS and NGOs.

Natural Resources and Enhanced Revenue Generation

We have funded research by Global Witness into the current state of natural resources management in the DRC. We are supporting the implementation of the

Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in the DRC and developing our plans for further support for effective and transparent natural resource extraction and the re-establishment of border control systems.

Humanitarian

Around half of our programme is spent on humanitarian interventions either through UN agencies or NGOs, to address the complex and chronic humanitarian emergency that has faced the people of the DRC since the war. Our funding is principally channelled to the UN's Action Plan for the DRC through its pooled donor funding mechanism.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans he has to visit the Democratic Republic of the Congo. [72812]

Hilary Benn: I hope to visit the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the autumn; once the elections have finished and the new government is installed.

Departmental Credit Cards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what facility is available for senior civil servants in his Department to use credit cards supplied by the Department. [70508]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) operates a Mastercard system supplied by the NatWest bank, under an arrangement set up by the Welsh Procurement Initiative. The card is used for low-value, high-volume purchases by senior civil servants as required. It has both individual and overall spending limits, and usage is closely monitored to ensure compliance with Government accounting rules.

Genetic Resources

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what assistance his Department has provided to enable countries to consider different forms of sui generis systems for plant varieties; and what studies his Department has carried out to assess the impact of Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights on the availability of seeds for farmers and researchers in developing countries; [72659]

(2) what studies his Department has carried out to assess the effectiveness of different forms of sui generis systems for plant varieties for allowing continuing access by farmers and researchers to seeds; [72660]

(3) what assistance his Department has provided to developing countries to develop a definition of 'micro-organisms' to enable free access to genetic resources consistent with Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights; and what studies his Department has carried out to assist the development of such a definition; [72661]

(4) what measures his Department has taken to support developing countries to restrict the application of patents to plant and animal genetic resources in ways which are consistent with Trade-Related Property Intellectual Rights; [72662]

(5) what assistance his Department has provided for the purpose of ensuring that patent protection legislation in developing countries includes specific exemptions for plant breeding and research and the harvested seed intended for re-sowing by the producing farmer; and what studies his Department has carried out to assist the development of such legislation; [72663]

(6) what his Department's policy is on preserving the rights of countries not to grant patents for plants and animals, includes genes and genetically modified plants and animals, in order to protect varieties for research and breeding, to provide for the rights of farmers to save and plant-back seed and to allow informal sale and exchange of seeds. [72664]

Mr. Thomas: The UK Government believe that the question of patenting of plants and animals should be carefully considered by developing countries. The UK Government also strongly believe that the flexibilities contained in the Trade Related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights agreement, Article 27.3(b), are important and should be used. The TRIPs agreement indeed allows the World Trade Organisation members to exclude plant varieties from patentability. However, the WTO members are required to provide for plant varieties protection either by patents or by an effective sui generis system or by any combination thereof. The TRIPS agreement also makes clear that WTO members have to provide patents for inventions involving microbiological and non-biological processes, which would include genetic modification technology.

The UK Government agree that sui generis systems for protecting plant varieties may be a more suitable option for many developing countries.

There are a certain number of issues to consider when restricting the application of patenting in agricultural biotechnology. The interpretation of the TRIPS provisions is one of them, as there is no agreed international legal definition of "micro-organism". We believe that it is legitimate for the WTO member states to make a reasonable definition of "micro-organism" for themselves. The UK Government are also of the view that developing countries could consider in sui generis systems the use of exceptions to exclusive rights for research and plant breeding purpose, as well as to enable farmers to save and plant back seed, including the possibility of informal exchange and sale.

The UK Government are supporting the rapid implementation of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture which came into force in 2004. The ITPGRFA has the objective to facilitate access to genetic resources, and recognises the contribution of farmers in conserving, improving and making these resources available. It also covers the question of farmer's rights. DFID supported the International Plant Genetic Research Institute in advising the FAO on development of the ITPGRFA.

DFID has funded analytical work that takes these issues into consideration. DFID provided support to the Secretariat of the independent UK Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, which reported in

September 2002 and provided a breakthrough analysis of the implications of intellectual property protection for development. DFID has since provided funding for a UNCTAD—International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development joint project on intellectual property in Geneva, as well as work carried out by the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva. These projects have produced highly valued analytical papers, technical dialogues and research cooperation projects with regional institutions, covering agricultural and plant variety patent protection.

DFID has not provided any direct technical assistance or capacity building support to developing countries to help them define restrictions to the application of patenting in agricultural biotechnology in a manner consistent with the TRIPS Agreement. DFID's development assistance is recipient driven, and countries are defining their own development priorities. Should interested developing countries formulate future requests for assistance in these issues, DFID will consider how to answer such needs. Specialised international and national intellectual property agencies or offices are technically better placed to provide such assistance and the UK Patent Office has provided training and assistance to developing countries and less developed countries when requested.

State Failures

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the extent of state failure in *(a)* Sudan, *(b)* Democratic Republic of the Congo, *(c)* Cote d'Ivoire, *(d)* Zimbabwe, *(e)* Chad, *(f)* Somalia, *(g)* Haiti, *(h)* Pakistan, (i) Guinea and (j) Liberia; and what steps are being taken by his Department to reduce the incidence of state failure. [69966]

Hilary Benn: There is no international agreement on what constitutes state fragility: the World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessments (CPIA) can be used to measure fragility. The CPIA measures countries performance and divides low-income countries into five categories. There is one "unranked" group of countries not scored in any given year. The lowest two categories plus the unranked group are used by DFID and other donors as a list of fragile countries. Of the countries listed, all except Pakistan fall into this proxy list.

Poverty is widespread and particularly severe in fragile states. Aid that has been given has often been volatile, fragmented and poorly co-ordinated. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) cannot be achieved without more progress in fragile states.

Following the publication of our policy paper 'Why we need to work more effectively in fragile states' in January last year, DFID has made a commitment to increase engagement in fragile states. We have, with our partners, been developing more appropriate ways of working together to improve the way the international system organises itself to respond and deliver aid. DFID has led work in the OECD's Development Assistance Committee including on agreeing 'Principles for good international engagement in fragile states'. These were endorsed in 2005 and are currently being piloted in nine countries. DFID is leading three of the nine pilots.

Copies of the 2005 policy paper are available in the Library of the House.

Our engagement in the fragile states listed is as follows:

Sudan

The UK share of EC and multilateral assistance was £9 million in 2004. Total DFID Bilateral Aid in 2004-05 was £84 million (of which £77.7 million was humanitarian assistance). The Comprehensive Peace Agreement to the North- South conflict and the recently signed 'Darfur Peace Agreement' offer the people of Sudan genuine opportunities for political representation and security. DFID will spend £109.8 million in 2006-07 helping to meet the humanitarian, developmental and conflict resolution needs in Sudan, split roughly humanitarian: £67 million and development/conflict resolution: £42 million. Furthermore, we are working closely with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to support the Abuja peace process and the African Union peacekeepers in Darfur.

Democratic Republic of Congo

The UK share of EC and multilateral assistance was £31.3 million in 2004. In the last five years, DFID bilateral assistance to the DRC has risen rapidly, from £5.6 million in 2001-2 to £29.2 million (of which £22.2 million was humanitarian assistance) in 2004-05. A fully devolved DFID programme was established in the country in late 2005. Expenditure of £132 million is planned over the next two years. The increase in DFID's assistance reflects the UK's determination to support the people and the Government of the DRC to complete successfully the transition process, including the elections, and find a sustainable path to peace, prosperity and poverty reduction.

Cote d'Ivoire

DFID has no bilateral development programme with Cote d'Ivoire, but since the start of hostilities in 2002 we have provided £900,000 in humanitarian assistance including displaced people and refugees of many nationalities. We are working closely with the international community to help bring about a swift and peaceful resolution. Our share of EC and multilateral assistance totalled about £13.2 million in 2004.

Zimbabwe

Since the crisis in Zimbabwe began in 2000 until 2004-05 (most recently published figures), DFID Zimbabwe has provided £117.1 million to support poor people in Zimbabwe through our bilateral programme. Our share of EC and multilateral assistance was £5.6 million in 2004. DFID has focused on humanitarian assistance, tackling HIV and AIDS and providing support to orphans and vulnerable children. DFID channels resources through the UN agencies and civil society: none of our funding goes through the Government of Zimbabwe. We work closely with other donors and international organisations in identifying and responding to the immediate needs of Zimbabwe's poorest people.

Chad

There is no bilateral development programme, but humanitarian assistance was £2 million in 2004-05. Our share of EC and multilateral assistance totalled £7.6 million in 2004. DFID continually monitors the humanitarian situation and undertakes periodic assessments in the east of the country. Humanitarian funding totalling £4.million is planned this year.

Somalia

The UK share of EC and multilateral assistance was £4.2 million in 2004. DFID's programme has increased from £1.7 million in 2001-02 to £5.3 million in 2004-05 (of which £3.5 million was spent on humanitarian activities) and is set to reach £21 million in the financial year 2007-08. The majority of last year's spend was focused on emergency humanitarian activities due to the drought in early 2006. We work with a range of Somali partners, UN system and NGOS. The overall goal of the programme is a peaceful, politically stable, and economically viable Somalia.

Haiti.

DFID assists Haiti through multilateral contributions to the amount of £15.3 million over the period 1999-2004 through the UK imputed share to the European Commission, United Nations, World Bank and others. We made bilateral contributions to humanitarian needs in 2004-05 of £1.9 million. We are hoping to put a DFID placement in the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in Port au Prince to assist in donor harmonisation/aid effectiveness and humanitarian assessments.

Guinea

DFID has no bilateral development programme with Guinea, but our share of EC and multilateral assistance totalled £6.4 million in 2004. DFID undertakes regular assessments of humanitarian need and has provided assistance totalling £2.3 million over the period 2000-01 to 2004-05. Last year's programme (figures not yet available) included assisting people affected by conflict, and supporting an emergency immunisation programme. We are also planning support for conflict prevention activities to help minimise the risks of political transition.

Liberia

DFID is working closely with the new government of Liberia to strengthen its capacity, particularly in anti-corruption and civil service reform. DFID has provided over £17.4 million of bilateral aid from 2002-03 – 2004-05 (including £12.5 million humanitarian assistance), and is also supporting the resettlement of refugees and reintegration of ex-combatants (£3 million this year). The UK share of EC and multilateral support was £3.5 million in 2004.

DFID also has a significant engagement in:

Pakistan

Which we would not class as a fragile state, where we spent £31.4 million in 2004-05. UK share of EC and multilateral assistance was £18.9 million in 2004. Last year DFID's bilateral expenditure increased considerably and £236 million expenditure is planned over the next three years. In addition to all this, last year's earthquake relief is being followed up with £70 million towards reconstruction over the next 3 to 5 years. DFID works closely with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in country to alleviate the causes of state fragility.

Traditional Knowledge

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what research his Department has carried out to assess what systems are best for protecting traditional knowledge; [71453]

(2) what steps he has taken to ensure that the holders of traditional knowledge from developing countries are protected when patent applications are made; [71454]

(3) what studies his Department has carried out to assess the effectiveness of the Food and Agriculture Organisation Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources, in countries where it has been ratified, in *(a)* protecting traditional knowledge, *(b)* ensuring the equitable sharing of benefits from utilisation of genetic resources, *(c)* securing the right to be consulted about the sustainable use and conservation of genetic resources and *(d)* protecting other rights of farmers; [71458]

(4) what fora *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials participate in to consider the protection of traditional knowledge. [71464]

Mr. Thomas: DFID recognises the importance of traditional knowledge to communities, and especially poor farmers, in developing countries and to ensure their rights to, and benefits from this knowledge are protected. DFID has taken a number of steps to help achieve this.

In relation to DFID funded research, all our contracts specify that the retention of intellectual property rights (IPR) should be freely available for non-commercial use by any organisation or individual. This ensures DFID research outputs cannot be captured in patents, and that traditional knowledge is protected.

DFID has directly commissioned work on traditional knowledge. This included a survey on IPR and sustainable human development in 2000. This review investigated the suitability of IPR regimes for protecting traditional knowledge and concluded that patents are generally unsuitable, but that other IPR regimes required further investigation.

In 2003, DFID produced a briefing on TRIPS (the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Agreement) and development. This investigated how IPR regimes could take greater account of developing country interests, and raised the concern that TRIPS does not cover traditional knowledge. We are working with the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) on this. This issue was again recognised by the Commission for Africa which my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development was a member. The Commission's Report stated that developed countries should increase technical support to Africa for the extension of IPR to indigenous innovation and knowledge.

We also support the Centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research to conduct work on traditional knowledge and genetic

resources. For example, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) is conducting ethnobotanical research to identify where and how genetic diversity in crops is found and valued. The International Plant Genetic Research Institute (IPGRI) has developed an Indigenous Knowledge Journal to help empower knowledge holders. Under this farmers document their knowledge on a topic on audio tape, or any media, in their own language which can then be listed in scientific journals.

At the national level DFID has supported a range of initiatives on traditional knowledge. For example, in Indonesia we are supporting local NGOs in partnership with the Government to explore opportunities for supporting traditional forest management systems where communities directly benefit from their traditional knowledge.

We supported the IPGRI in advising the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) on development of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. DFID has not yet carried out any studies to assess the effectiveness of the Treaty as it only recently came into force in June 2004.

Alongside the Treaty the Global Crop Diversity Trust was established and this will set up gene banks to preserve existing plant material. The issue of the diversity in animal genetic resources is under discussion including the possibility of a new Treaty. DFID is financing studies on this to help inform discussion in the FAO.

We have funded dialogues on traditional knowledge, for example through a joint project with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD). This project contributed to enhancing developing countries' engagement in World Trade Organisation (WTO) and WIPO discussions.

DFID has supported the work of the 2002 Commission on Intellectual Property Rights (CIPR). The Commission reported that traditional knowledge was an important area where intellectual property protection needed to be developed. The UK Government broadly endorsed the analysis of the CIPR.

DFID officials participate in the intergovernmental discussions that take place under article 8j of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. There is a Working Group on Article 8j, which DFID officials participate in, this has worked on (a) improving participation of indigenous communities in decision making processes (b) mechanisms for maintaining traditional knowledge relevant to the conservation and sustainable use (c) promoting the wider application of this traditional knowledge, subject to the consent of communities concerned and (d) encouraging the equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of traditional knowledge.

Uganda

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has allocated to aid for the Ugandan Government for the purposes of conducting public prosecutions, with particular reference to the trial of Dr. Kizza Besigye; and if he will make a statement. [73124]

Mr. McCartney: I have been asked to reply.

The UK has not allocated any aid to Uganda for the specific purpose of conducting public prosecutions. The trial of Dr. Kizza Besigye is funded from the Government of Uganda's budget for justice, law and order. A number of development partners, including the UK, provide budget support to Uganda. This form of aid is the best way to support the Government's programmes in education, health and in other areas essential to reduce poverty. A recent evaluation of budget support in Uganda concluded that budget support had led to a major increase in the Government's spending to reduce poverty and improved the efficiency of public expenditure and financial management systems.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

2012 Olympics

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what the estimated budget is for security at the London 2012 Olympics; [72526]

(2) what recent revision she has made of the £220 million figure for security costs at the London 2012 Olympics; and what the total security costs were at *(a)* the Sydney 2000 Olympics and *(b)* the Athens 2004 Olympics. [72324]

Tessa Jowell *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The overall responsibility for security for the Olympic and Paralympic Games rests with the Home Secretary. He has appointed a senior Metropolitan officer as the security director with day-to-day responsibility for all security related matters.

The security director is currently reviewing the requirement for providing a safe games for all concerned, and will report to Ministers shortly. We will, with the security director, keep the developing security situation under constant review until the Games are complete so as to be able to respond to changing threats and circumstances.

Security costs at the Sydney Olympic Games quoted in their post Games report totalled A$170 million (approximately £70 million at today's exchange rate). The approximate cost of security at Athens was €900 million.

However, as the international security situation continues to change we do not believe that valid cost comparisons can be made with previous games. The Metropolitan police and other agencies are nevertheless in contact with their counterparts in other countries to learn from their operational experiences.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent revision she has made of the estimate of 3 per cent. building cost inflation for the London 2012 Olympics; and how the estimated figure compares with market data. [72325]

Tessa Jowell *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* Cost work conducted in support of the Olympic bid suggested building cost inflation of 3.5 per cent. in the period 2003-06 and 6.5 per cent. from 2006 onwards.

Building costs are among those being looked at by the review of Olympic costs, which is ongoing. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Manchester, Blackley (Graham Stringer) on 10 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 311W.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games announced that its budget had risen from £1.5 billion to £2 billion; what the reason is for the increase; and on what basis the extra £500 million has been calculated. [72329]

Tessa Jowell *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by the Minister for Sport, my right hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield, Central (Mr. Caborn) on 12 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 634W.

There has been no increase in the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) budget. LOCOG always anticipated that the budget would be around £2 billion. However, the International Olympic Committee asked bidding cities to submit budgets at 2004 prices, which is why the bid files show a budget of £1.5 billion.

On 24 January 2006, LOCOG published a press notice stating their budget at out-turn prices. In arriving at the figure of £2 billion, LOCOG has applied the relevant compound inflation rates to the appropriate elements of their budget

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent assessment she has made of whether the funding package of £2.375 billion for the London 2012 Olympic Games is sufficient to cover the capital costs. [72333]

Tessa Jowell *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* This is under consideration as a part of the Olympic cost review, which is ongoing. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Manchester, Blackley (Graham Stringer) on 10 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 311W.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the most recent Government estimate is of the funding necessary for infrastructure improvements required for the London 2012 Olympics in addition to the £2.375 billion agreed funding package. [72339]

Tessa Jowell *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to him on 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 640W.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with organisations with a view to extending the benefits of the 2012 Olympic Games into the north-west of England and Greater Manchester. [72649]

Mr. Caborn: The Government are determined that the whole of the UK, including the north-west of England and Greater Manchester, can contribute to and benefit from the Games in 2012.

A Nations and Regions Group (NRG), has been established to provide leadership and strategic direction in ensuring that the whole of the UK is engaged with and benefits from the Games in 2012. Each nation and region, including the North West, is represented on the NRG and has been tasked with developing a delivery plan to ensure that it gains the maximum benefits from the Games.

The north-west has established its own Steering Group to drive forward this agenda. The group, chaired by the north-west Sports Board, includes representation from the Northwest Regional Development Agency, the North West Tourism Forum, Government Office North West, Culture North West, Liverpool Culture Company, Manchester city council and Preston city council.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she first informed Parliament that the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games had raised its budget from £1.5 billion to £2 billion. [72759]

Tessa Jowell *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my right hon. Friend the Minister for Sport on 12 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 634W.

The London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) planned on the basis of a budget at outturn prices of 'around £2 billion'. However, because the International Olympic Committee asked bidding cities to submit budgets at 2004 prices, the bid files show a budget of £1.5 billion. The 'around 2 billion' figure was published by LOCOG on 24 January.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the Minister for Sport's letter of 17 May 2006 to the hon. Member for Faversham and Mid Kent, whether the different inflation rates referred to have also been applied to the £2.375 billion infrastructure budget. [72818]

Tessa Jowell: In the costings work prior to the bid different inflation rates were applied to different cost elements. These different rates of inflation reflect the rates appropriate to each element.

Betting and Gaming

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment the Government have made of the effects on the economy of the liberalisation of the betting and gaming industries. [73195]

Mr. Caborn: The Government commissioned economic studies to inform the policies that are incorporated in the Gambling Act 2005. The results of some of these studies are included in the Regulatory Impact Assessment which accompanied the Act assent and can be found in the Libraries of both Houses.

Departmental Bills (Amendments)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the occasions when an amendment has been moved by *(a)* a Labour backbencher, *(b)* an Opposition backbencher and *(c)* an Opposition Front Bench spokesman to a Bill sponsored by her Department that has been accepted by her Department during the current Session; and if she will make a statement. [72123]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has sponsored the following Bills during the current Session:

The London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Bill

The National Lottery Bill

Information on amendments moved and accepted during the Committee and Report Stages on these Bills is published in the *Official Report*.

Departmental Responsibilities

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list responsibilities which her Department has lost since 1997; what the *(a)* date and *(b)* destination Department was in each case; what responsibilities the Department has taken on since 1997; and what the (i) date and (ii) source Department was in each case. [71135]

Mr. Lammy *[holding answer 15 May 2006]*: Ministerial responsibilities are set out in the list of ministerial responsibilities, which is updated regularly. A revised version will be published shortly. Copies of previous versions are available in the Libraries of both Houses.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what incentives her Department offers to encourage staff to share vehicles when travelling to work. [73015]

Mr. Lammy: DCMS employs 500 staff in central London and offers parking spaces only to disabled staff, and to cyclists. The vast majority of staff travel to and from work using public transport. The Department is currently investing in improved facilities for cyclists so as to encourage more staff to cycle to work.

Gambling Commission

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what powers the Gambling Commission has to attach conditions to codes of practice about how gambling operators advertise or describe their products. [73438]

Mr. Caborn: Under the Gambling Act 2005 the Gambling Commission has the power to attach a licence condition making provision for how gambling facilities may be advertised or described.

The Advertising Standards Authority is working with the Gambling Commission to draw up new codes for non-broadcast gambling advertising, on which it will begin consulting shortly. The Secretary of State also has reserve powers under the Gambling Act to make regulations with regard to the form, content, timing and location of gambling advertising. She will not hesitate to use these powers if it becomes clear that self-regulation is not sufficient to protect children and vulnerable people from exploitation.

Under the Act Ofcom will continue to set, review and revise standards for broadcast advertising by gambling operators. In doing so Ofcom must consult with the Gambling Commission, and reflect any relevant regulations made by the Secretary of State.

Horse Racing Levy

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much was received by the horse racing industry from the Statutory Levy payment by UK bookmakers in each of the last six years; and what the total VAT payment on the Levy payment was in each year. [73194]

Mr. Caborn: For the last six years the Horserace Betting Levy contributed the following amounts to the horse racing industry:

	£ million
2005-06	[1] 91
2004-05	97.3
2003-04	102
2002-03	74.5
2001-02	67
2000-01	55.2

[1] estimated

To date the Levy has not been liable for VAT.

Lottery Funds

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much has been allocated from the National Lottery Distribution Fund to *(a)* the Heritage Lottery Fund, *(b)* UK Sports Lottery Distributors, *(c)* UK Arts Lottery Distributors and *(d)* the Community Fund in each financial year since 1994, not including investment income. [73236]

Mr. Caborn: The following table shows non-investment income to the Heritage Lottery Fund, the UK Sports Lottery Distributors, the UK Arts Lottery Distributors and the Community Fund.

£ million

Financial year	Heritage Lottery Fund	UK Sports Lottery Distributors	UK Arts Lottery Distributors	Community Fund
1994-95	57.8	57.8	57.8	57.8
1995-96	288.7	288.7	288.7	288.7
1996-97	291.5	291.5	291.5	291.5
1997-98	327.2	327.2	327.2	327.2
1998-99	253.7	253.7	253.7	253.7
1999-2000	244.8	244.8	244.8	244.8
2000-01	258.0	258.0	258.0	258.0
2001-02	275.8	275.8	275.8	275.8
2002-03	225.2	225.2	225.2	225.2
2003-04	216.5	216.5	216.5	216.5
2004-05	226.1	226.1	226.1	226.1
2005-06	230.6	230.6	230.6	230.6

Private Members' Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list those private Members' Bills in respect of which her Department adopted a policy of neutrality in each session since 2001-02; and if she will make a statement. [72121]

Mr. Lammy: Unfortunately, the information requested is not collected by the Department and it could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Action Teams

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether *(a)* Pathways to Work, *(b)* employment zones and *(c)* resources from the Deprived Areas Fund will be available in areas served by action teams. [70470]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 16 May 2006]*: Pathways to Work and Employment Zones are already operating in many areas where Action Teams operate. The Action Team programme is due to finish later this year.

The rationale for Action Teams as originally conceived—reaching out to those on benefit who would not otherwise have come into contact with our services—has now, to some extent, been superseded by the creation of Jobcentre Plus and the regime of compulsory work-focused interviews for almost all benefits recipients.

We recognise, however, that some form of continuing outreach activity will be necessary to encourage the most socially excluded—some of whom will not even be claiming benefits—to make use of the support into work we can offer.

The purpose of the Deprived Areas Fund is primarily to add value to current mainstream services offered by Jobcentre Plus and it is envisaged that this will build on the most effective elements of community based initiatives such as Action Teams, Working Neighbourhoods and Ethnic Minority Outreach. This will involve continued partnership working with local stakeholders.

Our recently published Green Paper, "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work" sets out proposals for piloting new initiatives to help local partners work together to improve economic regeneration through skills, employment and health.

Each local area will be asked to develop a consortium comprising local partners with a shared interest in working together to raise local employment rates and improve the local economy. This may include local authorities, employers, learning and skills councils, regional development agencies, primary care trusts and Jobcentre Plus. The key aim of this initiative will be to provide a solution that offers the maximum degree of local flexibility, so that local areas can provide local solutions to local problems.

Child Support Agency

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many constituents in Midlothian have migrated from the old Child Support Agency system to the new system. [72704]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information requested is not currently available at the geographical level requested.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Denton and Reddish constituency have had their Child Support Agency cases migrated from the old to the new system. [73133]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information requested is not currently available at the geographical level requested.

Jim Sheridan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many constituents in Paisley and Renfrewshire, North have migrated from the old Child Support Agency system to the new system. [73191]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information requested is not currently available at the geographical level requested.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many non-resident parents were non-compliant with the Child Support Agency in each of the last five years. [69527]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is the matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the right hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many non-resident parents were non-compliant with the Child Support Agency in each of the last five years.

There are two ways in which non-resident parents can be non-compliant. Information on these is available in the Child Support Agency's Quarterly Summary Statistics (QSS), published on 27th April 2006. A copy of this document is available in the House of Commons Library. Specifically:

Table 7.1 shows Case Compliance - the number of cases that have made a payment (either regular maintenance and/or arrears) via the collection service over the preceding quarter as a percentage of all open cases for which maintenance was charged.

Table 7.2 shows Maintenance Outcomes - the number of cases with a positive maintenance liability that have made a payment (either regular maintenance and/or arrears) via the collection service or have a Maintenance Direct arrangement in place over the preceding quarter.

Note that the Agency measures compliance on the basis of cases, rather than non-resident parents, the data therefore reflects this.

I hope you find this useful.

Extract from CSA Table 7.1: Case Compliance

Quarter ending	*Overall Agency*		
	Total cases charged	*Total cases received*	*Case compliance (Percentage)*
November 1995	143,000	80,000	56
February 1996	157,000	92,000	58
May 1996	170,000	105,000	62
August 1996	178,000	112,000	63
November 1996	190,000	121,000	63
February 1997	202,000	132,000	65
May 1997	210,000	142,000	68
August 1997	221 ,000	151,000	68
November 1997	235,000	162,000	69
February 1998	246,000	170,000	69
May 1998	264,000	183,000	69
August 1998	279,000	193,000	69
November 1998	296,000	205,000	69
February 1999	309,000	212,000	69
May 1999	325,000	227,000	70
August 1999	335,000	235,000	70
November 1999	347,000	243,000	70
February 2000	352,000	246,000	70
May 2000	358,000	254,000	71
August 2000	364,000	259,000	71
November 2000	369,000	265,000	72
February 2001	366,000	262,000	72
May 2001	368,000	267,000	72
August 2001	370,000	269,000	73
November 2001	372,000	271,000	73
February 2002	368,000	269,000	73
May 2002	371,000	279,000	75
August 2002	373,000	283,000	76
November 2002	377,000	286,000	76
February 2003	373,000	283,000	76
April 2004	409,000	288,000	70
May 2004	410,000	289,000	71
June 2004	411,000	291,000	71
July 2004	414,000	293,000	71
August 2004	415,000	292,000	70
September 2004	414,000	291,000	70
October 2004	414,000	291,000	70
November 2004	417,000	293,000	70
December 2004	415,000	292,000	70
January 2005	413,000	289,000	70
February 2005	413,000	288,000	70
March 2005	415,000	290,000	70
April 2005	414,000	291,000	70
May 2005	414,000	291,000	70
June 2005	415,000	292,000	70
July 2005	419,000	294,000	70
August 2005	420,000	296,000	70

Extract from CSA Table 7.1: Case Compliance

Quarter ending	*Overall Agency*		
	Total cases charged	*Total cases received*	*Case compliance (Percentage)*
September 2005	423,000	297,000	70
October 2005	425,000	298,000	70
November 2005	428,000	300,000	70
December 2005	431 ,000	302,000	70
January 2006	432,000	304,000	70
February 2006	435,000	306,000	70
March 2006	440,000	313,000	71

Notes:

1. The above includes those old-scheme cases with a Full Maintenance Assessment, and those new-scheme cases with either a Full Maintenance Calculation, or a Default Maintenance Decision. Old-scheme cases with a punitive Interim Maintenance Assessment are excluded from this analysis in line with the Agency's case compliance target definition, as are new-scheme cases being processed clerically.
2. Cases are classed as compliant if they are currently open, and have been charged and paid money via the collection service (either regular maintenance and/or arrears) over the preceding quarter.
3. Volumes are rounded to the nearest thousand and percentages to nearest whole percent.
4. Robust data from the new IT system (CS2) covering the period March 2003-March 2004 is not currently available, and is under development. Data prior to November 1995 is not currently available.

Extract from CSA Table 7.2: Maintenance Outcomes

Quarter ending	*Overall Agency*		
	Total cases charged	*Total cases received*	*Case compliance (Percentage)*
November 1995	252,000	136,000	54
February 1996	267,000	149,000	56
May 1996	279,000	164,000	59
August 1996	292,000	173,000	59
November 1996	307,000	183,000	60
February 1997	323,000	196,000	61
May 1997	334,000	209,000	62
August 1997	352,000	222,000	63
November 1997	372,000	236,000	63
February 1998	389,000	246,000	63
May 1998	410,000	263,000	64
August 1998	430,000	276,000	64
November 1998	443,000	289,000	65
February 1999	461,000	299,000	65
May 1999	483,000	316,000	66
August 1999	499,000	328,000	66
November 1999	515,000	339,000	66
February 2000	527,000	344,000	65
May 2000	539,000	353,000	65
August 2000	544,000	357,000	66
November 2000	546,000	362,000	66
February 2001	545,000	358,000	66
May 2001	547,000	364,000	66
August 2001	551,000	366,000	66
November 2001	557,000	368,000	66
February 2002	561,000	367,000	65
May 2002	567,000	377,000	67
August 2002	561,000	381,000	68
November 2002	564,000	383,000	68
February 2003	503,000	369,000	73
April 2004	560,000	371,000	66
May 2004	565,000	373,000	66
June 2004	570,000	375,000	66

Extract from CSA Table 7.2: Maintenance Outcomes

Quarter ending	*Overall Agency Total cases charged*	*Total cases received*	*Case compliance (Percentage)*
July 2004	576,000	377,000	65
August 2004	581,000	377,000	65
September 2004	584,000	376,000	64
October 2004	587,000	377,000	64
November 2004	592,000	379,000	64
December 2004	596,000	380,000	64
January 2005	600,000	378,000	63
February 2005	607,000	378,000	62
March 2005	613,000	381,000	62
April 2005	619,000	384,000	62
May 2005	625,000	386,000	62
June 2005	631,000	388,000	62
July 2005	639,000	392,000	61
August 2005	644,000	395,000	61
September 2005	651,000	397,000	61
October 2005	658,000	400,000	61
November 2005	667,000	405,000	61
December 2005	674,000	408,000	61
January 2006	683,000	412,000	60
February 2006	692,000	415,000	60
March 2006	703,000	426,000	60

Notes:
1. The above includes those old-scheme cases with a Full Maintenance Assessment, and those new-scheme cases with either a Full Maintenance Calculation, or a Default Maintenance Decision. Old-scheme cases with a punitive Interim Maintenance Assessment are excluded, as are new-scheme cases being processed clerically.
2. Cases are classed as compliant if they are currently open, and have been charged and paid money via the collection service (either regular maintenance and/or arrears), or have a Maintenance Direct arrangement in place over the preceding quarter.
3. Volumes are rounded to the nearest thousand and percentages to nearest whole percent.
4. Robust data from the new IT system (CS2) covering the period March 2003-March 2004 is not currently available, and is under development. Data prior to November 1995 is not currently available.

Data Protection (Processing of Sensitive Personal Data)

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what training is given to *(a)* Jobcentre Plus and *(b)* other benefits staff on dealing with queries from hon. Members in relation to the Data Protection (Processing of Sensitive Personal Data) (Elected Representatives) Order 2002. [64438]

Mrs. McGuire: No specific training on this particular Order is provided to Jobcentre Plus or other DWP staff. However, all staff in the Department must use the Personal Information Policy Guide when dealing with requests for personal information relating to our customers or staff. This is the primary guidance within the Department dealing with personal customer information and when it may be passed to third parties. The Guide contains specific instructions for staff to follow when a request is received under The Data Protection (Processing of Sensitive Personal Data Elected Representatives) Order 2002: SI 2002 no. 2905.

Departmental Expenditure

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the 10 non-public sector entities that have received the largest total sum of payments from his Department in each of the last five years. [71818]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Department was formed in June 2001. The information for 2001-02 relates to the former Department of Social Security only. Information for 2005-06 will not be available until July 2006. This response covers disbursements (and the value of any other consideration) for goods and services provided under a contract.

	Non-public sector entities
2001-02	Consignia (now Royal Mail)
	Land Securities Trillium
	Electronic Data Systems
	British Telecom
	Sema Group
	Computacenter
	Girobank
	Capita Business Services
	Haden Building Management
	Bull Information Systems
2002-03	Electronic Data Systems
	Land Securities Trillium
	Royal Mail Group
	British Telecom
	SchlumbergerSema
	Remploy
	Computacenter (UK)
	WS Atkins
	Drivers Jonas
	Working Links
2003-04	Electronic Data Systems
	Land Securities Trillium
	Royal Mail Group
	British Telecom
	Atos Origin/SchlumbergerSema
	Remploy
	Computacenter (Uk)
	Central Office Of Information
2004-05	Electronic Data Systems
	Land Securities Trillium
	Royal Mail Group
	British Telecom
	Atos Origin
	Remploy
	IBM
	Capita
	Accenture

Departmental Targets

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what targets his Department has set for the number of days taken to rate claims for *(a)* income support, *(b)* jobseeker's allowance and *(c)* incapacity benefit in Tamworth constituency; [71234]

(2) how many days it took to rate a claim for *(a)* income support, *(b)* jobseeker's allowance and *(c)* incapacity benefit in Tamworth constituency in the most recent period for which figures are available. [71235]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your questions asking what targets we have set to process claims for Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Incapacity Benefit and how many days it took to process a claim, in the most recent period for which figures are available, in the Tamworth constituency. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The time taken to process benefit claims is measured within Jobcentre Plus as Average Actual Clearance Times (ACCT), which are included as a Jobcentre Plus Target for 2006/07.

The current AACT targets for Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Incapacity Benefit, and the performance levels for Hanley Benefit Delivery Centre (BDC) where claims are now processed for most of Staffordshire, including Tamworth, are in the table below.

	Jobcentre Plus Target AACT 2006-07	*AACT Hanley BDC April 2006*
Income Support	11 days	11.4 days
Jobseeker's Allowance	12 days	14.6 days
Incapacity Benefit	18 days	11.7 days

The ACCT for all three benefits are showing a month on month improvement. A national initiative is currently underway to further improve AACT performance across all three benefits. To drive this, a weekly review of outstanding claims was instigated from 15 May 2006.

Equal Pay

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men are employed in the Department; what the average pay was for (i) women and (ii) men in the Department in (1) 1997 and (2) 2006; what women's average pay is as a percentage of men's average pay; and how many (A) women and (B) men the Department employed in each of the last five years, broken down by grade. [67791]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is as follows:

1. How many women and men are employed in the Department:

The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the civil service by Department. This includes data on the employment of men and women.

2. Average pay for women and men in the Department in 1997 and 2006:

Table 1 shows the number of men and women by salary band at 31 October 2002, the first period available following the creation of DWP in 2001 and subsequent reorganisations as a result of its formation.

Table 1: DWP Staff by gender on salary bands at 31 October 2002

Salary band	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
Up to £10,000	3,810	7,043	10,853
£10,001-£15,000	21,154	56,047	77,201
£15,001-£20,000	12,235	27,599	39,834
£20,001-£25,000	3,691	5,737	9,428
£25,001-£30,000	1,255	1,167	2,422
£30,001-£35,000	373	281	654
£35,001-£40,000	272	191	463
£40,001-£45,000	171	107	278
£45,001-£50,000	143	64	207
£50,001-£55,000	54	29	83
£55, 001-£60,000	57	28	85
£60,001-£65,000	22	8	30
£65,001-£70,000	23	9	32
£70,001-£75,000	17	13	30
£75,001 and over	49	13	62
Total	43,326	98,336	141,662
Median salary	14,710	14,710	14,710

Table 2: DWP Staff by gender on salary bands at 31 March 2006

Salary band	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
Up to £10,000	12	13	25
£10,001-£15,000	14,261	27,780	42,040
£15,001-£20,000	10,345	31,130	41,474
£20,001-£25,000	9,233	20,817	30,050
£25,001-£30,000	3,119	5,020	8,139
£30,001-£35,000	1,123	1,212	2,335
£35,001-£40,000	304	265	569
£40,001-£45,000	305	262	567
£45,001-£50,000	187	145	332
£50,001-£55,000	226	144	370
£55,001-£60,000	97	88	185
£60,001-£65,000	84	48	132
£65,001-£70,000	37	26	63
£70,001-£75,000	34	12	46
£75,001 and over	92	30	122
Total	39,459	86,992	126,451
Median salary	17,248	16,740	16,740

The salaries do not include any allowances or overtime, nor are they adjusted for liabilities such as national insurance, income tax or occupational pension contributions. The numbers are a headcount, that is, all staff are counted as one irrespective of their working pattern.

The 25 records where salary is below £10,000 (which is below the minimum of the lowest pay scale in DWP) relate to those staff on recurring periodic appointments who are paid manually. The records therefore show their salary as 0.

3. How many women and men the Department employed in each of the last five years broken down by grade:

Table 3: DWP Staff by responsibility level and gender at 31 March 2006

Salary band	Male	Female	Total
SCS level	165	85	250
Grades 6 and 7	939	725	1,664
SEO and HEO level	4,120	5,648	9,768
EO level	13,228	28,734	41,962
AO and AA level	21,007	51,800	72,807
Total	39,459	86,992	126,451

Table 4: DWP Staff by responsibility level and gender at 31 March 2005

Salary band	Male	Female	Total
SCS level	160	85	245
Grades 6 and 7	966	712	1,678
SEO and HEO level	4,646	6,197	10,843
EO level	13,874	29,661	43,535
AO and AA level	20,611	51,622	72,233
Total	40,257	88,277	128,534

Table 5: DWP Staff by responsibility level and gender at 31 March 2004

Salary band	Male	Female	Total
SCS level	154	79	233
Grades 6 and 7	983	715	1,698
SEED and HEO level	4,784	6,379	11,163
EO level	14,391	31,035	45,426
AO and AA level	22,339	56,913	79,252
Total	42,651	95,121	137,772

Table 6: DWP Staff by responsibility level and gender at 31 March 2003

Salary band	Male	Female	Total
SCS level	150	74	224
Grades 6 and 7	876	600	1,476
SEIO and HEO level	4,210	5,168	9,378
EO level	14,063	30,216	44,279
AO and AA level	23,049	60,368	83,417
Total	42,348	96,426	138,774

Table 7: DWP Staff by responsibility level and gender at 31 March 2002

Salary band	Male	Female	Total
SCS level	125	60	185
Grades 6 and 7	751	501	1,252
SEO and HEO level	4,035	4,727	8,762
EO level	13,200	28,475	41,675
AO and AA level	22,044	59,533	81,577
Total	40,155	93,296	133,451

There are no figures available for 2001 as the DWP was formed in that year. The figures show the staff headcount in the Department on 31 March of each of the years in the table.

Financial Assistance Scheme

Mr. Touhig: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average length of time has been between a pension scheme member applying for and receiving payments under the Financial Assistance Scheme. [70890]

James Purnell: Individual scheme members do not make applications to the Financial Assistance Scheme. Qualifying pension schemes are required to supply data on their members once liabilities to their members have been discharged: this could be some considerable time after they initially contacted the Financial Assistance Scheme Operational Unit (FAS OU). Trustees may request that initial payments are made to qualifying members before liabilities have been discharged.

FAS OU issues payments (including any arrears due) to qualifying members as quickly as possible once usable member data has been received and members have confirmed their personal details. Payments are made on the 21st of each month.

Housing Benefit

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was spent on housing benefit for tenants in *(a)* council property, *(b)* housing association property, *(c)* registered social landlord property and *(d)* private sector housing in Tamworth constituency in each of the last three years. [68358]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure figures are not available broken down by landlord type. The most recent available information is in the table.

Housing benefit gross expenditure in Tamworth borough council, nominal terms

£ million

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Rent Rebate	7.6	7.2	7.3
Rent Allowance	3.8	3.9	4.0

Source:
Local authority subsidy claims.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many incapacity benefit claimants are expected to have access to pathways to work support by the end of 2006. [67956]

Mrs. McGuire: 900,000 incapacity benefits claimants are expected to have access to Pathways to Work support by the end of 2006, one third of all claimants. By 2008 we will have extended this successful approach further, offering access to all incapacity benefit claimants.

Kvaerner Pension Fund

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the decision of the Pensions Regulator relating to the future contributions of TH Global to the Kvaerner Pension Fund. [73212]

James Purnell: None. This is a matter for the Pensions Regulator.

Pensions Regulator

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures are in place to ensure transparency in the process used by the pensions regulator for taking decisions; and to whom the pensions regulator is accountable for his decisions. [73213]

James Purnell: Any information concerning decisions taken by the pensions regulator needs to respect both legislative prohibitions and the confidentiality of information exchanged between the parties and the regulator. The regulator has published a number of documents containing guidance as to its approach on its website.

The regulator is accountable to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and thus ultimately to Parliament.

Rehabilitation Services

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* the Treasury, *(b)* the Department of Health and *(c)* the Department for Trade and Industry on promoting the provision of rehabilitation services by employers; [64498]

(2) what is his Department's policy for promoting the provision of rehabilitation services by employers; and if he will make a statement; [64499]

Mrs. McGuire: The Government, through their Health, Work and Well-being Strategy, wish to work in partnership with employers, employees, health professionals and insurers to promote the development of comprehensive packages of support. Our aim is to encourage the development of healthy workplaces, to enable employers to retain and rehabilitate employees when they fall ill and to maximise the effectiveness of healthcare in restoring well-being.

To take this forward we have established a ground-breaking partnership with the Department of Health, and its Scottish and Welsh counterparts, and the Health and Safety Executive. This work is overseen by a Joint Ministerial Group which also includes the Department for Trade and Industry and the Treasury.

Under the Strategy we have, for example, started to pilot Workplace Health Connect which provides small and medium-sized employers in England and Wales with advice on occupational health and return to work issues via a national help line. The pilot also offers more personalised support across regions covering some 40 per cent. of the country's small and medium-sized enterprises.

SCOTLAND

Electors (Scotland)

Mr. Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many electors there were in each parliamentary constituency in Scotland on 5 May 2005. [63398]

David Cairns: The information requested can be found in the following table.

Constituency name and electorate	*Number*
Aberdeen North	65,714
Aberdeen South	67,012
Aberdeenshire West and Kincardine	65,548
Airdrie and Shotts	60,618
Angus	63,093
Argyll and Bute	67,271
Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock	72,786
Ayrshire Central	67,838
Ayrshire North and Arran	72,986
Banff and Buchan	65,750
Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk	70,855
Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross	46,629
Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill	66,753
Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East	64,254
Dumfries and Galloway	73,143
Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and Tweeddale	65,083
Dunbartonshire East	63,918
Dunbartonshire West	67,853
Dundee East	63,335
Dundee West	65,857
Dunfermline and West Fife	70,775
East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow	75,251
East Lothian	70,672
Edinburgh East	65,154
Edinburgh North and Leith	68,352
Edinburgh South	61,499
Edinburgh South West	67,584
Edinburgh West	66,261
Falkirk	76,784
Fife North East	62,059
Glasgow Central	63,869
Glasgow East	64,218
Glasgow North	55,370
Glasgow North East	62,106
Glasgow North West	61,686
Glasgow South	68,583
Glasgow South West	61,828
Glenrothes	66,563
Gordon	71,925
Inverclyde	59,291
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey	69,395
Kilmarnock and Loudoun	71,400
Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath	71,603

Constituency name and electorate	Number
Lanark and Hamilton East	73,824
Linlithgow and East Falkirk	76,718
Livingston	75,798
Midlothian	60,193
Moray	65,498
Motherwell and Wishaw	65,467
Na h-Eileanan an Iar	21,169
Ochil and South Perthshire	70,731
Orkney and Shetland	32,639
Paisley and Renfrewshire North	63,076
Paisley and Renfrewshire South	60,181
Perth and North Perthshire	71,842
Renfrewshire East	65,714
Ross, Skye and Lochaber	50,351
Rutherglen and Hamilton West	74,089
Stirling	64,086

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for Ministers of State in his Department on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [69099]

David Cairns: Since 1999, the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year; this information includes accommodation costs. Copies are available in the Library. In the last three years, none of the Parliamentary Under-Secretaries of State have travelled abroad on official business.

Portland PR

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what meetings officials in his Department have had with representatives of the public relations company Portland PR; what contracts Portland PR has with his Department; and what the nature of the contract is in each case. [70049]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office does not maintain a central list of such meetings. Civil servants meet many people as part of the process of policy development and business delivery. All such meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the civil service code and guidance for civil servants on contacts with lobbyists and people outside Government.

The Scotland Office has no contracts with Portland PR.

Promotion Boards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what promotion boards have been held in his Department in each of the last five years. [70624]

David Cairns: Staff in the Scotland Office are on loan from the Scottish Executive or the Department for Constitutional Affairs and the Office normally advertises vacant positions in those Departments. Posts can be filled on level transfer or by promotion; checking which posts were filled by promotees over the last five years would involve revisiting the files held by the Scottish Executive and the Department for Constitutional Affairs over this period and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

DEFENCE

Air-to-Air Refuelling

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to maintain existing air-to-air refuelling capability following delays to the Future Strategic Tanker Aircraft programme. [71919]

Mr. Ingram: We expect the air-to-air refuelling capability provided by the current VC10 and TriStar fleets to meet our requirements until the introduction of the Future Strategic Tanker Aircraft.

Army Discharge Applications

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many serving soldiers have made an application for discharge; and what the grounds were for each application. [71508]

Mr. Watson: The following table shows the number of applications, from both regular army officers and other ranks, to leave the Army in each financial year since 1996. Details of the reasons for the applications to leave are not held centrally and could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

	Applications to leave the Army from:		
Financial year	Officers[1,2]	Other ranks[2]	Total number of applications to leave the Army
1996-97	490	7,760	8,250
1997-98	550	7,620	8,180
1998-99	520	7,820	8,330
1999-2000	550	7,360	7,910
2000-01	690	7,840	8,530
2001-02	530	7,280	7,810
2002-03	520	6,350	6,870
2002-04	600	6,650	7,250

Financial year	Applications to leave the Army from: Officers[1,2]	Other ranks[2]	Total number of applications to leave the Army
2004-05	710	7,380	8,090
Total[3]	5,150	66,070	71,220
2006[4]	730	7,090	7,820

[1] Officer numbers comprise applications and resultant exits for premature transfer to the reserve, premature voluntary retirement and voluntary relinquishment or resignation of commission.
[2] For certain groups of female personnel, data on exits on marriage or pregnancy grounds are available, but data on applications are not. In these cases, the number of applications in a period has been counted as the number of exits during that period. This affects:
(a) Army officers who exit on pregnancy;
(b) Army soldiers who exit on marriage or pregnancy.
[3] Total is the sum of complete financial years only. March 2006 shows VO applications and exits for 12 months up to 1 March 2006 and is not included within the total.
[4] March 2006.

Notes:
1. UK regular army includes nursing services and excludes full time reserve service personnel, Gurkhas, the home service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment and mobilised reservists.
2. Data are for financial years.
3. The term premature voluntary release (PVR) has been changed to voluntary outflow (VO) although the methodology remains the same.
4. For this purpose, VO is defined as all applications and exits from trained personnel which are generated by the individual before their time expiry.
5. Females who leave on pregnancy grounds are included in both VO applications and exits wherever possible. It should be noted that since August 1990, female personnel who are pregnant are no longer required to leave the services, but have an option of either leaving or returning to work after maternity leave. All applications are counted according to the date received in MOD.
6. Due to the rounding methods used, totals may not always equal the sum of the parts. When rounding to the nearest 10, numbers ending in 5 have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias.

Source:
DASA (Tri-Services)

Budgetary Statistics

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the letter of 30 March 2006 from the Minister of State, when he will provide the hon. Member for the Forest of Dean with the tables setting out the breakdown of main and supplementary outturn data by top level budget holder, request for resources, departmental expenditure limit near cash and non-cash, annual managed expenditure and non-budget for financial years 2001-02 to 2004-05. [73123]

Mr. Ingram: I have placed copies of the tables in the Library of the House today.

Camp Ashraf

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what protection is provided for members of the Mujahedin-e Khalq Organisation by *(a)* Coalition forces and *(b)* Iraqi Security forces at Camp Ashraf in Iraq; [63940]

(2) whether members of the Mujahedin-e Khalq Organisation at Camp Ashraf in Iraq are being held indefinitely by Coalition forces. [63941]

Des Browne: The Government of Iraq is responsible for the well-being of all individuals in Camp Ashraf. At the request of the Iraqi Government, the Multi-national Force-Iraq (MNF-I) provide perimeter security for the camp. Members of the Mujahedin-e Khalq are not detained by the Coalition forces at Camp Ashraf and may leave at any time. Those with the appropriate documentation are free to return to their country of origin.

Central Wales Tactical Training Area

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what geographical area makes up the Central Wales Tactical Training Area. [69486]

Mr. Watson: I will write to the hon. Member, and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Conscientious Objectors

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many applications to be discharged from the Army on the grounds of conscientious objection to military service have been submitted to his Department by *(a)* Army reserves and *(b)* long-term reserves for each of the last five years. [71507]

Mr. Watson: Seven applications have been received in the last five years from members of the Army reserves or long-term reserves to be discharged on the grounds of conscientious objection to military service.

Deepcut

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 10 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 280-81W what evidence he has received that suggests that media coverage of Deepcut has been a factor affecting recruitment; and in which studies the evidence appears. [71141]

Mr. Watson *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* As stated in my answer of 10 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 280-81W, the Ministry of Defence has not undertaken any specific research or study into the impact of Deepcut on recruitment levels. Any such evidence we have received in respect of media coverage of Deepcut is anecdotal, and is based primarily on opinions provided to armed forces recruiting teams out in the field by those who influence the decisions of young men and women, including parents and guardians.

Negative media coverage of any aspect of the armed forces life may have contributed to a downturn in the number of inquiries in recent years. Conversely, positive media stories, for example Victoria Cross and George Cross awards and successful rescue missions, may contribute to some applicants, who had not previously considered an armed forces career, to inquire.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the highest valuation is of each of the army bases in Northern Ireland for which closure was announced on 10 May. [72542]

Mr. Watson: We have not yet assessed the value of the properties which are intended to close, as recently announced, but when we do so, it would be unlikely that such information would be disclosed because providing details of the open market valuation could prejudice the commercial interests of the Department by unduly influencing the market if and when properties were sold.

Departmental Expenditure

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the 10 non-public sector entities that have received the largest total sum of payments from his Department in each of the last five years. [71880]

Mr. Watson: The following tables list the 10 non-public sector entities (in alphabetical order) that have received the largest total sum of payments from the Ministry of Defence in each of the last five financial years.

FY 2001-02

Babcock Support Services
BAH Systems (Operations)
EAE Systems Electronics Ltd
British Telecommunications PLC
Devonport Royal Dockyard
MBDA UK Ltd
QinetiQ Ltd
Rolls Royce PLC
Serco Group PLC
Westland Group PLC

FY 2002-03

BAE Systems (Operations) Ltd
BAE Systems Electronics Ltd
British Telecommunications PLC
Devonport Royal Dockyard Ltd
General Dynamics UK
MBDA UK Ltd
QinetiQ Ltd
Rolls Royce PLC
Serco Group PLC
Westland Group PLC

FY 2003-04

BAE Systems (Operations) Ltd
BAE Systems Electronics Ltd
British Telecommunications PLC
Devonport Royal Dockyard Ltd
General Dynamics UK
MBDA UK Ltd
QinetiQ Ltd
Rolls Royce PLC
Royal Ordnance PLC
Westland Group PLC

FY 2004-05

BAE Systems (Operations) Ltd
BAE Systems Electronics Ltd
BAE Systems Land Systems (Munitions and Ordnance) Ltd
British Telecommunications PLC
Devonport Royal Dockyard Ltd
Europaams SAS
General Dynamics UK
MBDA UK Ltd
QinetiQ Ltd
Westland Group PLC

FY 2005-06

BAE Systems (Operations) Ltd
BAE Systems Electronics Ltd
British Telecommunications PLC
Devonport Royal Dockyard Ltd
EDS Defence Ltd
General Dynamics UK
MBDA UK Ltd
QinetiQ Ltd
Serco Group PLC
Westland Group PLC

Source:

Defence Bills Agency and Defence Analytical Services Agency

The term 'non-public sector entities' has been taken to refer to all UK and foreign owned private companies and firms with whom the MOD contracts. It includes all subsidiaries and individual units of a company and is therefore not organised by holding company. A listing aggregated to holding company could only be provided at disproportionate cost due to the high volume of work required to map the changing corporate structure and ownership of large defence suppliers on a yearly basis.

The listings exclude all public sector bodies as listed in the "Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005" including all Government Departments, Agencies, Trading Funds, Non departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) and Government Owned Contractor Operated (GOCO) entities.

Payment of grants, credits and subsidies under statutory obligations for which the Ministry of Defence is responsible are out of the scope of this question.

Eurofighter

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions the Government have had with BAE Systems regarding the conversion of Eurofighter to land on the Royal Navy's two new aircraft carriers. [70272]

Mr. Ingram: The necessary actions have been and will continue to be undertaken to ensure that we have the necessary contingency plans for the JSF project. However, we are not prepared to go into the detail of what our contingency plans are.

Falklands War Medal

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will take steps to amend the criteria to enable the Falklands War Medal to be awarded to those who served on RMS St. Helena in support of the UK Government; and if he will make a statement. [72547]

Mr. Watson: The eligibility criteria for the South Atlantic Medal 1982 were carefully and extensively considered at the time. There are no plans to review these criteria.

Gulf War Syndrome

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many cases of Gulf War Syndrome have been accepted by his Department as being well-founded; [72396]

(2) how many *(a)* service personnel, *(b)* former service personnel and *(c)* civilian personnel have lodged a claim with his Department for Gulf War Syndrome. [72397]

Mr. Watson: In a decision welcomed by the Ministry of Defence, a Pension Appeal Tribunal (PAT) found that Gulf War Syndrome was a 'useful umbrella term' to cover accepted conditions which are causally linked to the 1990-91 Gulf Conflict but that Gulf War Syndrome does not exist as a 'discrete pathological entity', or in other words as a recognised disease. A written statement was published on 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 128-29WS, setting out our position on this issue. We do not hold figures for those claiming 'Gulf War Syndrome' but since the PAT decision the umbrella term has been applied in six cases.

The latest figures, as at the end of December 2005, show that about 3,025 veterans whose time in the armed forces includes service in the Gulf were in receipt of a war disablement pension for any condition for which an award would be payable. In addition, at that date, 2,515 such veterans had received a gratuity for disablement assessed at under 20 per cent. There will be some overlap between those figures, as some individuals will have received first a gratuity and then a pension. The figures include awards for both Gulf-related and non-Gulf-related injuries or illnesses, as our records do not distinguish the origin of the disablement (including awards where Gulf War Syndrome is appropriate as an umbrella term). The claimants are former members of the armed forces. Serving members of the armed forces are not covered by the War Pension Scheme but they and MOD) civilians are covered by other occupational schemes.

In addition, some 2,000 veterans, dependents and civilians have notified the MOD of their intention to claim common law compensation for Gulf War Syndrome or Gulf illnesses but as yet the claimants' solicitors have served no writs or claims of sufficient detail for the Department to be able to start considering these claims.

Iraq (Nuclear Programme)

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the proliferation risks associated with the former Iraqi nuclear programme; and if he will make a statement. [69166]

Des Browne *[holding answer 8 May 2006]:* Saddam Hussein ended the Iraq nuclear programme in 1991 following the Gulf war. The Iraq Survey Group (ISG) concluded that although Saddam clearly assigned a high value to the nuclear work that had taken place up to the 1991 war, the programme had ended and the intellectual capital had decayed in the succeeding years. In the comprehensive report of the special advisor to the director of Central Intelligence on Iraq's WMD, issued in September 2004 and finalised in April 2005, the ISG identify two residual risks—the proliferation of equipment and material, and the proliferation of knowledge.

In the 1990s IAEA inspectors identified, collected or destroyed all the key dedicated equipment and materials remaining from the pre-1991 nuclear weapon programme. The ISG concluded that the remaining dual-use nuclear equipment does not pose a proliferation risk, provided the Government remains in control of such equipment.

The ISG also concluded that the risk of (proliferation from scientists passing on information and knowledge is small. It emphasised that the numbers concerned are in fact far less than Saddam had previously led the international community to expect and that such individuals, despite Saddam's efforts, had not maintained their knowledge base/skills as a result of the sanctions regime.

The UK Government agreed with the conclusions in the ISO report and, in response to the risk of proliferation from scientists passing on information and knowledge, has been holding workshops to help Iraqi scientists to apply for civilian employment.

Joint Strike Fighter Programme

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made in discussions with the United States on the joint strike fighter programme in March and April 2006. [69674]

Mr. Ingram: I refer my hon. Friend to the statement made in my answer of 10 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 284-85W, to the hon. Member for Bolton, North-East (Mr. Crausby).

Nuclear Weapons

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence against which countries the UK nuclear deterrent has been targeted since the demise of the Soviet Union. [71990]

Des Browne: Since May 1994, the UK's nuclear missiles have not been targeted at any country.

Pest Control (Iraq)

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the companies which have received contracts from his Department for pest control in the south-east region of Iraq. [71518]

Mr. Watson: The Ministry of Defence has two contractors who provide pest control services to military bases in South Eastern Iraq as part of their operation and maintenance contracts. They are:

Turners Facilities Management Limited

Kellogg Brown and Root (UK)

Promotion Boards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many promotion boards have been held in his Department in each of the last five years. [70616]

Mr. Watson: We currently have no centralised system for tracking the numbers of staff obtaining substantive promotion in the Ministry of Defence. To provide the information sought would require asking TLBs to trawl their records to ascertain how many promotion boards have been held. This could be done only at disproportionate cost.

Each year, we hold two Assessment and Development Centres (A and DC); one for staff seeking promotion to Band D (EO), the first of which was held in May 2005; and one for B2 (Principle) grade, the first of which was held in 1993.

Veterans

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will include a web link and contact details for the Ex-Service Fellowship Centre on the Homeless and Need Help "page on the Veteran" Agency website. [72285]

Mr. Watson *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The web link and contact details for the Ex-Service Fellowship Centre have been included on the "Homeless and Need Help" page on Veterans Agency website.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Child Protection

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer of 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1630W, on sex offender vetting, if she will introduce vetting procedures for local councillors on the Sexual Offenders Register who have access to schools and vulnerable people; and if she will make a statement. [71382]

Mr. Woolas: We have no plans to introduce procedures of the sort suggested. Existing measures provide that, where offenders are considered to pose a risk of harm, impositions and restrictions may be imposed on them, which can prevent their access to schools and vulnerable people.

Congestion Charging

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate the Government have made of the total revenue raised from congestion charge fines in England in the most recent year for which figures are available. [70720]

Dr. Ladyman: I have been asked to reply.

The Government make no such estimates. The congestion charge schemes in London and Durham are the responsibility of the Mayor of London and Durham county council respectively. Individual drivers who evade the applicable congestion charge on the Dartford Crossing may be subject to prosecution, but the Government do not keep a central record of any fines imposed by the courts for these offences.

Correspondence

John Bercow: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will reply to the letter of 21 March from the hon. Member for Buckingham. [66668]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no record of receiving the hon. Member's letter of 21 March 2005. Officials have now obtained a copy of the letter from the hon. Member and a reply has been sent today.

Home Information Packs

Michael Gove: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the number of transactions in the residential property market where the lender will require a separate valuation inspection following the introduction of home information packs. [64944]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Home Condition Report and the associated certification arrangements for Home Inspectors have been developed in consultation with industry to ensure that lenders can have confidence in the report, and that it contains the information they need to generate valuations for mortgage purposes without the need for a further inspection report in the majority of cases. The HCR is far more extensive than the surveys on which most valuations are based. Lenders are already moving to automated valuation models. Even in cases where lenders believe additional information is needed we would expect the HCR to cut the costs of the valuation process.

Local Government Funding

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what total amount of Local Government grant is affected by the use of mid-year population data. [72954]

Mr. Woolas: The 2006-07 and indicative 2007-08 Local Government Finance Settlements, announced in the House on 31 January 2006, included the use of sub-national population projections as the dominant data drivers of population. Mid-2004 population estimates were also used within wider indicators used in the calculation of top-ups in the formulae for these settlements.

Population data are used throughout the distribution system. Both the population projections and mid-year estimates are used in Relative Needs Formula indicators. Population projections are also used to determine the Relative Needs Amount, Relative Resource Amount and Central Allocation as these are calculated on a per head basis. The distribution of formula grant is also affected by the social and economic characteristics of an area, a council's relative ability to raise council tax, and floor damping.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what steps the Government plans to take to ensure local authorities do not experience funding shortfalls from under-estimates of the level of migration in their mid-year population estimates. [72955]

Mr. Woolas: The Local Government Finance Settlements for 2006-07 and 2007-08 were laid before the House on the 31 January 2006 and the settlement for 2006-07 was agreed on the 6 February 2006.

For formula grant allocations, the DCLG use the best data available on a consistent basis for all authorities that are available at the time. For population, these are the 2003-based population projections and mid-2004 population estimates published by the Office for National Statistics. The population projections have been used as the dominant driver for population in the formula, while mid-year estimates of population have been used as a component of indicators used in the calculation of top-ups.

The DCLG protect all local authorities from detrimental changes to their grant allocation through the floor damping mechanism, which is a component of the formula grant distribution system.

Minister for Women

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much the Parliamentary Secretary for Women and Equality will be paid per year. [70582]

Hilary Armstrong: I have been asked to reply

In line with the rate of pay for parliamentary secretaries across Government, the salary of the Parliamentary Secretary for Women and Equality is currently £29,786 and will increase to £30,081 from 1 November.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discounts are available in relation to hotel accommodation used by *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his private office. [69053]

Angela E. Smith: I have been asked to reply.

Some hotels offer a reduced rate for those on government business. My private office staff travelling on official business use these when available.

Regional Government

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how the regional sustainable development round tables will be funded. [70709]

Ian Pearson: I have been asked to reply.

Regional sustainable development round tables are resourced by regional bodies which are members of their round tables, including regional development agencies, Government offices and regional assemblies.

In April 2006, the Government launched "Securing the Regions' Futures" to strengthen regional delivery of sustainable development. In this publication Government recognised the role of round tables and committed to contributing to a two-year programme of regional sustainable development activities which each round table puts forward.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General who in the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) is responsible for progress on each of the targets set out on page 7 of its Business Plan 2006-07; to whom each person reports; what discussions he has had with stakeholders about implementation of each target; and if he will make a statement. [66858]

The Solicitor-General: The CPS headquarters directors responsible for delivering the targets set out on page 7 of the CPS Business Plan 2006-07 are given in the section of the Plan entitled "Delivering the CPS Priorities for 2006-07." They all report to the Chief Executive and the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Regular consultation on the Public Service Agreement and other CPS and Criminal Justice System (CJS) targets is conducted with CJS colleagues, including the Office for Criminal Justice Reform, and with other stakeholders through the work of the National Criminal Justice Board. The Attorney-General, the Director of Public Prosecutions and Chief Executive of the CPS and I are members of, and play a full part in, the National Criminal Justice Board.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General how many copies of the Crown Prosecution Service Business Plan

2006-07 were produced; at what cost; to whom copies were disseminated; who was consulted prior to publication; how *(a)* hon. Members, *(b)* Members of the House of Lords and *(c)* members of the public can obtain copies; at what cost; and if he will make a statement. [66859]

The Solicitor-General: 2,000 copies of the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) Business Plan 2006-07 were produced at a cost of £13,452.15. The copies are available to staff, circulated to criminal justice partners, via Chief Crown Prosecutors to local stakeholders and to other Government Departments. The Plan is not formally laid before Parliament but is available electronically on the CPS website (www.cps.gov.uk) or can be obtained, without charge, by contacting the CPS at 50 Ludgate Hill London EC4M 7EX.

The plan is prepared from contributions across the CPS and, where cross-cutting CJS initiatives are described, CJS partners including the Office for Criminal Justice Reform are consulted.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Dining Room Bookings

John Mann: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission which hon. Members have booked one of the dining rooms A, B, C and D for lunch or dinner in the last 12 months; and on behalf of which organisations in each case. [73173]

Nick Harvey: It is not the practice of the House to release details of bookings made by individual hon. Members of catering facilities, whether made for private functions or on behalf of internal or external organisations. Any Member sponsoring a function in the House's banqueting facilities is obliged to declare any relevant interest, and the rules do not allow use of the private dining rooms for direct financial or material gain by a sponsoring Member or any other person or outside organisation.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Biofuels

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials have had with their counterparts in the German Government on ways of expanding the biofuel industry. [70805]

Ian Pearson: No specific bilateral discussions have taken place with Germany. However, the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Margaret Beckett) and officials were involved in EU discussions on the biomass action plan, which was published in December 2005. The plan outlines how energy from crops, trees and waste can make a strong contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Consultants

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will list the companies which were paid consultancy fees by his Department in 2005-06; how much each was paid; and what each of the companies was used to accomplish. [69696]

Barry Gardiner: The Department does not hold a central list of what every consultancy and professional services provider was used to accomplish and such a list could be provided only at disproportionate cost. As part of the preparation of its annual value for money return to the Office of Government Commerce the core-department is analysing its expenditure on consultancy and professional services for the financial year 2005-06. A list of the companies which were paid consultancy and professional fees by the Department in 2005-06 and how much each was paid will be placed in the Library of the House by no later than the week commencing 24 July 2006.

Departmental Budget

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much was spent on advertising by his Department in each of the last three years. [70544]

Barry Gardiner: The centralised departmental expenditure on advertising in the last three financial years was as follows:

	£
2003-04	70,000
2004-05	739,000
2005-06	890,000

Information on advertising spend by non-departmental public bodies, executive agencies and independent statutory bodies is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what facility is available for senior civil servants in his Department to use credit cards supplied by the Department. [70548]

Barry Gardiner: The Government Procurement Card (GPC), which is a bespoke commercial Visa Purchasing Card, is available currently to all Departments. The GPC is generally used for the prompt and efficient payment of goods and services across the UK public sector and is also widely used by Government officials including Senior Civil Servants for payment of travel and subsistence.

There are currently in excess of 73,000 GPC's issued across the UK public sector. Additionally, there are currently in excess of 130,000 Government Fuel Cards (GFC's) issued across the UK public sector.

Defra has 1326 GPC's and 135 GFC's.

Fishing (Cornwall)

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many fishermen operate from Cornwall's four biggest ports. [72778]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department does not hold this specific information. However, data are available on the number of fishermen operating in the Western District in 2004 following a survey carried out by the Marine Fisheries Agency. 801 fishermen were operating at the time, 729 of whom were full-time while 72 were part-time. The Marine Fisheries Agency also holds information relating to the number of vessels whose home ports are respectively Newlyn, Falmouth, Looe and Padstow—the four biggest ports in Cornwall based on the amount of landings in the period 2003 to 2005. Currently, there are 99 vessels over 10 m in length and 211 vessels of length 10 m and under.

Lord Rooker

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of Lord Rooker's time is expected to be spent on the affairs of his Department. [72371]

Barry Gardiner: My noble Friend will spend all the time that is necessary to fulfil his responsibility as Minister for Sustainable Farming and Food.

Ministerial Visits

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discounts are available in relation to hotel accommodation used by *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department. [69094]

Barry Gardiner: From information held centrally, civil servants and special advisers travelling on official business have through DEFRA's hotel booking agent taken 5,494 room nights during the financial year 2005-06 and which have attracted an average discount of 31.8 per cent. off published tariffs.

Modulation

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans he has for funding the voluntary modulation measure to reward farmers for making a contribution to his Department's environmental targets. [72524]

Barry Gardiner: In England, we have been using voluntary modulation since 2001. This has enabled us to reward farmers for protecting and enhancing the environment. In 2006, agri-environment payments from voluntary modulation receipts will continue to be match-funded with exchequer money.

Discussions are continuing within Government about how to fund the new Rural Development Programme for England 2007-13. These discussions are subject to European Commission proposals about how the voluntary modulation mechanism will operate from 2007 onwards. No decisions have yet been taken about the application of voluntary modulation and any match-funding in this period.

Nuclear Waste Storage

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the storage options for nuclear waste; and if he will make a statement. [72628]

Ian Pearson: Storage options for nuclear waste are being assessed by the independent Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM), which was appointed by the Government in November 2003.

The short list of options that CoRWM is currently assessing are: long-term interim storage; deep geological disposal, phased deep geological disposal and near surface disposal of short-lived decommissioning waste.

CoRWM have published draft recommendations which are open to public consultation until May 26 2006. They are available at:

http://www.corwm.org.uk/pdf/None%20-%20CoRWMs%20Draft%20Recommendations%2027%20April.pdf

Storage of nuclear waste is the responsibility of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, who will review their strategy in light of CoRWM's recommendations.

Portland PR

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what meetings officials in his Department have had with representatives of the public relations company Portland PR; what contracts Portland PR has with his Department and agencies for which he has responsibility; and what the nature of the contract is in each case. [70052]

Barry Gardiner: The Department does not maintain a central list of such meetings. Civil servants meet many people as part of the process of policy development and business delivery. All such meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the civil service code and guidance for civil servants on contacts with lobbyists and people outside Government.

Rural Development Programmes

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the impact on farmers in border areas of having different provisions for animal welfare in the rural development programmes in England, Wales and Scotland between 2007 and 2013. [72346]

Barry Gardiner: There will continue to be separate rural development programmes for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland for the new programming period, 2007-13. This is necessary to reflect the different priorities and needs identified within each part of the UK. There will be some differences in the application of measures provided for by the Rural Development Regulation in different parts of the UK, and farmers in border areas will only be eligible for rural development support under the programme covering the area in which their land is located.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions he has had with the devolved administrations about the rural development programmes for England, Wales and Scotland between 2007 and 2013. [72347]

Barry Gardiner: Since taking up my post on May 5. I have not yet met with colleagues in the devolved administrations to discuss rural development. However, our officials meet regularly to co-ordinate the approach within the UK to the EU Rural Development Regulation.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when he expects to publish the outcome of the consultation on the England rural development programme 2007 to 2013; and if he will make a statement. [72348]

Barry Gardiner: The consultation on the rural development programme for England 2007-13 closed on Monday 22 May. We are now analysing the responses and will publish a report on the results as soon as possible.

Sewage

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the potential risks to health arising from the spreading of sewage sludge on fields near homes. [72439]

Ian Pearson *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* A study carried out in the USA has examined the evidence for *Staphylococcus aureus* (SA) in sewage sludge applied to land and whether a route existed by which populations living in proximity to sludge spreading could be infected. The result of this work was that no SA were detected in any background aerosol or sludge aerosol sample.

The producers of sewage sludge (the water companies) work closely with farmers to ensure that recycling to agricultural land is carried out in accordance with: (i) The Sludge (Use in Agriculture) Regulations 1989 as amended, enforced by the Environment Agency, (ii) the Safe Sludge Matrix, under which they have agreed to ban the use of untreated sludge, and (iii) the non-statutory code of practice, which includes recommendations on environmental protection relating to odour control and proximity to properties.

Sustainable Development

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how his Department has sought to influence consumption patterns since the publication of "Securing the Future", the UK Government's Sustainable Development Strategy. [72310]

Ian Pearson: Following the publication of "Securing the Future" on 7 March 2005, we have collated evidence on the environmental impacts arising from households and how to influence patterns of use. A new information service, will offer advice to the public on how to make the most sustainable consumption choices. Our Environmental Action Fund initiative provides support to voluntary projects to influence consumer behaviour.

The new Round Table on Sustainable Consumption provides advice to Government for actions and policies to create a shift to more sustainable lifestyles. These measures will help the Government to continue to develop sustainable consumption policies. A report on progress will be published in late 2006.

Tallow

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) under what terms renderers are permitted to burn tallow; [72400]

(2) what assessment he has made of the *(a)* environmental and *(b)* economic consequences of the incentive scheme for the burning of tallow. [72401]

Ian Pearson: The EU Animal By-Products Regulation (ABPR) requires a range of animal by-products and substances derived from them (including tallow), to be disposed of as waste. Where the method of disposal is incineration or co-incineration (i.e. use as a fuel), the ABPR requires it to be carried out in compliance with the waste incineration directive (WID). Installations may burn tallow provided they comply with these requirements.

There is no specific incentive scheme for the burning of tallow although, as a form of biomass, tallow burning may qualify for renewables obligation certificates (ROCs). Since the WID came fully into force however, the Government are not aware of any significant burning of tallow which is eligible for ROCs.

Water

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what *(a)* representations he has received and *(b)* action he is pursuing in respect of water shortages in south-east London. [73129]

Ian Pearson: We have received a number of representations about the implications for water supply of the continuing drought in the south-east though few have been from south-east London.

Any projected shortage in water supply this year will be addressed though the relevant water company's drought plan. Drought plans contain mechanisms which trigger a range of actions to be initiated at different times as a drought develops. One of the actions may involve applying to my Department for drought orders to restrict non-essential uses of water, as some companies in the south-east of England have already done. For example, on 15 May 2006 the Secretary of State granted Sutton and East Surrey Water's application for a non-essential use drought order.

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps are being taken to reduce water leakage in *(a)* England and *(b)* the Thames Water area. [72851]

Ian Pearson: Water companies have a duty to develop and maintain efficient and economical systems of water supply. Since 1996 Ofwat has assessed water company performance against leakage targets that balance the needs of customers and the environment. This approach has resulted in a reduction in leakage of around 29 per cent. since 1994-95.

In 2001, following Thames Water's failure to meet their leakage targets, Ofwat suspended the company's leakage targets in favour of an action plan to improve its leakage monitoring and control activities. Thames Water is also required to provide quarterly reports on progress with its agreed leakage reduction plan. The aim is to restore leakage to its target level and achieve adequate security of supplies.

The company is now carrying out 60 per cent. more repairs than two years ago, and a major upgrade of its water distribution network in London is under way. This involves the replacement of more than 1,200 km of water mains by 2010. In 2004-05 Thames Water reduced its overall leakage for the first time since 1999-2000.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Consultants

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which consultancy firms have been engaged by his Department to provide advice about the funding of the Royal Mail over the last 12 months. [73158]

Jim Fitzpatrick: This Department has in the last 12 months engaged Deloitte and Credit Suisse to provide advice on funding of the Royal Mail.

Insolvency Service

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will estimate the *(a)* outgoings and *(b)* revenue of the Official Receiver in the Insolvency Service for each year since 1989; and if he will make a statement. [72407]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Prior to 1 April 2004 The Insolvency Service was funded on a gross basis and its fees were not set in accordance with HM Treasury Fees and Charges Guide which requires that fees should be set only to recover costs. Changes introduced by the Enterprise Act 2002 led to The Service moving to a net funded regime from 1 April 2004 and since that date fees have been set in accordance with the Fees and Charges Guide.

Official Receiver's staff carry out both case administration functions that are funded from fees and investigation and enforcement functions that are funded from a DTI programme. However, other staff in The Service also carry out investigation and enforcement functions and the costs are not separately shown to those incurred by Official Receiver's on these activities.

Prior to The Service becoming an agency in 1990 results were included in the DTI's appropriation accounts. Since 1990-91 Annual Report and Accounts have been published and are available in the Libraries of the House. Annual Reports and Accounts since 2000-01 are also available on The Service's website at www.insolvency.gov.uk.

Minimum Wage

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been spent on publicising the October 2005 changes to the national minimum wage. [72702]

Jim Fitzpatrick: DTI spent £418,300 (excluding VAT) on paid advertising to publicise the October 2005 increases in the national minimum wage. In addition the cost of producing guides and mailings cost the Department £22,295.

Renewable Energy

Kitty Ussher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the contribution that renewable energy generation could make to meeting future energy needs. [72728]

Malcolm Wicks: The Energy Review is currently looking at the potential for emerging technologies in the low carbon field and how best to bring them forward.

The Government remain committed to making progress towards its target of 10 per cent. of electricity from Renewable Obligation eligible sources of energy by 2010, with an aspiration to double that by 2020.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animal Protection

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females have been (i) prosecuted and (ii) convicted of offences under (A) the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, (B) the Zoo Licensing Act 1981, (C) the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, (D) the Pet Animals Act 1951, (E) the Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996 and (F) the Deer Act 1991 in each year since 1996, broken down by age. [69307]

Mr. Byrne: The requested information is provided in the table (a copy of which will be placed in the House Library), comprising prosecutions and convictions for males and females in England and Wales, by age group for offences under the following acts, the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Pet Animals Act 1951, the Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996 and the Deer Act 1991. Responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the licensing system and the administration of the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 rests with local authorities and no criminal proceedings can be brought under the Act. Data for 2005 will be available in the autumn.

Arrest Warrants

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many arrest warrants for *(a)* non-payment of fines and *(b)* breaching of the conditions of a community service order have been cancelled in each of the last five years. [69730]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

Information on the number of arrest warrants for *(a)* non-payment of fines and *(b)* breaching of the conditions of a community service order which have been cancelled in each of the last five years is not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Agency

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he has taken to ensure that the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Agency is alert to sophisticated uses of the internet to exploit children. [72300]

Mr. Coaker *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) was launched on 24 April. The Centre is a world first and will play a decisive part, with police forces, offender managers, children's services and other stakeholders, in protecting children, young people, families and society from paedophiles and sex offenders; in particular from those who use the internet and other new technologies in the sexual exploitation of children.

CEOP is different from traditional policing responses, with law enforcement officers sitting alongside industry and child protection experts. It is built around three core faculties—Intelligence, Operations and Harm Reduction—and will deliver a range of functions designed to empower children and parents through information and education, protect young people through better use of intelligence and better management of offenders and enforce the law both on and offline.

The clear focus on intelligence about offenders and the direct input from the industry will drive CEOP's operational and harm reduction effort, as well as the support it can provide to its partners, in protecting children from those who seek to use new technologies to exploit them.

The Centre is legally part of the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) but is operationally autonomous with a separate budget of nearly £5 million. The Centre reports to Home Office Ministers and is accountable through SOCA's governance structure.

Margaret Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre will be registered under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. [72849]

Mr. Coaker: The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) is affiliated to the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA). SOCA is a relevant public authority for the purposes of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) by virtue of amendments to that Act contained in schedule 4 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 and consequent to statutory instrument 2006 No. 594. Although CEOP is operationally autonomous and has a specific budget, it is legally part of SOCA and therefore needs no separate provisions in relation to RIPA.

Court Case Statistics

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of cases were heard in *(a)* magistrates courts and *(b)* Crown courts in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available in (i) England and Wales and (ii) the Southend area concerning *(A)* shoplifting, *(B)* theft and *(C)* burglary; and what percentage of defendants in each category of crime, were found (1) guilty and (2) not guilty. [71968]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information requested is provided in the following tables.

Number and percentage of cases heard at magistrates courts, crown courts and number found guilty at all courts for theft from shops', burglary and total theft, England and Wales 1994-2004[1]

		Magistrates court cases (Percentage)				Crown court cases (Percentage)		
Year/Offence	Proceeded against	Heard at magistrates courts	Committed for trial to crown court	Found guilty	Found not guilty[2]	Total tried	Found guilty	Found not guilty[3]
Theft from shops								
1994	60,019	96	4	82	18	2,016	76	24
1995	61,468	97	3	82	18	2,011	76	24
1996	65,220	97	3	83	17	1,954	75	25
1997	69,666	97	3	84	16	2,003	77	23
1998	77,915	98	2	86	14	1,550	74	26
1999	85,491	98	2	87	13	1,379	70	30
2000	89,050	99	1	87	13	1,217	70	30
2001	92,233	99	1	87	13	1,293	72	28
2002	92,664	99	1	87	13	1,192	74	26
2003	86,089	99	1	87	13	1,188	75	25
2004	78,241	99	1	89	11	1,035	76	24
Burglary								
1994	59,217	74	26	59	41	13,643	89	11
1995	53,071	75	25	59	41	13,191	89	11
1996	50,241	74	26	58	42	11,971	90	10
1997	49,530	69	31	56	44	13,794	91	9
1998	48,114	77	23	59	41	10,369	85	15
1999	46,141	76	24	60	40	9,572	83	17
2000	42,406	76	24	58	42	9,183	82	18
2001	41,593	75	25	58	42	8,213	82	18
2002	43,648	75	25	60	40	8,570	84	16
2003	41,281	75	25	61	39	8,136	81	19
2004	35,372	75	25	68	32	7,634	83	17
Theft and handling stolen goods								
1994	170,901	89	11	70	30	18,129	79	21
1995	159,801	91	9	70	30	17,565	79	21
1996	156,804	92	8	72	28	14,519	79	21
1997	159,085	92	8	73	27	14,049	80	20
1998	164,738	95	5	75	25	10,599	76	24
1999	169,607	96	4	77	23	8,953	74	26
2000	163,966	96	4	77	23	8,117	75	25
2001	163,464	96	4	77	23	7,730	74	26
2002	163,538	96	4	77	23	7,652	78	22
2003	151,725	96	4	78	22	7,611	78	22
2004	134,535	96	4	82	18	7,307	79	21

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis
[2] Includes defendants discharged and dismissed at magistrates court
[3] Includes defendants acquitted and not tried at crown courts
Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform

Number and percentage of cases heard at magistrates courts, crown courts and number found guilty at all courts for theft from shops', burglary and total theft, South East Essex Local Criminal Justice Area 1994-2004[1, 2]

		Magistrates court cases (Percentage)				Crown court cases (Percentage)		
Year/Offence	Proceeded against	Heard at magistrates courts	Committed for trial to crown court	Found guilty	Found not guilty[3]	Total tried	Found guilty	Found not guilty[4]
Theft from shops								
1994	337	99	1	84	16	10	60	40
1995	334	98	2	83	17	4	100	0
1996	506	97	3	87	13	2	50	50
1997	515	98	2	90	10	8	63	38
1998	481	98	2	88	12	5	80	20
1999	456	99	1	88	12	5	60	40
2000	454	100	0	88	12	1	100	0
2001	427	100	0	91	9	2	100	0
2002	389	98	2	89	11	3	100	0

Number and percentage of cases heard at magistrates courts, crown courts and number found guilty at all courts for theft from shops[1], burglary and total theft, South East Essex Local Criminal Justice Area 1994-2004[1, 2]

		Magistrates court cases (Percentage)				Crown court cases (Percentage)		
Year/Offence	Proceeded against	Heard at magistrates courts	Committed for trial to crown court	Found guilty	Found not guilty[3]	Total tried	Found guilty	Found not guilty[4]
2003	384	99	1	92	8	0	—	—
2004	302	99	1	90	10	0	—	—
Burglary								
1994	297	85	15	54	46	42	83	17
1995	254	71	29	66	34	42	95	5
1996	370	73	27	59	41	62	92	8
1997	246	62	38	59	41	85	86	14
1998	248	85	15	64	36	33	76	24
1999	211	78	22	65	35	39	82	18
2000	147	83	17	66	34	31	84	16
2001	157	81	19	63	37	26	85	15
2002	130	82	18	61	39	7	71	29
2003	137	77	23	77	23	9	89	11
2004	125	86	14	73	27	5	100	0
Theft and handling stolen goods								
1994	894	90	10	70	30	97	65	35
1995	852	92	8	67	33	103	79	21
1996	1,077	93	7	74	26	48	88	13
1997	1,032	93	7	76	24	71	89	11
1998	893	96	4	75	25	38	87	13
1999	896	97	3	77	23	54	76	24
2000	834	96	4	78	22	33	76	24
2001	771	98	2	78	22	23	91	9
2002	655	97	3	78	22	11	100	0
2003	596	97	3	84	16	8	75	25
2004	499	96	4	83	17	4	75	25

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis
[2] Includes all cases which originated from courts in South East Essex
[3] Includes defendants discharged and dismissed at magistrates courts
[4] Includes defendants acquitted and not tried at crown courts
Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform

DNA

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many DNA samples taken by police have subsequently been destroyed following a request to do so from the person from whom the DNA was taken, broken down by police authority area; and what percentage of requests to do so this represents. [72332]

Joan Ryan *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* During the financial year 2005-06, the total number of subject sample profiles which were removed from the Database and the DNA samples destroyed, for all reasons, and broken down by force area is set out in the following table.

Samples may be destroyed and the profiles removed from the database for a number of reasons, for example, following notification of the death of the individual, because the sample was taken unlawfully or following a request from the individual for his/her profile to be removed. Information on the number of DNA samples which have been destroyed and the profile removed only as a result of a request to do so from the person from whom the DNA was taken, and the total number of such requests received by the police, is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Number of subject sample profiles removed from the DNA database in 2005-06

Police force	Number of profiles removed
Avon and Somerset	1
Bedfordshire	2
British Transport Police	3
Cambridgeshire	0
Cheshire	0
City of London Police	0
Cleveland	3
Cumbria	0
Derbyshire	0
Devon and Cornwall	1
Dorset	1
Durham	0
Dyfed-Powys	1
Essex	2
Gloucestershire	1
Greater Manchester Police	3

Number of subject sample profiles removed from the DNA database in 2005-06

Police force	*Number of profiles removed*
Gwent	1
Hampshire	3
Hertfordshire	1
Humberside	1
Kent	3
Lancashire	3
Leicestershire	1
Lincolnshire	4
Merseyside	2
Metropolitan Police	42
Norfolk	1
North Wales	0
North Yorkshire	1
Northamptonshire	0
Northumbria	4
Nottinghamshire	3
South Wales	2
South Yorkshire	4
Staffordshire	2
Suffolk	0
Surrey	0
Sussex	0
Thames Valley	0
Warwickshire	0
West Mercia	0
West Midlands	4
West Yorkshire	3
Wiltshire	8
Total	111

Drug-related Crime

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drug-related crimes per 100,000 population were reported in *(a)* Cornwall and *(b)* England in the last period for which figures are available. [72797]

Mr. Coaker: Routine crime statistics used for monitoring overall crime trends do not contain information on the offender's drug habits. It is therefore not possible to provide a direct estimate of the number of crimes that are drug-related.

However, acquisitive crimes recorded by the police—to which drug-related crime makes a substantial contribution—fell by 12 per cent. in the year to April 2005 compared to the same period the year before.

Identity Card Register

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the feasibility of the integration of the proposed Identity Card Register with the IT systems of Government Departments. [66463]

Joan Ryan: The Identity and Passport Service continues to work with key Departments to fully map and plan the realisation of potential benefits that the National Identity Scheme will offer for their operations. As part of this work, Departments are assessing where the greatest benefits will arise through the use of the scheme and the consequences for their own systems. Indeed, not all services will require a high degree of integration between the ID Cards Scheme and other IT systems and in a number of cases, any necessary changes will be integrated in the usual planned cycle of system upgrades and technology refresh.

It is important to note that no Department will gain direct access to the National Identity Register itself. Instead, the Identity Cards Act 2006 provides that accredited Government organisations would be permitted, subject to certain conditions, to request information about an individual from the National Identity Register through a service run by Identity and Passport Service.

Knives

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research has been conducted on a system of licensing for the possession of knives in public places; and if he will make a statement. [62553]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* We have no plans to introduce a licensing system for knives. It is already an offence to have a knife in public without good reason or lawful authority.

Prisoners Abroad (Release)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what criteria the police use in deciding whether to interview newly released prisoners from foreign prisons upon their arrival in the United Kingdom; what legislation governs such decisions; and if he will make a statement; [56910]

(2) how long the police may detain prisoners released from foreign prisons upon their arrival in the United Kingdom; what recent representations he has received about the practice; what discussions he has had with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office about the practice; and if he will make a statement. [56911]

Mr. Sutcliffe: There is no legislation or other requirement for foreign authorities to inform the UK Government when a prisoner is released from a foreign jail. There is an agreement between Consular Directorate (CD) and the Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), that CD will notify SOCA of the arrest of British nationals abroad for Serious Crimes. When a British consulate overseas is mad aware that a UK national is being deported or released from a foreign jail, details are passed from the consulate to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office who in turn inform SOCA.

Law enforcement officers will determine if there is an operational need to interview the person on their return to the UK. The returnee is not required to attend such an interview unless the person is subject to arrest and detention in connection with the investigation of an offence. The results of any interview

are forwarded to the police force in whose area the returnee plans to reside. It is an operational matter for the chief officer of the force concerned whether further action should be taken.

Where the police are aware that an individual has received a conviction or caution for a sexual offence overseas they are advised to apply for a notification order—which will make the returnee subject to part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (the sex offenders register)—regardless of whether they believe that the person poses a risk of sexual harm or not. This mirrors the way in which sex offender registration automatically applies to offenders convicted or cautioned in the United Kingdom regardless of any risk they pose.

Prisons

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what correspondence he has had with the Prison Officers Association on industrial relations in HM Prison Service in the last 12 months; [59262]

(2) who the principal point of contact is for correspondence between his Department and its agencies and the Prison Officers Association; [59263]

(3) how industrial action is defined under paragraph 7 of the Joint Industrial Relations Procedural Agreement with the Prison Officers Association; [59264]

(4) if he will list occasions since 1994 on which his Department and its agencies have *(a)* taken injunctive action and *(b)* threatened to take injunctive action against the Prison Officers Association. [59265]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Home Secretary has corresponded on a regular basis with the Prison Officers Association (POA) in response to issues raised by them which affect the management of industrial relations across the Prison Service, including: on pay reform linked to the announcement of the Isle of Sheppey market test; the International Labour Organisation ruling on section 127 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994; Prison Service trade unions and POA industrial action. In addition, the Home Secretary has met the POA either at dedicated meetings or by attendance at joint conferences on six occasions in the last 12 months.

The principal point of contact for correspondence between the public sector Prison Service and the Prison Officers Association is Phil Wheatley, the director general.

Industrial action as defined under paragraph 7 of the Joint Industrial Relations Procedural Agreement with the POA is

"any actions by one or more individuals, which affects, or attempts to affect, the normal working or performance of the Prison Service".

There have been a total of five occasions where it has been necessary to seek injunctions and a further eight occasions where injunctive relief has been threatened in response to POA actions. Further details are contained in the following table.

Summary of injunctions and threatened injunctive action by the public sector Prison Service in England and Wales on the Prison Officers Association since 1994

Date injunction issued	*Date injunctive action threatened*	*Issue*
Two injunctions court hearing November 1994	—	1. Injunction brought against the Preston POA Branch following a lockout
	—	2. Injunction against the POA general secretary due to a dispute about whether prison officers were or were not "workers"
	June 1996	To prevent further unauthorised meetings held by POA branches in protest against staffing and cost reductions
November 1998	—	To prevent unauthorised POA branch meetings being held to discuss industrial action over pay
January 1999	—	To prevent unlawful POA branch meetings to discuss industrial action over pay
	August 2000	To prevent further unauthorised POA branch meetings following decision to market test HMP Brixton and threat of industrial action
	February 2002	Threat of injunction served on several prisons to prevent withdrawal of goodwill following announcement of pay award
February 2002	—	Injunction served on the POA National Executive Committee and HMP Holme House due to continued withdrawal of goodwill following announcement of pay award
	July 2002	HMP Kingston local POA branch threat of industrial action regarding a dispute over demarcation of duties
	August 2003	HMP Styal threat of industrial action by the local POA branch
	January 2004	Threat of industrial action on a national scale in protest over dispute about provision of protection allocated to Northern Irish Prison Officers

Summary of injunctions and threatened injunctive action by the public sector Prison Service in England and Wales on the Prison Officers Association since 1994

Date injunction issued	*Date injunctive action threatened*	*Issue*
	May 2005	Unlawful POA branch meeting at HMYOI Onley over a dispute about the free flow of juveniles within the prison
	February 2006	Release of POA circular advising POA members not to engage with the PS job evaluation and listen to improve schemes
Total: 5	Total: 8	

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Amendments to Legislation

Mr. Amess: To ask the Leader of the House if he will list the occasions when an amendment has been moved by *(a)* a Labour Back Bencher, *(b)* an Opposition Back Bencher and (c) an Opposition front bench spokesman to a Bill sponsored by his Department that has been accepted by his Department during the current session; and if he will make a statement. [72102]

Mr. Straw: The Office of the Leader of the House of Commons has not sponsored any Bills during the current session.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Leader of the House if he will revise the Government's guidelines for answering parliamentary questions, so that when a Minister replies to an hon. Member's question that the answer could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost, *(a)* he will allow hon. Members the option to pay the cost of supplying the information required and *(b)* he will set out what it would cost to answer the question (i) fully and (ii) partially; and if he will make a statement. [72032]

Mr. Straw: I am happy to receive representation on this issue.

September Sittings

Ben Chapman: To ask the Leader of the House pursuant to his oral answer of 9 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 168, on September sittings, when he expects to make an announcement regarding the tabling of written parliamentary questions during September. [72940]

Mr. Straw: As my reply on 9 May indicated, I am exploring ways of introducing increased accountability of the Government to Parliament during the summer adjournment. One possibility would be to resume the practice of September sittings. Failing that it might be possible to introduce a system of allowing the tabling and answering of written questions during a period in September, though this might not now be possible in respect of the current year. The issue remains under consideration within Government.

Small Change Big Difference Campaign

Anne Milton: To ask the Leader of the House what steps his Department has taken following the launch of the Government's "Small Change Big Difference" Campaign. [71999]

Mr. Straw: The Office of the Leader of the House of Commons comes within the administrative responsibility of the Privy Council Office. No specific steps have yet been taken by the Department following the publication of this document.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Amendments to Legislation

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the occasions when an amendment has been moved by *(a)* a Labour Back Bencher, *(b)* an Opposition Back Bencher and *(c)* an Opposition Front Bench spokesman to a Bill sponsored by her Department that has been accepted by her Department during the current session; and if she will make a statement. [72111]

Vera Baird: My Department has sponsored The Criminal Defence Service Act, The Electoral Administration Bill and The Compensation Bill during the current session.

Information on amendments moved and accepted during the Committee and Report Stage of these Bills is published in the *Official Report*.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Laws: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much has been spent by her Department on media training in each year since 1997-98. [55219]

Vera Baird: The information requested is not held centrally and to obtain it from across the Department for Constitutional Affairs, including all courts and judges, would incur disproportionate costs.

Information Commissioner

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what advice the Information Commissioner has provided to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in each of the last three years. [70742]

Bridget Prentice: The Information Commissioner has a general duty under both the Data Protection Act and the Freedom of Information Act to promote the observance of good practice by public authorities and other organisations in compliance with the provisions of both these Acts.

Guidance and advice is made available by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) through a variety of means including the ICO website, presentations by ICO staff at conferences and seminars attended by central Government officials, and by way of the ICO telephone helpline. Advice may also be given to Government Departments by the ICO in the context of specific cases as a result of the Information Commissioner considering complaints under the Data Protection Act and complaints under the Freedom of Information Act. There is no central record of all of these possible interactions with individual Departments.

Information Technology

Chris Huhne: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the *(a)* originally estimated, *(b)* most recently estimated and *(c)* out-turn cost was in each of the five largest information technology contracts agreed with outside suppliers over the last five years. [71805]

Bridget Prentice: The Department's five relevant IT contracts are with: Fujitsu Services; STL; Accenture; Cable and Wireless and Oracle.

(a) The originally estimated costs of these contracts are:

Fujitsu Services (magistrates courts IT systems) was tendered in July 2002 for £232 million over 8.5 years;

STL (magistrates courts IT systems): £38.5 million

Accenture (magistrates courts IT systems): £36 million

Cable and Wireless (for web-hosting): £1.5 million

Oracle—a contract agreement providing licensing for staff to use Oracle software products. Total expenditure since 2003, when the contract was awarded, is £9.7 million.

(b) and *(c)* all these contracts are ongoing and some will be subject to value for money contract re-negotiation. Therefore out-turn costs do not apply. The current values of each of the contracts are as follows:

Fujitsu Services: £232 million

STL: £38.5 million

Accenture: £36 million

Cable and Wireless: £2.5 million

Press Coverage

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs on how many occasions since 1 April 2003 she has complained to the Press Complaints Commission about the coverage in the press of *(a)* Ministers or officials and *(b)* her Department; and how many of these complaints were upheld. [47081]

Vera Baird: Neither I nor my ministerial colleagues have made any complaints to the Press Complaints Commission since April 2003.

CABINET OFFICE

Disability Access

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster whether any building in her Department falls short of disability access regulations. [73045]

Mr. McFadden: All Cabinet Office buildings, with one exception, are compliant with Disability Access Regulations. The non compliant building is due to be vacated later this year.

E-Government

Margaret Moran: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster which Departments have not implemented the e-Government Interoperability Framework standards; and when each such Department is expected to have done so. [72506]

Mr. McFadden: The provisions of the e-Government Interoperability Framework apply to individual information technology systems. Data on which systems have complied with the framework standards are not held centrally. The guidance for conducting an Office of Government Commerce Gateway Review 1 (Business Justification) stipulates that for new IT-related projects there should be evidence of compliance with the Framework.

It is established policy that Departments only need make their existing systems compliant when updating, enhancing or replacing these systems. Full compliance by an entire Department therefore depends on the eventual replacement or upgrade of all their systems.

National Youth Volunteering Service

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many times the board of the National Youth Volunteering Service has met since it was established. [70754]

Edward Miliband *[holding answer 12 May 2006]:* The new charity v, was launched on 8 May 2006. The board of trustees met informally on 10 April 2006 and holds its first official meeting on 12 June 2006.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on what date Rod Aldridge commenced his duties as chairman of the National Youth Volunteering Service; how much he is paid as chairman; and how many days each week he will spend on his duties. [70758]

Edward Miliband *[holding answer 12 May 2006]*: Rod Aldridge commenced his duties as chairman of v on 3 April 2006. The post of chairman is unpaid and is expected to involve a commitment of around two days a month. Since 3 April, the chairman has spent approximately three working days on business for v.

Tatenhill Airfield Planning Application

Mrs. Dean: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what steps she is taking to ensure effective and timely consultation with local communities on current planning application (CR/20723/010) for the development of Tatenhill airfield. [70665]

Hilary Armstrong: The Duchy is committed to the regeneration and extension of Tatenhill airfield.

The current planning application was made following a public enquiry into the Draft Local Plan for East Staffordshire borough council in 2005 and the subsequent Planning Inspector's Report in spring 2006 which accepted the Duchy's policy.

No objections to the proposals were submitted during the enquiry and the local authority has agreed to adopt all the recommendations of the inspector within the Local Plan, including those relating to Tatenhill airfield.

Mr. Clarke, the Chief Executive of the Duchy, has met with the local planning authority and attended the annual general meeting of the Tatenhill parish council to explain what was proposed and answer queries. A public statement outlining the proposal was also issued to the planning authority in a supplementary planning statement, which was circulated to all parish councils in the area.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

China Task Force

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what resources are available to him in his role as head of the China Task Force to facilitate discussion in *(a)* Mandarin and *(b)* Cantonese with Chinese interlocutors; and if he will make a statement. [71209]

The Deputy Prime Minister: Interpretation services for meetings with the Chinese Government in my role as chair of the China Task Force are provided either by the Chinese Government or by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and British embassy in China.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will encourage senior officials supporting the work of the China Task Force to learn *(a)* Mandarin and *(b)* Cantonese. [71210]

The Deputy Prime Minister: Interpretation services for my meetings with the Chinese Government in my role as chair of the China Task Force are provided either by the Chinese Government or by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and British embassy in China.

While it is not part of my specific role as chair of the China Task Force to encourage senior officials to study languages, deepening ties with China in the field of education is a theme of the China Task Force. This includes looking at mechanisms for Chinese students to study in the UK, and British students to study Chinese and visit China. I fully support more British students choosing to study Cantonese and Mandarin. The work of the task force is supported by Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials, many of whom are proficient in languages relevant to the duties I am required to undertake as chair.

Departmental Staff

Derek Conway: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many civil servants are allocated to work in his ministerial private office; whether he was involved in *(a)* their appointment and *(b)* the allocation of duties to those staff; and if he will make a statement. [67796]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave to the hon. Member for Reading, East (Mr. Wilson) and my hon. Friend the Member for South Swindon (Anne Snelgrove) in the House on 17 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 979-80.

Dorneywood

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the use of Dorneywood by his close personal friends. [67353]

The Deputy Prime Minister *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* Use of Dorneywood is governed by the terms of the charitable trust, established in 1942, which owns the property. All previous residents have been required to abide by the terms of the trust, and I have fully done this. Since Dorneywood is a charitable trust, there is no cost to the public purse.

Ministerial Anniversary

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he plans to commemorate his anniversary of 10 years as Deputy Prime Minister. [66225]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I fully intend to mark my 10 years as Deputy Prime Minister at the appropriate time.

In the nine years that I have been Deputy Prime Minister, we have seen over 2 million more jobs created, record investment in our public services, a doubling of the investment in housing, over a million social homes made decent, an increase in the green belt of 26,000 hectares, an increase in the percentage of development on brownfield sites from 57 per cent. in 1997 to 72 per cent. now, the establishment of the right to roam, announcing the establishment of two new national parks, an increase in the UK registered shipping fleet to 12.1 million tonnes in 2004 compared to 3.4 million tonnes in 1997, the successful negotiation of the Kyoto environmental protocol and the achievement of our commitment to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions

to 12.5 per cent. below 1990 levels several years ahead of target, the renegotiation of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link that is now being delivered on time and on budget and the first new major rail line in the UK for over a century, a £180 billion transport investment programme; which has led to large increases in the use of public transport, cleaner drinking water and a reduction in water leakages since 1997, and an increase in funding to local government of 39 per cent. since 1997, compared to a real terms cut of 7 per cent. in the last four years of the previous Administration, to mention but a few of our achievements.

A lot done, and a lot to do and I look forward to adding to this list between now and the 10th anniversary of holding the office of Deputy Prime Minister.

Parliamentary Questions

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will provide a substantive reply to question *(a)* 69909 on Dorneywood and *(b)* (i) 69910, (ii) 69986 and (iii) 69987 on the exercise of his official duties tabled by the hon. Member for New Forest, East for named day answer on 11 May. [72717]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave him on 18 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1254W and 1256W and to the answers I gave him on Tuesday 23 May.

TREASURY

Average Incomes

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the average income per person in *(a)* Cornwall and *(b)* the UK. [72776]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 24 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about average income in Cornwall, and the UK. (72776).

Figures for average incomes per person for Cornwall and the UK are shown in the table. These were published on 9 May 2006. Gross disposable household income (GDHI) is the amount of money that households have available for consumption expenditure or saving Total household incomes represent the total amount of money households receive before any deductions. Regional GDHI data are available on the National Statistics website at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=7359.

The statistics used are national accounts series for the combined household and non-profit institutions serving households sectors. Estimates for households alone are not available.

Average Incomes per Capita[1]

	Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) (£)		*Total Incomes*[2] *(£)*	
	Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly	*United Kingdom*	*Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly*	*United Kingdom*
1995	7,783	8,602	11,234	12,296
1996	8,191	9,088	11,687	12,866
1997	8,562	9,625	12,088	13,461
1998	8,769	9,938	12,653	14,149
1999	9,101	10,390	13,009	14,820
2000	9,609	10,971	13,798	15,745
2001	10,294	11,643	14,589	16,631
2002	10,637	11,971	15,023	17,120
2003	11,166	12,500	15,744	17,920
2004	11,508	12,840	16,477	18,638

[1] Population denominator is Mid-Year estimate, for total population.
[2] All household income including employers' social contributions, imputed social contributions, social benefits and other current transfers received.
Note:
Data are presented for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly combined. These data cannot be disaggregated in to the two constituent areas.

Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the occasions when an amendment has been moved by *(a)* a Labour backbencher, *(b)* an Opposition backbencher and *(c)* an Opposition front bench spokesman to a Bill sponsored by his Department, that has been accepted by his Department during the 2005-06 session; and if he will make a statement. [72483]

John Healey: Treasury Ministers have introduced the following Bills during the present session:

National Insurance Contributions Bill;

Finance Bill;

Finance (No.2) Bill.

Information on amendments moved and accepted during the Committee and Report stages on these Bills is published in the *Official Report*.

Bonuses

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many non-pensionable bonuses were awarded to members of his staff in each of the last three years; and at what total cost. [73041]

John Healey: Information on the number of non-pensionable bonuses to Treasury staff in the last three years is given in the following table:

	Number of bonuses	*Total cost (£)*
2005-06	603	1,090,544
2004-05	680	915,463
2003-04	635	784,958

Chinese Currency

Stephen Hesford: To ask The Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the

implications for British trade of China allowing its currency to appreciate against the US dollar. [72676]

John Healey: The exchange rate is determined in a fully flexible setting for foreign exchange and it is therefore difficult to determine the exact implications of an appreciation of the Chinese renminbi against the US dollar for British trade. An appreciation of the Chinese renminbi against the US dollar could result in an appreciation, depreciation or no change against UK sterling. However, the sterling effective exchange rate has been relatively stable in recent years. Since the introduction of the euro in 1999, the volatility of sterling's effective exchange rate has been under half that of the euro and around a third that of the US dollar. At the same time, UK exports, including exports to China, continue to grow. UK exports have grown on average 4.4 per cent. per year from 1997 to 2005.

Departmental Legislation

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list *(a)* Acts and *(b)* parts of Acts which received Royal Assent between 1976 and 2006 for which his Department has policy responsibility and which remain in force. [70063]

John Healey: The Acts that received Royal Assent between 1976 and 2006 for which Treasury Ministers have policy responsibility for the whole or a part, in addition to annual Finance, Appropriation and Consolidated Fund Acts, are listed as follows.

1. In relation to the functions of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (other than administration functions in respect of a matter for which another Department has lead policy responsibility)

National Insurance Contributions Act 2006
Child Benefit Act 2005
Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005
Income Tax (Trading and Other Income) Act 2005
Child Trust Funds Act 2004
National Insurance Contributions and Statutory Payments Act 2004
Income Tax (Earnings and Pensions) Act 2003
National Insurance Contributions Act 2002
Proceeds of Crime Act 2002
State Pension Credit Act 2002
Tax Credits Act 2002
Capital Allowances Act 2001
Social Security Contributions (Share Options) Act 2001
Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000
Social Security Contributions (Transfer of Functions, etc.) Act 1999
Welfare Reform and Pensions Act 1999
Social Security Act 1998
Drug Trafficking Act 1994
Social Security (Contributions) Act 1994
Value Added Tax Act 1994
Vehicle Excise Registration Act 1994
Social Security Act 1993
Social Security Administration Act 1992
Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992
Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992
Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988
Inheritance Act 1984
Oil Taxation Act 1983
Betting and Gaming Duties Act 1981
Petroleum Revenue Tax Act 1980
Alcoholic Liquor Duties Act 1979
Customs and Excise Duties (General Reliefs) Act 1979
Customs and Excise Management Act 1979
Excise Duties (Surcharges or Rebates) Act 1979
Hydrocarbon Oil Duties Act 1979
Isle of Man Act 1979
Tobacco Products Duty Act 1979
Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act 1976

2. In relation to Financial Services Regulation and Financial Crime

Regulation of Financial Services (Land Transactions) Act 2005
Industrial and Provident Societies Act 2002
Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001
Financial Services and Markets Act 2000
Building Societies (Distributions) Act 1997
Building Societies Act 1997
Reinsurance (Acts of Terrorism) Act 1993
Friendly Societies Act 1992
Building Societies Act 1986
Financial Services Act 1986
Trustee Savings Banks Act 1985
Friendly Societies Act 1984
Stock Transfer Act 1982
Banking Act 1979

3. In relation to the Public Finances

European Communities (Finance) Act 2001
Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000
National Audit Act 1983

4. In relation to Macro-economic policy and International Finance

Bank of England Act 1998
Currency Act 1983
International Monetary Arrangements Act 1983
Currency Act 1982
Exchange Equalisation Account Act 1979
International Monetary Fund Act 1979

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many promotion boards have been held in his Department in each of the last five years. [70552]

John Healey: The Treasury has not operated promotion boards for the last five years. Most vacancies are open to applicants on promotion as well as level transfer.

Disability Access

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether any buildings in his Department do not meet disability access regulations. [73038]

John Healey: The building the Treasury occupies at 1 Horse Guards Road complies with the Disability Access Regulations.

EU Finance

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how the UK's *(a)* rebate from and *(b)* gross contribution to the European Union is calculated; and how the formula was used to arrive at the latest available year's figure in each case. [72380]

Ed Balls: Details of the UK abatement calculation are given on page 30 of the European Community Finances White Paper (Cm 6770) which was laid before Parliament earlier today. The UK's gross contribution is determined in accordance with the Own Resources Decision (ORD) (Council Decision 2000/597/EC, EURATOM of 29 September 2000), details of which can be found on page 7 of Cm 6770. The ORD lays down the four sources of Community revenue, or own resources, details of which are given on page 31 of Cm 6770. The UK's annual contribution to the EC Budget, i.e. the gross contribution minus the UK abatement, is calculated in accordance with these arrangements.

GDP Statistics

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the gross domestic product per capita of *(a)* Cornwall, *(b)* the UK and *(c)* the EU is; and what the current European average is. [72774]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 24 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita estimates for Cornwall, UK, and EU (72774).

The ONS publishes estimates of Gross Value Added (GVA) rather than GDP at a regional level. The two measures are broadly similar, though direct comparisons are not possible.

The table contains estimates of GVA per capita for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and to UK as well as GDP per capita for the UK, EU15 and EU25. Data are shown for the period 1995-2003.

Gross Value Added/Gross Domestic Product per capita[1] [2]

	Gross Value Added[3]		Gross Domestic Product		
	Cornwall and Isles of Scilly[4] (£)	*United Kingdom (£)*	*United Kingdom (£)*	*EU15[5] (€)*	*EU25[5] (€)*
1995	6,724	11,015	12,379	18,000	15,500
1996	7,275	11,699	13,127	18,900	16,300
1997	7,432	12,347	13,900	19,800	17,200
1998	7,749	13,056	14,716	20,700	17,900
1999	8,018	13,622	15,429	21,700	18,800
2000	8,534	14,290	16,194	23,100	20,100
2001	9,164	14,944	16,862	23,800	20,800
2002	9,971	15,691	17,674	24,500	21,500
2003	10,518	16,485	18,570	24,800	21,700

[1] Population denominator is Mid-Year estimates for total population.
[2] Cornwall and UK data in £ stg. EU15 and EU25 data in Euro.
[3] Gross Value Added (GVA) is Gross Domestic Product (GDP) less taxes (plus subsidies) on products. These data are current price estimates which are not adjusted for changes in prices over time.
[4] Data are presented for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly combined. These data cannot be disaggregated in to the two constituent areas.
[5] Gross Domestic Product per head as published by Eurostat.

HM Revenue and Customs

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the value of subsistence claims made by staff of HM Revenue and Customs working away from home was in 2005-06; and what proportion of claims did not include receipts. [71722]

Dawn Primarolo: In 2005-06 it is estimated that HM Revenue and Customs paid out £9,299,575 on staff subsistence claims, excluding travel and accommodation costs.

As the submission of receipts with claims is not mandatory within HMRC, payment verification is on a sample basis.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average waiting time for callers to the HM Revenue and Customs tax return phone helpline was in each of the last 24 months for which figures are available; on how many occasions in each month no lines were available to callers; and how many call staff were available in each month. [72018]

Dawn Primarolo: The following table shows the average waiting time for callers to the self-assessment helpline, and also the number of calls receiving an engaged tone since May 2004.

	Month	*Average wait*	*Engaged[1] (thousands)*
2004	May	0:01:28	205
	June	0:01:18	172
	July	0:01:14	128
	August	0:01:23	43
	September	0:01:41	339
	October	0:00:44	37
	November	0:00:33	6
	December	0:00:35	24

	Month	Average wait	Engaged[1] (thousands)
	January	0:00:46	299
	February	0:00:50	8
	March	0:00:58	8
2005	April	0:01:36	18
	May	0:01:55	44
	June	0:01:40	21
	July	0:01:19	25
	August	0:02:37	39
	September	0:02:52	176
	October	0:00:37	2
	November	0:00:21	1
	December	0:00:20	5
	January	0:01:10	367
	February	0:00:36	5
	March	0:01:10	28
	April	0:01:22	10

[1] Call attempts where the caller was played an engaged tone, before they were placed in a queue to speak to an adviser.

Helpline advisers are not allocated exclusively to the self-assessment helpline and it would only be possible to disaggregate resource allocated to this helpline from other types of call at disproportionate cost.,

Improving Migration Population Statistics Programme

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on how many occasions the Office for National Statistics has met the four participating local authorities in the Improving Migration Population Statistics programme; and what the outcome was of those meetings. [72952]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 24 May 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking on how many occasions the Office for National Statistics has met the four participating local authorities in the Improving Motion and Population Statistics: (DS) project, and what was the outcome of those meetings. I am replying in her absence. (72952)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is currently working in partnership with four Local Authorities (LAs) to investigate whether there are local data sources that could be used to assist the compilation of the nationally produced population estimates. The four LAs are Barnet Derby Hammersmith & Fulham and Welwyn Hatfield. These authorities were selected from four groupings of LAs which each scored highly on different characteristics associated with difficulties in estimating population accurately.

Initial meetings were held with the four selected LAs in December 2005 and January 2006. At these meetings each of the LAs agreed to work with ONS to gain a better understanding of how they use the population estimates, what other local information and data sources they use, what particular issues affect population estimates within their LA and what methods and local data sources they use to overcome these issues.

A further round of meetings is currently underway to review progress and a final round of meetings will be held at the end of the studies in summer 2006. ONS will review the findings to see if any improvements can be applied to the mid-year population estimates processes or quality assurance procedures, either for all LAs or for groups of LAs. ONS will publish the outcome of the studies and evaluate their success, including a review of the criteria and approach for selecting LAs.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Treasury expects to receive the findings of the Office for National Statistics Improving Migration Population Statistics Programme. [72953]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Jil Matheson, dated 24 May 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking when the Treasury expects to receive the findings of the Office for National Statistics Improving Migration and Population Statistics (IMPS) project. I am replying in her absence. (72953)

The IMPS project was set up following the publication of the full report on the Local Authority population studies in September 2004. The aim is to investigate where it is possible to introduce changes to the data sources and methods that will improve the quality of the migration and population statistics.

A list of published reports and those due to be published shortly, is attached in the Annex to this letter. The report planned for August 2006, at the same time as the release of the mid-2005 population estimates for England & Wales, will provide a summary of the research plan and progress to date. Further reports will be issued as results emerge and plans for implementing changes to reflect these results, will be published on the National Statistics website. There will be a final report in March 2008, which is when the project is currently due to be completed.

Annex A

Publication of reports

Progress Report of the National Statistics Quality Review on International Migration: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/quality/reviews/downloads/Progress.doc

The progress reports from this component of the IMPS project are planned to be updated six-monthly.

Announcement of the LAs selected for case study

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/specific/population/future/imps/updates/default.asp

This document is available together with a note about the selection methodology and feedback from the LA workshop held in November 2005

Update on the work on population definitions - report of the discussions at the Population Definition Working Group, a group of Local Authority, central government and academic demographic experts.

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/specific/population/future/imps/components/improvements.asp

Population bases and statistical provision: towards a more flexible future? (To appear in Population Trends on 29 June 2006).

Issues of Population Trends can be accessed at:

http://statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=6303

This article will present an analysis of the research and consultation into alternative population bases and discusses the options for moving towards more flexible output bases.

An article is due to appear in a forthcoming issue of Population Trends presenting the research into administrative data on housing and the insights that affords into the relationship between housing and population change.

A further article, which reviews international experience of the Cohort Component method, is due to appear in a forthcoming issue of Population Trends. This method is the main one used by Census taking countries to produce population estimates during the intercensal period.

IMPS Research Plan and Progress Report, 2006. Due to be published in August 2006.

Inheritance Tax

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received regarding the inheritance tax treatment of accumulation and maintenance trusts and interest in possession trusts. [72934]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave on 16 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 831W.

Migrants

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the breakdown by *(a)* local authority area and *(b)* nationality of migrants was allocated by the Office for National Statistics to mid-year estimates in each year from 1991 to 2004. [72951]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Jil Matheson, dated 24 May 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about what breakdown by (a) local authority area and (b) nationality of migrants was allocated by the Office for National Statistics to mid-year estimates in each year from 1991 to 2004.1 am replying in her absence. (72951)

I am placing a table in the House of Commons Library, which gives a breakdown of the migration component of the mid-year estimates by local authority for mid-2000 to mid-2004. Figures for the migration component are not available separately for the earlier years requested. Published tables for earlier years showing 'Natural Change' and 'Migration and other changes' are available on the National Statistics website:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/ssdataset.asp?vlnk=8615&More=Y

The migration estimates used in the mid-year estimates are not disaggregated by nationality.

The components of the mid-year estimates are estimated in as robust a manner as possible given available data sources. The total international migration figures shown in this table are produced for the express purpose of producing the mid-year estimates. Figures for the internal migration in the table may also differ slightly from those published elsewhere due to rounding and constraining effects.

Ministerial Activities

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* public speeches and *(b)* official visits (i) he and (ii) the Chief Secretary to the Treasury has made on departmental business since 5 May 2005. [55714]

John Healey: Speeches by Treasury Ministers are available on the Treasury's website. Since 5 May 2005 both the Chancellor and successive Chief Secretaries have made a number of visits to the regions and nations of the United Kingdom and will be continuing to do so over the coming months.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many letters *(a)* he and *(b)* the Chief Secretary to the Treasury has sent on departmental business since 5 May 2005. [55715]

John Healey: The Chancellor and the Chief Secretary both send many hundreds of letters each year in the course of their official duties.

Ministerial Travel

Mr. Newmark: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the use by Ministers of aircraft from 32 (The Royal) Squadron of the RAF to travel on *(a)* private and *(b)* party business is treated as a benefit in kind for tax purposes. [66621]

John Healey: The tax treatment of travel and subsistence for the Speaker, Ministers and Opposition office-holders is covered by specific provisions in s295 of ITEPA, introduced in 1996.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) on how many occasions *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department have stayed overnight in (i) five star, (ii) four star and (iii) three star hotels in each of the last three years; [69059]

(2) what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department staying overnight in (i) mainland Great Britain, (ii) Northern Ireland, (iii) the Republic of Ireland and (iv) other countries in each of the last three years; [69060]

(3) what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for Treasury Ministers on foreign visits in each of the last three years; [69061]

(4) on how many occasions Treasury Ministers stayed overnight in *(a)* five star, *(b)* four star and *(c)* three star hotels on foreign visits in each of the last three years; [69062]

(5) what discounts are available in relation to hotel accommodation used by *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his private office. [69063]

John Healey: In relation to the total costs of Ministers' and special advisers' overnight accommodation costs, I refer to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Leicester, East (Keith Vaz) on 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2411W. The total cost of subsistence for the Treasury in the last three financial years was as follows. The figures include Ministers, special advisers and civil servants, and meals as well as overnight accommodation costs.

£000

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Subsistence in the UK	85	78	72
Subsistence overseas	237	272	323

Further details, including analysis of costs by destination and by class of hotel, could be provided only at disproportionate cost. All travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the "Ministerial Code", the "Civil Service Management Code" and the "Code of Conduct for Special Advisers", which include requirements for travel arrangements to be efficient and cost-effective.

Our hotel providers use their purchasing power to negotiate better rates and room allocations for their Government clients. These arrangements are available to all staff, both civil servants and special advisers.

Parliamentary Questions

Anne Main: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 15 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 2163W, on written parliamentary questions, how many written questions have been submitted to his Department in each year since 1997; and how many questions each Minister in his Department has answered. [54244]

John Healey: As the former Economic Secretary said in his earlier reply, written answers are usually given by the Minister with named responsibility for the issue concerned.

The information requested in respect of each complete parliamentary Session since 1997-98 is given in the table:

Minister	*1997-98*	*1998-99*	*1999-2000*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Chancellor	224	42	17	10	40	17	13	14
Chief Secretary	368	125	271	152	921	628	298	94
Paymaster General	258	671	1,054	510	1,453	1,082	896	486
Financial Secretary	1,517	191	448	145	1,716	1,247	1,480	797
Economic Secretary	1,611	1,055	1,037	471	1,785	976	651	111
Total	3,978	2,084	2,827	1,288	5,915	3,950	3,338	1,502

Pensions

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the change in levels of taxation required to meet the cost of implementing the recommendations set out in the Ombudsman's report Trusting in the Pensions Promise. [69891]

James Purnell: I have been asked to reply.

No such estimate has been made.

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many and what percentage of staff in his Department are making additional voluntary contributions to their pension. [73040]

John Healey: On 1 April 2006, 20 Treasury staff were paying into additional voluntary contributions and 43 were paying into added years. The 63 people concerned represented 5.7 per cent. of the staff of the Treasury.

Population Statistics (Hartlepool)

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many single parent households with children under the age of 16 years there were in the Hartlepool constituency in each of the last 15 years; [72598]

(2) how many single-person households there were in the Hartlepool constituency in each of the last 15 years; [72599]

(3) what estimate he has made of the number of cohabiting couples living in Hartlepool constituency in each of the past 15 years. [72603]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 24 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your requests for the following figures for the Hartlepool constituency: the number of single parent households with children under 16 years of age in the past 15 years; the number of single person households since 1990; and, the number of cohabiting couples in the past 15 years. (72598, 72599 and 72603)

Estimates of these figures are not produced on an annual basis for local areas. Available figures are from the censuses of 1991 and 2001. These are shown in the table below.

Numbers of lone parent households with dependent children aged under 16[1], one person households[2] and cohabiting couples in households[3]: Hartlepool, 1991 and 2001

	1991	*2001*
1. Lone parent households with dependent children aged under 16	1,793	2,992
2. One person households	9,172	11,413
3. Number of couples in households: Cohabiting	[4]788	3,273

[1] Source: 1991 Census Local Base Statistics Table 32 and 2001 Census data.

[2] Source: Table F in the Census 1991 New Parliamentary Constituency Monitor North East and Table KS20 in the Census 2001 Report for Parliamentary Constituencies.

[3] Source: 1991 and 2001 Census data.

[4] In 1991 responses to relationship questions were only processed for approximately 10 per cent. of the population. The figures in this table have been grossed up by a factor of 10.16 to account for this.

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many marriages took place in the Hartlepool constituency in each year since 1990. [72600]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 24 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking for the number of marriages that have taken place in the Hartlepool constituency since 1990. (72600)

The table below shows the number of marriages that took place in the Hartlepool Registration District from 1990 to 2003, the latest year available. It should be noted that place of marriage does not necessarily denote place of last, current or future residence.

Marriages in Hartlepool[1] Registration District 1990-2003

	Marriages
1990	633
1991	509
1992	547
1993	524
1994	486
1995	447
1996	463
1997	409
1998	409
1999	430
2000	418
2001	411
2002	365
2003	386

[1] Known as North Cleveland Registration District until 1995

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many divorces took place in the Hartlepool constituency in each year since 1990. [72601]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 24 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking for the number of divorces that have taken place in the Hartlepool constituency since 1990. (72601)

The number of divorces that took place at the Court Service in Hartlepool is shown from 1992 to 2003, the latest year available, in the table below. Data is not readily available for 1990 and 1991. It should be noted that place of divorce does not necessarily denote place of last, current or future residence.

Divorces at Hartlepool Court 1992-2003

	Divorces
1992	610
1993	536
1994	530
1995	545
1996	477
1997	425
1998	459
1999	446
2000	387
2001	412
2002	379
2003	493

Private Members' Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list those private Member" Bills in respect of which his Department has adopted a 'policy of neutrality in each session since 2001-02; and if he will make a statement. [72481]

John Healey: The information is not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Private Office Costs

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost was of *(a)* his and *(b)* the Chief Secretary to the Treasury's private offices in the last year for which figures are available. [55713]

John Healey: The costs of the offices of the Chancellor and the Chief Secretary in 2004-05 were £1,248,802 and £513,866, respectively.

Sovereign Strategy

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what dates over the last 12 months *(a)* he and *(b)* (i) Ministers and (ii) officials in his Department met a representative of Sovereign Strategy. [72344]

John Healey: I am advised that Treasury Ministers and officials have not met with Sovereign Strategy over the last 12 months.

Tax Credits

Mr. Spring: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people living in West Suffolk received overpayments of *(a)* child tax credit and *(b)* working tax credit in each of the last five years. [72637]

Jim Sheridan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in Paisley and Renfrewshire North received overpayment of *(a)* working tax credit and *(b)* child tax credit in 2005. [73190]

Dawn Primarolo: Child and Working Tax Credits were only introduced in April 2003.

I refer the hon. Member and my hon. Friend to the answer given to the hon. Member for Mid-Bedfordshire (Mrs. Dorries) on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 322W.

Estimates for 2004-05 of the numbers of in-work families with tax credits awards, including information on overpayments and underpayments by constituency, based on final family circumstances and incomes for 2004-05 are due to be published on 31 May 2006.

We do not produce statistics separately for child and working tax credits.

Tax Revenues

Matthew Taylor: To ask The Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Government raised in tax revenues from Cornwall in each of the last five years. [72721]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 24 May 2006

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the amount of tax revenue raised in Cornwall per annum. (72721)

The ONS publishes regional estimates of Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) which include data for taxes on incomes and wealth paid by households. Regional estimates for expenditure based taxes and duties, for example VAT, are not available. Taxes paid by corporations are also unavailable on a regional basis.

Table A contains estimates of household taxes paid by residents of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly from 1995 to 2004.

Table A: Taxes generated per annum

	£ million[1, 2]
	Cornwall and Isles of Scilly[3]
1995	510
1996	507
1997	508
1998	581
1999	613
2000	659
2001	700
2002	712
2003	735
2004	803

[1] These data are at current prices. They are not deflated to account for increases in prices over time. Regional data are not available on a constant price (deflated) basis.
[2] These estimates are taken from the most recent release of regional GDHI data, published on May 9 2006.
[3] Data are presented for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly combined. These data cannot be disaggregated in the two constituent areas.

David Mundell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he plans to change the system by which HM Revenue and Customs measures actual tax revenue receipts from the nations and regions of the United Kingdom. [72814]

Dawn Primarolo: There are no plans to change the system by which HM Revenue and Customs measures actual tax revenue receipts from the nations and regions of the United Kingdom.

Systems for recording HMRC tax revenue receipts are dependent on the administrative arrangement for the various taxes. For example, some taxes are collected from businesses although the liabilities are borne by individuals (e.g. PAYE) and the location of the office making the payment may not be the same as the physical location of the business. One PAYE payment scheme can cover units located throughout the country.

Geographical information is therefore only routinely available for income tax in terms of the liabilities of individuals based on their tax records which include addresses.

Although HMRC hold information on registered company addresses, companies normally operate in many locations and it is not possible to split each company's tax liability between their activity in different geographical areas. Furthermore, corporation tax is charged on total profits of a company, including income received from abroad, and a company may surrender tax losses to another company in the same group anywhere in the United Kingdom.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* location and *(b)* cost was of each publicly funded foreign visit that Mr. Paul Sanderson, Director of Data Strategy at the Valuation Office Agency, has undertaken since May 1997. [60102]

Dawn Primarolo: The VOA's records are not maintained in such a way as to enable detailed information relating to particular visits to be extracted. All overseas travel on official business is undertaken in accordance with the Civil Service Code.

VAT Registration

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the adequacy of staff resources in HM Revenue and Customs to process VAT registration applications. [73179]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs regularly review their staffing requirements at their registration centres, as well as developing new working practices to improve productive capacity and the quality of service they provide to the public.

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many complaints *(a)* he and *(b)* HM Revenue and Customs have received about the time taken to process VAT registration applications since 1 March 2006. [73180]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs estimate that around 170 complaints about the time taken to process VAT registration applications were received between 1 March 2006 and 19 May 2006.

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what target HM Revenue and Customs have set for the time taken to process VAT registration applications. [73181]

Dawn Primarolo: Revenue and Customs aim to process complete and accurate registration applications within 21 days following receipt, although in cases where the application is incomplete and additional information is required, processing times can be longer.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Bangladesh

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make

representations to the Government of Bangladesh on its treatment of religious minorities; and whether she is monitoring the performance of Jamaat-e-Islami (JEI) and Isalmi Oikya Jote (IDJ) within the Government of Bangladesh. [72517]

Dr. Howells: The persecution of religious and ethnic minorities including the Ahmadiyyas, Hindus, Christians and indigenous groups is a serious issue in Bangladesh. Our High Commission in Dhaka is actively engaged in promoting human rights in Bangladesh, raises human rights issues with the Government of Bangladesh on a regular basis, and provides funding to non-governmental organisations for human rights programmes. We take all available opportunities to underline the UK's commitment to support human rights in Bangladesh during discussions with senior Government representatives, human rights campaigners and representatives of religious and ethnic minorities, and will continue to do so. During a visit to Bangladesh in November 2005, I underlined the UK's commitment to support human rights in Bangladesh during discussions with senior Government representatives, human rights campaigners and representatives of religious and ethnic minorities. We shall continue to seek out opportunities to raise our concerns.

We take a close a close interest in Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote and maintain a constructive dialogue with them and all other Bangladeshi parties that participate in the democratic process. We continue to urge the Government and the opposition to engage in constructive dialogue on the key steps to ensure a level playing field, and free and fair and peaceful elections in January 2007 with full participation. We believe that a healthy democracy, improved human rights and a reduction in corruption offer the best route to combating extremism in Bangladesh.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make representations to the Government of Bangladesh on meeting its obligations under the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord. [72518]

Dr. Howells: A team of EU diplomats visited the Chittagong Hill Tracts in November 2005. Our High Commission in Dhaka led the visit as EU presidency. The team's broad conclusion on this specific subject was that the Land Disputes Resolution Commission was not operating at a level necessary to facilitate effective implementation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord. Problems included the complex procedures for lodging claims. The team found that the Commission was not receiving many cases for adjudication and of these few were being concluded. Local confidence in the Commission was low.

Following the team's visit, the British High Commissioner in Dhaka, as EU presidency, wrote to the Government of Bangladesh on citing the urgent need to improve implementation of the Peace Accord, including the operation of the Land Disputes Resolution Commission. The subject of the Peace Accord was subsequently raised during an EU troika visit at the start of 2006 and at the recent EC-Bangladesh Joint Commission

A member of the British High Commission in Dhaka has just returned from a visit to the Chittagong Hill Tracts. I have asked officials to inform my hon. Friend separately of the findings of that visit.

British Passport Holders

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British passport holders she estimates live overseas; and if she will list the 10 countries where most British overseas passport holders live. [72385]

Dr. Howells: We estimate that the number of British passport holders who live overseas is approximately 4.5 million. This is based on the fact that we issue approximately 450,000 passports each year through our 104 issuing posts and, as a passport lasts for 10 years, we have multiplied this figure by 10 to arrive at our estimate. This figure is different from our estimate that there are approximately 13.1 million British Nationals (BNs) living overseas, based on estimates from each country received in our Consular Annual Return. The difference, 8.6 million, is the number of BNs who we estimate do not hold a British passport.

The top 10 issuing posts are in the following countries:

Country	*2004-05 passports issued*
Hong Kong	79,881
Australia	61,549
USA	52,746
Canada	23,263
New Zealand	21,590
France	20,624
Spain	19,500
Germany	18,145
South Africa	17,464
Ireland	10,893

Charles Munyaneza

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 769W, on Charles Munyaneza, what progress has been made in the investigation of allegations against Mr. Munyaneza. [72658]

Dr. Howells: Officials from the Home Office Immigration and Nationality Directorate War Crimes Unit are investigating the allegations against Mr. Munyaneza. Once the facts are fully established, consideration will be given to the appropriate course of action. We would not wish anyone suspected of genocide in Rwanda to enjoy impunity in the UK.

China

Mr. Pope: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much the Government have allocated for a British pavilion at the Shanghai Expo 2010; and from what budgets such funding will come. [72406]

Dr. Howells: We are considering the Chinese Government's formal invitation to participate in the Shanghai Expo 2010. As part of that process we are looking at how UK participation might be funded and we are discussing this with a wide range of possible stakeholders including Government Departments, other parts of the public sector, and many private sector companies.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what response the UK Government have made to the Chinese government's undertaking to the UN Human Rights Council; how the proposals made are to be monitored; what the timescale is for their implementation; what assessment she has made of the likely impact of their implementation on Tibetans; and if she will make a statement. [72962]

Dr. Howells: China made voluntary pledges on human rights prior to its election to the UN Human Rights Council (HRC). The HRC is mandated within one year of its first session to set up a system of 'universal periodic review' to assess the fulfilment by each state of its human rights obligations and commitments. The detail of this system of review is not yet determined. However, the Government will expect every member of the HRC, including China, to act fully in accordance with the high standards set by the UN General Assembly resolution which established the HRC, and to take very seriously the responsibility that they will have for the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide. We will continue to look for appropriate opportunities to raise our concerns about human rights abuses in China and Tibet with the Chinese authorities.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government has made representations to the Chinese government to disclose the whereabouts of Gendun Choekyi Nyima; and if she will make a statement. [72964]

Dr. Howells: The Government last raised the case of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima at the last rounds of the UK- and EU-China Dialogues in June 2005 and October 2005. We requested that the Chinese authorities allow a private visit to him by an agreed international observer, and provide information on his religious instruction. Officials from our Embassy in Beijing, on a visit to Tibet with the Foreign Affairs Committee in May 2006, requested information on the whereabouts of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima from the Tibetan Autonomous Region local government. We will continue to raise this case in future contacts with the Chinese government.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what her most recent assessment is of *(a)* the situation and *(b)* stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and if she will make a statement. [72809]

Dr. Howells: The security situation remains fragile in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Civilians continue to suffer abuses by armed groups, including ill disciplined elements within the Congolese army (FARDC).

The UN peacekeeping mission (MONUC) continues to conduct operations to disarm militias and to disrupt the activities of foreign armed groups. We commend the combined efforts of MONUC and the FARDC which resulted in the detention of two prominent militia leaders, Kyunga Matanga and Innocent Kahina, in the last week. We continue to urge regional governments to work together to disarm these groups.

The DRC peace process remains a UK priority and we are committed to promoting forthcoming democratic elections and encouraging the new government to take an inclusive and representative approach.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans she has to visit the Democratic Republic of the Congo. [72810]

Dr. Howells: Foreign engagements for my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and other Ministers are kept under constant review. It is not our practice to announce such visits until they are firm. Because of the unpredictable nature of world events, final decisions on overseas visits are often not possible until very shortly before the day of travel.

Departmental Staff

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what date Mr Mockbul Ali *(a)* left the Department in 2005 and *(b)* was re-appointed to her Department; and in what capacity he was re-employed. [72418]

Dr. Howells: It is not Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) policy to comment publicly on individual members of staff. Appointments to the FCO are made in accordance with the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code. Information on the code can be found at the following website: www.civilservicecommissioners.gov.uk.

EU Finance

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the value was of each of the fortnightly transfer payments made into the budgets of the institutions of the European Union in 2005. [66128]

Ed Balls: I have been asked to reply.

The figure for the UK's gross contribution, after taking account of the abatement, to the EC Budget in 2005 is shown in Table 3 (page 46) of the "European Community Finances" White Paper which was laid before Parliament earlier today (Cm 6770). The

individual payments which the UK made twice per month to the EC Budget in 2005 sum to this figure.

EU-Morocco Agreement

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what her voting intentions are at the European Council on the EU-Morocco Agreement; what assessment she has made of the *(a)* wishes of the Saharawi people and *(b)* the financial benefits to the Moroccan Army relating to the agreement; and if she will make a statement. [73076]

Dr. Howells: The UK will vote in favour of the EU-Morocco Fisheries Partnership Agreement.

I refer the hon. Member to the replies given to him by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Bradshaw) on 2 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1315W, and 4 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1771W.

European Entitlement Card

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether it is her Department's policy to support the introduction of a European entitlement card. [71875]

Mr. Hoon: There are at present no proposals before Council for the introduction of a European entitlement card.

European Union

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will list policy areas in which the Government are involved in discussions about *(a)* the extension of European Union competences and *(b)* the removal of the UK's veto. [72703]

Mr. Hoon: There are no discussions of formal proposals under way about the extension of EU competencies or the removal of the UK's veto.

Information Technology

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the *(a)* originally estimated, *(b)* most recently estimated and *(c)* outturn cost was in each of the five largest information technology contracts agreed with outside suppliers over the last five years. [71790]

Mr. Hoon: The information requested is provided in the table.

Contract	Original estimate	Most recent estimate	£ million Outturn
Future Firecrest—Hewlett Packard	183.5	187.5	[1,2]21 .3
Prism—Cap Gemini Ernst and Young	53.1	78	[1,2]58.4
Focus—Fujitsu Consulting	10.5	[3]—	7.5
FCO Website Internet Project—Logica CMG	6.5	12.2	[1,2]11.7
Biometric Passports—3M UK Plc	6.5	6.5	[1]—

[1] Not yet known.
[2] Spent so far.
[3] Contract ended March 2003.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government have been consulted on proposed reform of police and paramilitaries in Baghdad; what this proposed reform comprises; and if she will make a statement. [72965]

Dr. Howells: The UK takes a close interest in all efforts to reform the police in Iraq. We are aware of the intent by the Iraqi government to reform police structures in Baghdad and we will engage with them on this as their plans develop.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what response the Government have made to the statement by Iraqi Interior Minister Bayan Jabr that the Facility Protection Service set up by the Americans to guard official buildings was responsible for killings; and if she will make a statement. [72966]

Dr. Howells: We are aware of allegations of sectarian and criminal abuses being carried out by various parts of the Iraqi security forces, including the Facilities Protection Service. We condemn any acts of abuse and we have raised our concerns with the Iraqi Authorities at the highest levels.

Israel

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment her Department has made of the compatibility of Israel's Nationality and Entry into Israel Law (Temporary Order) 2003 with obligations not to discriminate under the human rights clauses of the Israel-EU Trade Association Agreement. [73071]

Dr. Howells: We have concerns that Israel's Nationality and Entry into Israel Law (Temporary Order) 2003 will continue to have a detrimental effect on the right to family life for Israeli-Arabs. We will be raising our concerns with the Israeli Government at the next appropriate opportunity.

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the recent

ruling of the Israeli Supreme Court in relation to the Nationality and Entry into Israel Law (Temporary Order) 2003 will be considered by the EU authorities as part of the human rights monitoring of the EU-Israel Trade Association Agreement. [73077]

Dr. Howells: Human rights, including minority rights, will be discussed at the EU-Israel Working Group on Human Rights which will meet in June 2006.

Leased Military Bases

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 9 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 196W, on RAF Wideawake, (1) how many military bases leased to the US Administration worldwide by the UK *(a)* are and *(b)* are not subject to rent or charges; [71472]

(2) if she will list the UK military bases worldwide which are leased to the military of other countries for which the UK *(a)* collects and *(b)* does not collect rent or charges. [71473]

Mr. Watson: I have been asked to reply.

The Ministry of Defence does not lease UK military bases worldwide to any other country. The subject of rent charged does not therefore apply.

However, the US Government uses the Ascension Islands under the terms of the Bahamas Agreement. They also use the island of Diego Garcia under the terms of Exchanges of Notes in 1966 and 1976.

The presence of the United States Visiting Forces in the UK is governed by the NATO Status of Forces Agreement 1951 and additional confidential arrangements.

Military Technology (Belarus/Iran)

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether she has received representations regarding the possible sale of Russian military technology by Belarus to Iran; and if she will make a statement. [69196]

Dr. Howells: No representations have been received on the possible sale of Russian military technology by Belarus to Iran. The Government take a close interest in jail reports of arms transfers to and from countries whose current activities give rise to issues of potential concern and monitors the situation closely.

Miza Tahir Hussain

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make representations to the authorities in Pakistan to commute the death sentence on Mr. Miza Tahir Hussain; and if she will make a statement. [68935]

Dr. Howells: The Government are opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances, and it is our policy to always make representations against the use of the death penalty and its imposition on British nationals at whatever stage and level is judged appropriate.

We have made a number of high level representations to the Pakistani Government on behalf of Mr. Hussain, at both senior official and Ministerial level. On behalf of my right. hon. Friend the Prime Minister and the whole Government, my right. hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has written to President Musharraf to request that he commute Mr. Hussain's death sentence to an appropriate term of imprisonment.

In addition to these representations, Consular staff both in Pakistan and in London continue to do all they can to support Mr. Hussain. Staff at the our High Commission in Islamabad visit him regularly, most recently on 17 May 2006, and have remained in close contact with Mr. Hussain's family. Staff in London have also followed the case closely and have been in contact with Mr. Hussain's family here.

We will continue to offer our full support to Mr. Hussain and his family. We very much hope our representations will be successful.

Pensions

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many and what percentage of staff in her Department are making additional voluntary contributions to their pension. [73034]

Mr. Hoon: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office have 3 per cent. of staff making additional voluntary contributions per month: 193 officers out of a headcount of 6,117. The following is a breakdown of the different schemes:

	Number
Equitable Life	52
Scottish Widows	116
Standard Life	25
Total	193

Portland PR

Mr. Anthony Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what meetings officials in her Department have had with representatives of the public relations company Portland PR; what contracts Portland PR has with her Department and agencies for which she has responsibility; and what the nature of the contract is in each case. [70053]

Mr. Hoon: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not maintain a central list of such meetings. Civil servants meet many people as part of the process of policy development and business delivery. All such meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Service Code and Guidance for Civil Servants on contacts with lobbyists and people outside Government.

The FCO has no current contracts with Portland PR.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's employer contribution rates to the principal civil service pension scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [62016]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to him by my hon. Friend the then Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy) on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1030-31W.

Lebanon

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions she has had with her US counterpart regarding the US proposal to freeze the assets of those involved in the 2005 assassination of the former Lebanese Prime Minister, Rafiq Hariri; and if she will make a statement. [69178]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary expects to continue the close co-ordination with the US on all aspects of our Lebanon policy. This includes continued discussions, at ministerial and official level on this issue.

UN Security Council resolution 1636 of October 2005 requires that all States shall freeze all funds, financial assets and economic resources owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by individuals designated by the UN International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIIC) or by the Government of Lebanon as suspected of involvement in the assassination of Mr. Hariri. Neither UNIIIC nor the Government of Lebanon has yet requested such action.

Russian Orchestras

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of the cost of visas and work permits for visiting orchestras from Russia; and if she will make a statement. [72172]

Dr. Howells: Visiting orchestras, from Russia, or from elsewhere, may qualify for group multiple entry work permits. Such permits, issued by Work Permits UK, cost £153 per group application and can be issued for a minimum of six months and a maximum of one year. If such a work permit were obtained, each individual would have to apply for entry clearance as a work permit holder. Visas would be issued in line with the validity of the work permit and would therefore cover multiple trips to the UK. The current fee for such a visa is £85.

UKvisas and Work Permits UK are mandated by HM Treasury guidelines to recover their costs without burdening the UK taxpayer. The visa application fee for each category of entry clearance, set in Sterling and usually payable in local currency, is the same, wherever in the world an individual applies.

Sickness Absence

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many staff in her Department have had *(a)* five or more, *(b)* four, *(c)* three and *(d)* two periods of sick leave of less than five days in each of the last three years. [73030]

Mr. Hoon: In February 2005 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office implemented new arrangements for recording sickness absence. Staff, both in the UK and overseas, now record sick leave absences electronically. While the electronic system was being rolled out during financial year (FY) 2005-06, there may have an element of under reporting. This may account for the significant differences between sickness absences in FY's 2003-04, 2004-05 and those in FY 2005-06. We strongly encourage staff to use the new system and are working on measures to improve the accuracy of the existing data.

	Number
FY 2003-04	
Total number of staff having five or more periods of sick leave of less than five days within the given year	231
Four periods of sick absence	153
Three periods of sick absence	288
Two periods of sick absence	598
FY 2004-05	
Total number of staff having five or more periods of sick leave of less thin five days within the given year	211
Four periods of sick absence	164
Three periods of sick absence	248
Two periods of sick absence	512
FY 2005-06	
Total number of staff having five or more periods of sick leave of less than five days within the given year	153
Four periods of sick absence	94
Three periods of sick absence	161
Two periods of sick absence	343

UN Compensation Committee

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much has been paid to the Government by the United Nations Compensation Committee for distribution to claimants; how much more is expected to be paid to the Government for disbursement to claimants; how many UK claimants *(a)* have and *(b)* after including subsequent payments which are due will have received disbursements from the UK Government in excess of

(i) £500,000, (ii) £1 million, (iii) £2 million, (iv) £5 million, (v) £10 million, (vi) £20 million and (vii) £50 million; whether any of the money has been disbursed to (A) the Government itself and (B) agencies of the Government; and if she will make a statement. [72971]

Dr. Howells: To date the United Nations Compensation Committee (UNCC) has made available the sum of US $427,534,014.57 to the Government for payment to UK claimants.

The sum of US $1,036,663.11 in compensation awards remains to be received by the Government from the UNCC for payment to approximately 50 UK claimants.

Nearly 5,000 UK claimants have so far received disbursements of varying amounts from the Government. A breakdown of these figures is not held centrally, and the figures could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The Government have not received any payments itself from the UNCC and nor have any of its agencies.

Vehicle Sharing

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what incentives her Department offers to encourage staff to share vehicles when travelling to work. [73033]

Mr. Hoon: At present the Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not offer any direct incentives to staff to encourage them to share vehicles. However, we do apply policies which contribute to staff using more sustainable methods of transport:

we limit staff parking in the Main Building in London to those who work unsocial hours and those with a disability. The majority of our staff in London use public transport;

we provide cycle racks and changing facilities, with about 220 staff in the UK currently cycling to work;

we currently offer staff an advance of salary to purchase a bicycle for home to office journeys and are looking into upgrading this to a salary sacrifice scheme, enabling staff to obtain cycles at a reduced cost;

with the support of the Civil Service Travel Group, we are launching a campaign on 5 June, World Environment Day, which among other things will highlight to staff the environmental impact of their travel choices;

we provide a minibus service for junior members of staff living in Milton Keynes and Northampton to our rural site in Hanslope Park in Buckinghamshire as only a very limited public transport service is available to the site;

all taxi journeys out of the Hanslope Park site are shared, where it is operationally possible to do so;

we are developing a Travel Plan which will be aimed at promoting sustainable modes of travel among our staff with a particular focus on car sharing;

within our flexible working policy we encourage staff to work from home thereby reducing the number of journeys;

we encourage the use of video conferencing facilities to limit non-essential travel.

Overseas, travel policy is devolved to posts. Examples of good practice are the enhancement of bicycle travel allowance to encourage people to use bicycles rather than cars, and encourage staff to walk to meetings and to share taxis where possible.

HEALTH

Alzheimer's Disease

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate she has made of how many people have Alzheimer's disease, broken down by *(a)* strategic health authority and *(b)* primary care trust; what forecast she has made of the number of new cases each year and incidence over the next (i) 20 and (ii) 30 years; and what estimate she has made of the incidence in other EU countries; [71450]

(2) what assessment she has made of the total cost of *(a)* treating and *(b)* caring for people with Alzheimer's disease; and what forecast she has made of the future trends of this figure. [71451]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: No assessment has been undertaken by the Department about the total cost and future trends of treating and caring for people with Alzheimer's disease.

Dementia currently affects over 750,000 people in the United Kingdom (UK). It is estimated that by 2026 there will be 840,000 people with dementia in the UK, rising to 1.2 million by 2050. The Department has not made such an estimate of incidence of Alzheimer's disease in other European Union countries.

Information on the number of people with Alzheimer's disease, broken down by strategic health authority (SHA) and primary care trust (PCT) is not available but information on the number of people in England admitted to hospital where Alzheimer's disease was a diagnosis in SHA and PCTs is shown in the table.

Count of patients admitted to hospital with Alzheimer's disease as a diagnosis by SHA and PCT—Data for all national health service hospitals in England, data years 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05

	Data year			
	2002-03	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*Total*
SHA total patients	19,442	21,575	24,253	65,270
PCT total patients	19,442	21,575	24,253	65,270

Notes:
ICD—10 codes used: G30 Alzheimer's disease (as provided by Data Standards, Connecting for Health)
FCEs—finished consultant episodes
All diagnoses count of episodes:
These figures represent a count of all FCEs where the diagnosis was mentioned in any of the 14 (seven prior to 2002-03) diagnosis fields in a HES record.
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), The Information Centre for health and social care

Autism

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children in *(a)* Torbay and *(b)* England are diagnosed with autism. [72020]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The number of finished consultant episodes[1] involving a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorders, for children aged up to 15 in 2004-05, in Torbay primary care trust (PCT) was 83, and in England was 5,888.

Data for England is for all national health service hospitals. Data for Torbay shows figures for children treated by Torbay PCT. The figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.

[1] A finished consultant episode is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider.

Bone Marrow Donation

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the merits of raising the upper age limit for bone marrow donation; and what plans she has to encourage UK registries to reach a consensus on this matter. [73355]

Caroline Flint: NHS Blood and Transplant is currently considering this issue with the Anthony Nolan Trust and the Welsh Blood Service.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps she takes to monitor the number of people from ethnic minority backgrounds donating bone marrow; [73356]

(2) what plans she has to promote bone marrow donation *(a)* within schools and *(b)* to people from ethnic minority backgrounds; and if she will make a statement. [73357]

Caroline Flint: The NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) is responsible for managing the British Bone Marrow Registry (BBMR). The ethnicity of people joining the BBMR is monitored by NHSBT.

The NHSBT is looking into developing a school pack for 16 to 18-year-olds. The pack would be designed to promote all donation opportunities within NHSBT, for example blood, bone marrow, organs, tissues and cord blood. NHSBTs strategy over the coming year is to maintain the BBMR at its current size and focus their recruitment activity towards under represented ethnic groups.

Breast Cancer (Shrewsbury and Atcham)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were diagnosed with breast cancer in Shrewsbury and Atcham in 2005. [72521]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 24 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many people were diagnosed with breast cancer in Shrewsbury and Atcham in 2005.(72521)

The most recent available figures for newly diagnosed cases of cancer registered in England are the year 2003. There were 67 cases of breast cancer diagnosed in Shrewsbury and Atcham county district in 2003.

Cancelled Appointments

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in the Hull and East Yorkshire Hospital NHS Trust area had their appointments cancelled by the trust *(a)* once, *(b)* twice, *(c)* three and *(d)* more than three times in the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [73580]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time was for an appointment with the child and adolescent mental health service in each primary care trust area in 2005-06. [72800]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The requested information is not collected centrally. The child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) mapping exercise for 2004 found that just over 50 per cent. of new cases were seen within four weeks, an improvement on the 24 per cent. of new cases in 2002. Similarly, the number of cases waiting over 13 weeks has reduced from just over 50 per cent. to just over 30 per cent.

Children's Wards

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Government are taking to improve the provision and quality of care in children's wards in England; and if she will make a statement. [71708]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The national service framework (NSF) for children, young people and maternity services, copies of which are available in the Library, includes a standard on hospital care for children. We expect all hospitals providing services to children to implement these standards, and to consider good practice examples included in the Department's database of emerging practice.

The Healthcare Commission, which is required to pay particular attention to the need to safeguard and promote the rights and welfare of children and the effectiveness of measures taken to do so, is currently concluding an improvement review to assess the quality of healthcare for children in hospital, based on elements of the NSF hospital standard. The NSF is available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/childrensnsf/.

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will revise the minimum requirement for care homes and nursing homes to have one announced and one unannounced visit by the Commission for Social Care Inspection per year, so as to require all visits to be unannounced; and if she will make a statement. [71187]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: On 2 March 2006, my hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham, Hodge Hill (Mr. Byrne) announced changes, effective from 1 April 2006, to the Commission for Social Care Inspection (Fees and Frequency of Inspections) Regulations, which govern inspections by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI).

The new regulations permit the CSCI to inspect any adult social care service at any time, as long as every service is inspected at least once in three years. In the past, CSCI was required to inspect adult services at least twice a year (less frequently for some services). The changes will enable CSCI to work more efficiently, by focusing its efforts on services that need attention, while a small number of the very best adult services will notice a longer period between their inspections. There will be more unannounced inspections and more focus on the experiences of people using the services.

There will be no change to the frequency of inspection of children's services.

Connecting for Health Computer System

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated cost was of the Connecting for Health computer system in each primary care trust. [72024]

Caroline Flint: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 17 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1114W.

Departmental Responsibilities

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the responsibilities which her Department has lost since 1997; what the *(a)* date and *(b)* destination Department was in each case; what responsibilities the Department has taken on since 1997; and what the (i) date and (ii) source Department was in each case. [71133]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* Ministerial responsibilities are set out in the "List of Ministerial Responsibilities", which is updated regularly. A revised version will be published shortly. Copies of previous versions are available in the Library.

Disabled People (Assessments)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* maximum and *(b)* average amount of time was that a person with a disability had to wait to be assessed for assistance from social services in Sefton in the last two years. [72185]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Information on the maximum and average amount of time that a person with a disability had to wait is not collected centrally.

It is for local social services departments to prioritise assessments for people with disabilities, based on need.

Elderly Mental Infirm Patients

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many homes registered for elderly mental infirm patients there are in England. [69935]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I understand from the Chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection that, as at 23 March 2006, the latest available figures, the number of care homes registered for older people with mental illness was 1,752.

Ex-service Personnel

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the NHS provides *(a)* treatment and *(b)* resources specifically for ex-service personnel following injury or illness while serving in the armed forces. [53840]

Caroline Flint [*holding answer 27 February 2006*]: The national health service is responsible for the medical care of ex-service personnel, provided the individual is entitled to residency in the United Kingdom, on the same basis as any other member of the public.

Guidance issued by the Department in 2004 states that for those leaving the armed services with significant or debilitating illness or injury, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) should engage with the relevant primary care trust to ensure a seamless transfer of care between that managed by the MOD and that to be provided by the NHS.

The full text of the guidance 'Health Service Guidance covering Arrangements between the Ministry of Defence and the NHS' is available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/37/68/04113768.pdf.

General Practitioners

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioner surgeries in (a) England and (b) Hackney, North and Stoke Newington are operating appointment booking systems by which appointments may only be booked a certain maximum time in advance. [69200]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department is continuing to work with strategic health authorities to get primary care trusts (PCTs) to ensure their general practices offer patients flexible as well as fast access.

In support of this aim, the Department collects information each month from PCTs on the

appointment arrangements operated by their practices. In April 2006, there were 20 practices nationally whose PCTs reported that they do not allow patients to book more than two days in advance. A further 126 practices did not have any appointment system in place.

Hackney, North and Stoke Newington is served by City and Hackney PCT and Haringey PCT. The former reported one practice and the latter two practices without appointment systems. Otherwise, both PCTs reported that their practices allow patients to book ahead.

A new independent national patient experience survey will be introduced in 2006-07 which will incentivise practices making accessing a general practitioner easier, with rewards linked directly with patients' experiences of how their practice is improving.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the operation and regulation of general practitioner out-of-hours services. [71550]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 17 May 2006]:* The Department's aim is to ensure that all patients can be assured of high quality, responsive and consistent out-of-hours service wherever they live. We have put in place quality requirements, which set minimum standards for the delivery of out-of-hours care. Primary care trusts and strategic health authorities are responsible for assessing the performance of out-of-hours providers against the quality requirements. The requirements are available at the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/outofhours.

The National Audit Office (NAO) report "The Provision of Out-of-Hours care in England" published on 5 May found that 80 per cent. of patients were satisfied with the services provided but that there was room for improvement. We are working with the NAO to bring performance of all primary care trusts up to the levels of the best.

Hospital Appointments

Andrew George [*holding answer 15 May 2006*]: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 8 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 63-64W on hospital appointments, what other systems send messages through the care record spine; how the costs associated with the spine are accounted for; and what the *(a)* set-up costs and *(b)* annual running costs of the spine are. [70972]

Caroline Flint: The spine is the colloquial name given to the national database of key information about patients' health and care. It forms the core of the national health service care records service. It also supports other key programmes of the national programme for information technology, such as choose and book the electronic prescriptions service (EPS), and general practitioner (GP) to GP record transfer, each of them using the spine's messaging capabilities as part of their own services.

Choose and book daily registers in excess of 150,000 message transactions from almost 36,000 referring clinicians, and over 360,000 bookings have been made to date. Nearly 1.2 million prescriptions have already been processed through EPS. Almost 400 general practices are currently generating electronic prescription messages and over 800 general practices have had their systems upgraded in preparation for going live. About 1,500 pharmacies have now had their systems upgraded to enable them to receive electronic prescription messages.

The spine has a number of applications, including:

personal demographics service (PDS), which holds nationally demographic information for every patient covered by the NHS in England, accessible through local systems, and is currently processing message transactions at a rate of over nine million per month;

spine directory services, which holds reference data such as users and locations. 220,000 users are now registered; almost 45,000 currently access the system on any given day;

access control framework, which registers and authenticates users, including patients, and provides a single log-in and a record of each professional accessing a NHS care record;

transaction messaging system, which processes and routes data messages, for example, from a GP to a hospital or from one GP to another.

These four elements went live on time and to budget in July 2004 to support choose and book.

Other planned applications are:

secondary uses service (SUS), providing the NHS with high quality data to enable investigation of trends and emerging health needs which can inform public health policy. The data extracted will provide information to support performance improvement and assessment, clinical audit and governance, monitoring and benchmarking, surveillance, research and planning;

personal spine information service (PSIS), providing personal health information for a patient, for example, drug allergies, details of operations and/or conditions, medication history, pathology, radiology and other results, as well as a summary of contacts with care providers;

clinical spine application (CSA), allowing patient information on the spine to be viewed on a personal computer; users will be able to view and update patient information.

The first stage of SUS went live in June 2005 to support payment by results, and is already processing around half a million message transactions a month. PSIS and CSA are due for piloting in 2007, with rollout expected in early 2008.

Picture archiving and communications (PACS) implementations in 2007 include plans to integrate to elements of the spine such as PDS. Currently there are 31 live national programme PACS systems, with over 27 million images stored.

A total of 5,647 GP systems, 253 pharmacy systems, and over 100 patient administrations systems are currently linked to and regularly using the spine. These systems have already achieved compliance, and around 70 or so systems are in test at various development stages across the programme. Interface standards are made available to all suppliers, as well as published more widely. The standards have been developed to reflect internationally-recognised standards, and in conjunction with the programme's major suppliers.

Use of the spine will continue to develop over the life of the programme to deliver the full set of planned patient benefits and clinical improvements to the NHS.

Costs associated with the spine are accounted for by the NHS Connecting for Health agency of the

Department which is responsible for delivering the programme and for managing programme contracts. Set-up (capital) costs are incurred in phases as functionality is added to the spine through staged software releases over the implementation period. They are expected to total £335 million on completion. The ongoing service (revenue) costs average around £45 million a year, although this falls in a range between £30 to £60 million in any particular year. These sums are in line with the contracted value of the work concerned, and represent an investment of roughly one pound per NHS patient per year over the life of the contract.

Independent Treatment Centres

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the *(a)* cost-effectiveness and *(b)* quality of patient care in independent sector treatment centres. [70108]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Value for money has been ensured by running a robust and competitive procurement process, and by benchmarking procedure prices between contracts and comparing them with the national health service equivalent cost and the prices paid by the NHS to the independent sector under spot purchase arrangements.

The National Centre for Health Outcomes Development (NCHOD) published a preliminary report on four independent sector treatment centre schemes in October 2005. The NCHOD audit is based on some of the 26 key performance indicators that independent sector providers are contractually obliged to collect in order to monitor clinical quality, patient experience, and productivity of services. The preliminary report is available at the NCHOD's website at www.nchod.nhs.uk. A further report is expected later this year, In addition, as announced by the Secretary of State on 26 April, the Healthcare Commission will be undertaking an audit of independent sector treatment centres.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* complication and *(b)* failure rates are for orthopaedic operations at (i) each independent treatment centre (ITC) and (ii) the NHS hospital closest to each ITC. [70159]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested relating to national health service hospitals is not collected centrally.

Information is collected on the number of untoward incidents at independent sector treatment centres, but the data is not exclusive to complications arising from surgery.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* contract value and *(b)* location is of each of the independent treatment centre programmes in the second wave. [70160]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We are in the process of a commercial procurement being conducted according to European Union procurement law, and as such we cannot release the value of individual schemes as they are commercially sensitive. The total value of activities procured in phase two is expected to be £550 million.

Invitations to negotiate (ITNs) have been issued for 12 schemes for elective procedures. These are in the following areas:

Northumberland, Tyne and Wear;
Cumbria and Lancashire (two schemes);
Cheshire and Merseyside;
Essex;
West Midland South;
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire;
Greater Manchester (two schemes);
South London;
Hampshire and Isle of Wight; and
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire

We expect a further tranche of ITNs to be issued in the summer.

Negotiations are also under way with bidders on seven regional diagnostics schemes. These are in the following areas:

London;
the North East;
the West Midlands;
the North West;
the South East;
the South West; and
the East

IT Reviews

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the statement from her Department of 10 April 2006 that the national programme for IT is under constant review and audit, with what frequency such reviews and audits are conducted; if she will list the bodies that *(a)* have conducted, *(b)* are conducting and *(c)* plan to conduct such reviews and audits; and if she will place in the Library a list of required actions that have resulted from those reviews and audits conducted. [69654]

Caroline Flint [*holding answer 9 May 2006*]: The national programme has been subject from its inception to the Office of Government Commence (OGC) Gateway process. Gateway reviews have been, and continue to be, undertaken at each of the standard stages throughout the development of every project within the programme, and of its cluster-based deployment activity from initiation to live running. A similar annual and ongoing programme of audit reviews has been and continues to be carried out by the Department's internal auditors. A National Audit Office (NAO) value for money study into choice at the point of referral which reported in January 2005, involved close scrutiny of the work of the national programme and specifically the choose and book programme. The report on a further NAO study into wider aspects of the programme has yet to be published, and this has included an independent review of programme management capability. In addition, the programme's own quality management function undertakes a broad range of reviews and audits of

specific aspects of programme, cluster and supplier activity on an ongoing basis.

A number of independent reviews have been commissioned under contract, including one commissioned from McKinsey to inform the approach before the start of the programme, and from other suppliers to establish the value for the national health service and taxpayer achieved through the contracts and to examine specific aspects such as disaster recovery. In addition, there is ongoing review by transparent discussion with key stakeholder groups including the British Medical Association and through consultation initiated by the care record development board.

OGC Gateway reports and other reports have been provided in confidence in order not to impair the value of the advice they contain and to protect commercial confidentiality. We have no plans to publish the outcome of these reports. Given the number of reviews and audits concerned, extraction of recommendations in each case could be done only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she intends to commission an independent audit of the National programme for IT in the NHS. [71438]

Caroline Flint: The National programme is already the focus of regular and routine audit, scrutiny and review. It has been subject from its inception to the Office of Government Commerce Gateway process. Gateway reviews have been, and continue to be, undertaken at each of the standard stages throughout the development of every component project within the programme, and of its cluster-based deployment activity from initiation through to live running. A similar annual and ongoing programme of audit reviews has been, and continues to be, carried out by the Department's internal auditors.

A National Audit Office (NAO) value for money study into choice at the point of referral, which reported in January 2005, involved close scrutiny of the work of the national programme and specifically the choose and book programme. The report on a further NAO value for money study into wider aspects of the programme has yet to be published, and this has included an independent review of programme management capability.

In addition, the programme's own quality management function undertakes a broad range of reviews and audits of specific aspects of programme, cluster and supplier activity on an ongoing basis.

A number of independent reviews have been commissioned under contract, including one commissioned from McKinsey to inform the approach before the start of the programme, and from other suppliers to establish the value for the national health service and taxpayer achieved through the contracts and to examine specific aspects such as disaster recovery. Ongoing review is also encouraged by transparent discussion with key stakeholder groups including the British Medical Association and through consultation initiated by the care record development board.

We remain confident that the technical architecture of the national programme is appropriate and will enable benefits to be delivered for patients, and value for money for the taxpayer, without further independent scrutiny.

Junior Doctors

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the consequences of the Association of University Teachers action short of a strike on the final qualification of medical students in June 2006; and what arrangements she is making to ensure that NHS junior doctors' posts can be filled on 1 August 2006. [72340]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is a matter for higher education institutions to consider how best they can minimise the adverse effects on students of the current dispute, including making contingency arrangements for exams and assessment.

The dispute will not have a great impact on graduating medical students because their assessments will be conducted by clinical academic staff (including some national health service staff with honorary academic appointments) who, if they belong to a trade association, are normally British Medical Association members.

Postgraduate deans are working closely with their heads of medical schools to monitor the situation.

Long-term (Neurological) Conditions Framework

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the Government are measuring implementation of the national service framework for long-term (neurological) conditions; and what progress has been made in implementation since it was published. [72719]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department is coordinating a range of activity to support national and local implementation of the national service framework (NSF) for long-term neurological conditions. This includes:

working with key national health service, social care, voluntary and independent sector stakeholders, as well as service users and carers, to identify and address key issues in neurological services and the stakeholders' role in implementation;

ensuring that other key delivery programmes, most especially the White Paper "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say" and the long-term conditions strategy help deliver key NSF objectives; and

work to support local delivery, including regional implementation workshops, a web-based getting started pack and self-assessment tool for services through the Care Services Improvement Partnership to provide practical help to local health and social care organisations.

Progress on implementation will be measured in a number of ways, including:

research studies commissioned as part of a national research initiative to underpin implementation of the NSF, to provide baseline data needed to measure the subsequent impact of the NSF;

work to develop a national minimum dataset for long-term neurological conditions;

implementation of clinical indicators developed as part of the better metrics programme;

and

work with the Healthcare Commission and Commission for Social Care Inspection to identify ways of monitoring and inspecting progress.

Long-term Care

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent reports she has considered on the cost of long-term care; and if she will make a statement. [72842]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department welcomed the publication of "Securing Good Care for Older People", the King's Fund review led by Sir Derek Wanless into long-term social care for older people in England.

The report is an important starting point that we need to feed into our work on the 2007 comprehensive spending review. To inform this work we are bringing in external experts. We are delighted that Sir Derek Wanless has agreed to be one of these experts.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Andrew Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what representations she has received on retaining ring-fenced funding for primary care trusts for the provision of myalgic encephalomyelitis support services; and if she will make a statement; [72908]

(2) what steps her Department is taking to support people with myalgic *(a)* encephalomyelitis and *(b)* encephalopathy; [72909]

(3) what funding the Government have allocated to continuing specialist services for myalgic *(a)* encephalomyelitis and *(b)* encephalopathy; and if she will make a statement; [72910]

(4) what advice her Department plans to issue to primary care trusts on funding for specialist services for myalgic *(a)* encephalomyelitis and *(b)* encephalopathy in 2006-07; [72911]

(5) what support her Department provides for patients with myalgic *(a)* encephalomyelitis and *(b)* encephalopathy who are (i) bed and (ii) house bound and unable to attend the newly developed specialist services; and if she will make a statement. [72912]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: People with chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis/encephalopathy (CFS/ME) have access to the full range of health and social services support as outlined in the national service framework for long-term conditions (the NSF). This includes:

Joint health and social care plans that change over time and consider other needs such as housing, transport, benefits, education, careers advice, employment and leisure;

Access to a broad range of services, including rehabilitation, equipment, accommodation and personal care to help people live as independently as possible at home; and

Support to help people to work or take up other vocational opportunities.

The £8.5 million budget to establish new CFS/ME services has supported the development of 13 clinical network co-ordinating centres (CNCCs) and 36 local multidisciplinary teams (LMDTs), as well as 11 specialist children and young people teams across England.

The role of the LMDTs is to lead the development of services within primary and secondary care to support general practitioners and other relevant professionals in the care of the patient. In this respect, LMDTs are expected to develop networks of local domiciliary services, including health education and social services, to support those more severely affected, including those who are housebound and bed bound and are therefore unable to access services.

Funding of CFS/ME services from 2006-07 is included within the resource allocations to primary care trusts (PCTs). PCTs have been informed that this funding would be included within their baseline allocations.

Ministers and departmental officials regularly receive representations seeking dedicated funding for a range of specific diseases and conditions, including CFS/ME. These include a number of questions from Members, which appear in the *Official Report*, for example on 17 May 2006, column 1108W and 6 March 2006, column 1198W.

Midwifery

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) which midwife-led maternity units are *(a)* within a primary care trust, *(b)* within an acute trust, *(c)* within another setting or *(d)* independent; [72757]

(2) which *(a)* primary care trusts, *(b)* acute trusts and *(c)* other NHS bodies have midwife-led maternity units on their premises. [72758]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 23 May 2006]:* This information is not collected centrally.

Neonatal Units (London)

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average occupancy rates were in each London neonatal unit in each of the last three years. [72372]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department does not collect the information in the format requested. Data are for occupancy of neonatal beds and is collected only at trust level rather than at neonatal unit level.

The average daily occupancy rate for neonatal intensive care beds for national health service organisations in London, 2002-03 to 2004-05 is shown in the table.

Strategic health authority name	Organisation	2002-03	2003-04	Percentage 2004-05
North West London	Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	91.6	94.2	100
North West London	Ealing Hospital NHS Trust	54.3	63.8	66.8
North West London	North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	85.4	88.1	97.5
North West London	St. Mary's Hospital NHS Trust	100	98.0	93
North West London	The Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	89.2	84.4	89.5
North West London	The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	65.5	82.2	85.7
North West London	West Middlesex University NHS Trust	60	70.1	62.7
North Central London	Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust—Chase Farm site	65.2	100	100
North Central London	Great Ormond Street Hospital For Children NHS Trust	74.3	81.9	84.5
North Central London	North Middlesex Hospital NHS Trust	47.5	40.2	27.4
North Central London	The Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	86	86.9	86.3
North Central London	University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	72.3	84.1	86.2
North Central London	Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	98.5	98.3	100
North East London	Barking Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust (King George site)	68.5	68.1	71.4
North East London	Barts and The London NHS Trust	70.2	73.3	77.8
North East London	Homerton Hospital NHS Trust	88.4	90.6	87.3
South East London	Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	65.4	52.8	59.8
South East London	Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Trust	70.2	73.6	74.3
South East London	King's College Hospital NHS Trust	92.5	100	100
South East London	Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	85.6	86.6	92.5
South East London	Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	60.6	51.1	73.8
South East London	Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	43.6	48	50.7
South West London	Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust	62.2	57.5	55.1
South West London	Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	63.4	79.8	80.6
South West London	Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust	69.9	72.3	82.7
South West London	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	90.6	90.3	96.9

Source:
Department of Health form KH03

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* neonatal intensive care cots and *(b)* special care cots in London were not being used due to a lack of staff in the latest period for which figures are available. [72373]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to change the number of neonatal nurses in London. [72374]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: It is for the local national health service to ensure that staff numbers are at a sufficient level to meet the needs of the local population.

Neurology

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment her Department has made of the accuracy of diagnosis of hereditary neuropathy with liability to pressure palsies in NHS patients; and what estimate her Department has made of the number of undiagnosed cases; [71182]

(2) what steps she is taking to increase awareness of hereditary neuropathy with liability to pressure palsies in the medical profession; [71183]

(3) what plans she has to change the number of *(a)* consultants and *(b)* nurses qualified to diagnose and treat hereditary neuropathy with liability to pressure palsies; [71184]

(4) what Government support is available to those who are diagnosed with hereditary neuropathy with liability to pressure palsies and their families; and if she will make a statement. [71185]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The detail of the content of curricula for doctors in training and maintaining skills and knowledge are professional matters.

Those most severely affected by neurological disorders, including those that are genetic in origin, have access to the full range of health and social services support as outlined in the national service framework for long-term conditions. This includes:

Joint health and social care plans that change over time and take other needs into account such as housing, transport, benefits, education, careers advice, employment and leisure;

Access to a broad range of services including rehabilitation, equipment, accommodation, personal care to help people live as independently as possible at home; and

Support to help people to work or take up other vocational opportunities.

We have not assessed the accuracy of diagnosis, and cannot practically estimate who carries the defective gene.

We have no plans to develop new clinical specialties in this area. Our efforts are focused on securing an adequate work force—including clinicians, therapists and medical scientists—to meet the current and forecast needs of all patients.

NeuroMuscular Centre

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding has been allocated to the NeuroMuscular Centre at Winsford for the next five years. [72835]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The NeuroMuscular Centre at Winsford is a charity that has not applied for, nor been allocated, any departmental funding.

Non-emergency Treatment

Miss Widdecombe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) on what basis Mr. Edward Atkinson has been told that non-emergency treatment at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, King's Lynn, will not be available to him in the future; what categories of offender are not eligible for non-emergency treatment at Queen Elizabeth Hospital King's Lynn NHS Trust; what measures are in place to ensure Mr. Atkinson receives appropriate treatment; and if she will make a statement; [73264]

(2) how many people serving sentences for *(a)* murder, *(b)* rape and *(c)* grievous bodily harm have been told they may not attend national health service hospitals for non-emergency treatment. [73265]

Andy Burnham: The guidance framework on the withholding of national health service treatment from violent and abusive patients was issued by the Department in 2001 following on from the cross-government zero tolerance campaign introduced in 2000, to tackle violence in the NHS. The guidance highlighted that the withholding of NHS treatment from violent and abusive patients will always be a last resort, but should be an option available to managers and staff working in all NHS trusts, with certain exemptions including those requiring urgent medical treatment or under the age of 16. The guidance made explicit that all NHS trusts develop local policies on withholding treatment from violent and abusive patients in consultation with independent legal advice on the terms and application of such a policy; and trusts must also have in place clear defensible policies and procedures outlining the circumstances where the withholding of treatment is justifiable.

Information is not collected on the number of prisoners who have had NHS treatment withheld as a result of NHS policies on protecting staff from violence and abuse.

Since then the Government created the NHS Security Management Service (NHS SMS) in April 2003. The NHS SMS has launched a comprehensive strategy, which has replaced work previously undertaken under the NHS Zero Tolerance campaign. The NHS SMS strategy places a particular emphasis on the introduction of preventative measures to stop violent incidents from occurring in the first place. In 2004, the NHS SMS issued guidance covering the application of this strategy in the context of tackling the whole issue of non-physical assaults on NHS staff.

The West Norfolk Primary Care Trust is advising Mr. Atkinson's general practitioner so that alternative routes to treatment can be found through the "Patient Choice" agenda.

Osteoporosis

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps she is taking to improve the information and support offered to people with osteoporosis; [69597]

(2) what assessment she has made of the impact the proposals in the White Paper, "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say", will have on *(a)* the management of osteoporosis, *(b)* choice for osteoporosis patients and *(c)* the number of osteoporosis fractures; [69598]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department has not assessed the impact of the White Paper, "Our Health, Our care, Our Say" on osteoporosis services or the number of osteoporotic fractures.

"Our Health, Our care, Our Say" will build on the progress that has already been made in the management of a range of long-term conditions, giving people greater choice and control over the care they receive and ensuring that they are treated sooner, closer to home and earlier in the course of their disease.

PRODIGY guidance which is available at www.prodigy.nhs.uk offers advice on the management of a range of conditions and symptoms, including osteoporosis, that are commonly seen in primary care. The guidance is advisory and has been developed to assist healthcare professionals, together with patients, make decisions about the management of the patient's health.

The Department has also asked the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to produce a clinical guideline on the assessment of risk fracture and prevention of osteoporotic fractures in individuals at high risk.

Osteoporosis can often be prevented by maintaining a healthy lifestyle and, through a range of initiatives, the Department is raising awareness of the importance of regular exercise, a balanced diet, smoking prevention/cessation and a responsible attitude to alcohol consumption in the prevention of a range of conditions, including osteoporosis.

Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals Trust

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department plans to take to safeguard patient care at the Oxford Radcliffe hospitals trust following the prospective job losses. [73345]

Caroline Flint: It is the responsibility of primary care trusts and strategic health authorities to analyse their local situation and develop plans, in liaison with their local national health service trusts and primary care

providers, to deliver high quality NHS services and take action to recruit the appropriate staff required to deliver these services.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will reply to Question 65812 from the hon. Member for Manchester, Withington, on the 'Choose and Book' system, tabled on 20 April 2006. [72070]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: A reply was given on 17 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1094W.

Petitions

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements are in place in her Department for responding to petitions presented in the House and forwarded to her. [72395]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: A ministerial reply is sent in response to all petitions where there are contact details for a lead organisation or individual.

Petitions are then kept for a period of years.

Portland PR

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what meetings officials in her Department have had with representatives of the public relations company Portland PR; what contracts Portland PR has with her Department and agencies for which she has responsibility; and what the nature of the contract is in each case. [65088]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department does not maintain a central list of such meetings. Civil servants meet many people as part of the process of policy development and business delivery. All such meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Service Code and Guidance for civil servants on contacts with lobbyists and people outside Government.

The Department does not have any contracts with Portland PR and does not hold records of contracts let by its agencies.

Section 64 Grants

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the section 64 grants for 2006-07 that have been paid by her Department, broken down by *(a)* recipient and *(b)* the sum paid; and if she will make a statement. [71149]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This information will be available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/section64 at the end of May 2006.

Self-harm

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent estimate she has made of the number of children and young people who self-harm, broken down by *(a)* sex and *(b)* ethnic group. [71248]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Information is not collected in the form requested. In 2002, a survey by the Office for National Statistics of 12,000 five to 15-year-olds found that 1.3 per cent. had tried to self-harm.

Spinal Injuries

Roger Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the impact on NHS costs of ensuring appropriate *(a)* rehabilitation and *(b)* care of spinal cord injured people in specialised settings. [71915]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department has not made an assessment of the impact on national health service costs of ensuring appropriate rehabilitation and care of spinal cord injured people in specialised settings.

The Department does not routinely collect detailed costings for services provided by the NHS for specific conditions. It is the responsibility of primary care trusts to determine the provision and appropriate funding of local services based on the needs of their populations. With regard to specialised services, primary care trusts are expected to collaboratively commission them through their membership of the eight specialised commissioning groups and 26 local specialised commissioning groups covering England.

Student Nurses

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the employment prospects for student nurses graduating in 2006. [73343]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national health service still needs newly qualified nurses to replace those who retire or take career breaks. However, there is now more competition and new staff may not always be able to find the job they want in the location they want and may need to be more flexible.

Strategic health authorities and NHS trusts are working proactively to identify opportunities for newly qualified staff within their workforce plans.

Third Sector Funding

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the review of departmental funding to the third sector has been completed. [72824]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 23 May 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 24 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 967W.

TRANSPORT

Aircraft Safety

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received from *(a)* the Independent Pilots Association and *(b)* the British Airline Pilots Association on potential under-reporting of contaminated air events on UK registered aircraft. [70760]

Gillian Merron: The information is as follows:

(a) The Department checked with IPA who confirmed they had not sent representations. However, they have since written to Sir Roy McNulty, chairman of the CAA, on 12 May 2006, about contaminated air events and the Department has been sent a copy. This letter mentions, among other matters, potential under-reporting.

(b) The Department has useful working contacts with BALPA. Both DFT and BALPA want to develop an authoritative understanding of cabin air quality issues. The Department has therefore commissioned the independent Committee on Toxicity (COT) to conduct a comprehensive evidence review of any health risks in cabin air. The formal COT meeting will be held in public later this year. BALPA has contributed actively to this process.

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what assessment he has made of the impact on human health of exposure to pyrolised synthetic jet engine oils; and in what year the Department first received a representation on this matter; [70761]

(2) what epidemiological surveys have been carried out on the long-term impact of repeated exposure of pilots to chemicals, with particular reference to potential neuropsychological impacts; [70764]

(3) what research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the effects on health of exposure on commercial aircraft to pyrolised synthetic jet engine oils (i) dermally and (ii) via inhalation. [70765]

Gillian Merron: The Department has commissioned the independent Committee on Toxicity (COT) to conduct a comprehensive evidence review of any such health risks in cabin air. The formal COT meeting will be held in public later this year. The Department will be guided by the COT conclusions and recommendations.

It is not possible to state the exact year in which the Department first received representations on this matter, although there is a record of a parliamentary question on 11 December 2001 from Paul Tyler MP, and the issue was covered in the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology into the issue of Air Travel and Health which reported in November 2000. In its evidence to that Committee BALPA said it had raised concerns with the then Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what information is held by the Civil Aviation Authority in relation to contaminated air incidents on British Aerospace BAE 146 aircraft between 28 January and December 2005. [70762]

Gillian Merron: The Civil Aviation Authority has 10 records in relation to incidents between 28 January and December 2005. These records are set out in a table, which has been placed in the Libraries of the House today.

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effect on airline safety of the inhalation by a pilot of the organophosphate tricresyl phosphate; and if he will make a statement. [71819]

Gillian Merron: In 2004 the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) published safety research into fume events that concluded that

'no single component or set of components can be identified which at conceivable concentrations would definitely cause the symptoms reported in cabin air quality incidents'.

But acids were found which could act as irritants, and as a result CAA brought in specific troubleshooting and maintenance actions to minimise the potential for fume events.

Since then the Department has commissioned the independent Committee on Toxicity (COT) to conduct a comprehensive evidence review of toxic risk in cabin air. The formal COT meeting will be held in public later this year. We shall be guided by the COT conclusions and recommendations.

Beverley Integrated Transport Plan

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the East Riding of Yorkshire council will receive confirmation of funding for the Beverley Integrated Transport Plan; and if he will make a statement. [73514]

Gillian Merron: The Department is currently considering East Riding's Business Case for this scheme alongside the Yorkshire and Humber region's advice on its priorities for major transport schemes within the indicative regional funding allocations announced in July 2005. The response is expected to be announced later this year.

British Airports Authority

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what provisions exist for Special Administration in the event that the British Airports Authority (BAA) or its holding company should go into administration or receivership; and what arrangements are in place to ensure that BAA's airports continue to operate in such an eventuality. [73294]

Gillian Merron: There is no provision for Special Administration in the event of any UK airport operator going into administration or receivership. Any such provision could only be introduced by primary legislation. The Government liaise closely with BAA, and other airport operators, to understand their plans for managing major risks such as this.

Buses

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when consultation was *(a)* started and *(b)* completed on the civil enforcement of bus lane contraventions outside London under the Transport Act 2000; and if he will make a statement. [73315]

Gillian Merron: The Department wrote to consultees on 10 July 2002 seeking comments by 6 September 2002 on the draft regulations concerning the arrangements for imposing civil penalty charges for bus lane contraventions, the handling of representations, the procedure for adjudication and the procedure for enforcement when a penalty charge is not paid. A summary of the comments received was published on the DfT website on 15 November 2004.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with bus operators on *(a)* the reduction in services in Huddersfield and Yorkshire and *(b)* the introduction of free transport for the over 60s. [68854]

Gillian Merron: Ministers meet with bus operators on a regular basis and discuss a range of issues. The Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT), the main body representing the bus industry, participates in the Department's Concessionary Fares Working Group along with representatives from local government. There have been no specific discussion with operators in Huddersfield and Yorkshire about services or concessionary travel.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps the Government is taking to improve the skills of bus drivers; and what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on this subject. [68855]

Gillian Merron: Over recent years, the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) has taken forward the task of creating Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) across various sectors of industry. In October 2004 the SSDA awarded a licence to GoSkills, which is now the SSC for passenger transport. GoSkills is taking a leading role in addressing the skills needs of the passenger transport industry, including those of bus drivers.

The Department is providing funding of £0.75 million over the period 2005-06 to 2007-08 in support of Go Skills' work. It works closely with the Department of Education and Skills on these matters.

Government, bus operators and local authorities have been jointly considering the issue of staff recruitment and retention in the industry through a Bus Partnership Forum Task and Finish Group. The forum will shortly be publishing a best practice guide as a result of this work.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average wage is of a bus driver in *(a)* West Yorkshire, *(b)* Leeds, *(c)* Huddersfield and *(d)* London. [69156]

Gillian Merron: The information available is set out as follows.

Average gross hourly pay for bus and coach drivers

	£
Yorkshire and Humberside other than South Yorkshire	6.42
London	10.05

Source:
Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey Autumn 2004

Consultants

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the companies which were paid consultancy fees by his Department in 2005-06; how much each was paid; and what each of the companies was used to accomplish. [69695]

Gillian Merron: Tables providing this information for the central Department and its Executive Agencies have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

The central Department and its Agencies currently have separate accounting systems. This means that it has not been possible in all cases to provide the level of detail requested in relation to actual expenditure. The central Department and the DVLA have only been able to provide this information in relation to committed spend (i.e. orders raised and contracts awarded during the period in question). Figures are based on the latest revised OGC definition of consultancy.

Cycling Proficiency

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will take steps to encourage local authorities to ensure a cycling proficiency scheme is made available in all schools. [73121]

Derek Twigg: We are already doing so.

With the help of over 20 road safety and cycling organisations including ROSPA, the CTC, local authorities and Cycling England, we have developed a new child cycle training standard to replace the old style cycle proficiency test.

To support the new standard we have through our advisory body Cycling England awarded over £1 million to increase the number of accredited trainers and training centres able to teach the new National Standard. Grants and bursaries are available for trainers and training centres to teach the new standards together with a national training helpline and consultancy service for local authorities.

The Department for Transport encourages local authorities to apply for the grants and bursaries available and work with us to improve both the quality of cycle training our children receive and to make it more widely available in schools.

Damages

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport further to his answer of 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 489W, on damages, if he will make a statement on the background to the incidents where no breach of confidentiality would occur. [69541]

Gillian Merron: Details of the damages claim where there is no breach of confidentiality would occur are listed as follows:

	Date	*£*			
HA	16 November 2004	1,350,000	Personal injury Drainage flooding	The claimant who suffered an accident and sustained injuries	Personal injury Drainage flooding - A motorist suffered an accident on a trunk road caused by standing water Settled in line with legal advice
MCA	29 July 2004	550,000	Damages for costs for fix vessel stability	Details withheld due to confidentiality clause	
DSA	2 November 2004	392,000	Personal injury	The individual trainee	Personal injury. A trainee undergoing CBT (Compulsory Basic Training) had an accident that resulted in the individual suffering injuries leading to a paralysis A claim was made against the ATB (Approved Training Body) and DSA.
HA	10 March 2005	250,000	Personal injury, falling tree	The two claimants who suffered accidents and sustained injuries.	Personal injury, falling tree—A tree brought down in a heavy storm fell onto a road hitting 2 cars. Settled in line with legal advice.
MCA	1 April 2005	226,204	Damages to cover costs for vessel survey	Details withheld due to confidentiality clause.	
HA	25 February 2005	140,000	Property Damage tree roots	The owners of the properties concerned.	Property Damage tree roots—HA trees caused subsidence in 2 nearby properties. Settled in line with legal advice.
DVLA	31 March 2005	98,000	Early termination of contract (Planned Maintenance & Helpdesk)	Maintenance Company	Early termination of contract (Planned Maintenance & Helpdesk) Compensation for loss of income due to early curtailment of contract.
MCA	10 May 2005	66,142	Damages for cover costs for vessel survey	Details withheld on confidentiality	
DVLA	31 March 2005	65,000	Early termination of contract (Catering)	Catering Company	Early termination of contract (Catering) Compensation for loss of income due to early curtailment of contract.
HA	15 November 2004	50,000	Fatality Drainage/ flooding	The widow of the driver killed in the accident.	Fatality Drainage/flooding - A motorist lost control after hitting a pool of water on a road and hit a tree. Settled in line with legal advice.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what incentives his Department offers to encourage staff to share vehicles when travelling to work. [73117]

Gillian Merron: Car sharing is one of a number of measures called "Smarter Choices", which the Department and its Executive Agencies are promoting to encourage our staff and the wider population to travel more sustainably.

Through the Local Transport Planning system and other initiatives, we encourage local authorities to set up authority-wide car share schemes and promote car sharing as part of site specific workplace travel plans.

The Highways Agency are implementing workplace travel plans on the strategic road network and piloting the use of dedicated car share lanes.

Initiatives aimed at staff include:

car sharing only parking bays;

promotion of car sharing for business travel;

in-house training courses;

car park management measures that combine intelligent traveller information with Co_2 economy data,

and, with both external and internal parties, examining the development of electronic car sharing tools.

Dredging

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport who pays the cost of dredging *(a)* for a new port development and *(b)* for existing ports. [72577]

Dr. Ladyman: The costs of dredging in ports are met by the harbour authority or terminal operator in the port concerned. In the case of new port developments, if a new authority is being established it will meet the costs of any dredging unless otherwise agreed with another harbour authority.

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Ageny's's policy is on providing information to a court about a defendant. [72917]

Dr. Ladyman: Prior to a court hearing the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency will provide the court with information relating to any current driving endorsements. This is provided to the courts via an electronic printout of the driver record.

Equal Pay

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men are employed in the Department; what the average pay was for (i) women and (ii) men in the Department in *(A)* 1997 and *(B)* 2006; what women's average pay is as a percentage of men's average pay; and how many (1) women and (2) men the Department employed in each of the last five years, broken down by grade. [67781]

Gillian Merron: The Department for Transport was formed in 2002 and consists of a central Department and seven Agencies.

A table has been placed in the Libraries of the House listing the information requested for Department for Transport (Centre). Information with regards to Agencies can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the Civil Service by Department. These include data on the employment of men and women.

Information on the numbers of women and men employed in the Civil Service broken down at 31 December 2005 is available in the Library and on the Civil Service website at:

www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/employment/index.asp

European Maritime Safety Agency

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has seen a draft of the EU Commission White Paper entitled préparer la mobilité de demain; and what his policy is towards an expansion of powers to the European Maritime Safety Agency proposed therein. [72576]

Dr. Ladyman: The European Commission has yet to present this White Paper to the EU member states. The Government supported the establishment of EMSA and is content to see it develop its role where it can enhance the activities of member states to improve maritime safety without usurping the competence and responsibilities of the member states.

Illegal Taxi Drivers

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many illegal taxi drivers he estimates are operating in *(a)* England, *(b)* the North East and *(c)* the Tees Valley; [71086]

(2) how many people have been *(a)* prosecuted for and *(b)* convicted of driving a taxi illegally in (i) England, (ii) the North East and (iii) the Tees Valley in each year since 1997. [71087]

Gillian Merron: The Department has made no estimate of the extent of unlicensed taxi operation either in England as a whole or in particular local areas. The degree of unlicensed operation is best assessed at the local level by local taxi licensing authorities, making use of their local knowledge, as part of their responsibilities for enforcement of the law within their area.

However, relevant data on prosecutions and convictions is held by the Court Proceedings Database of the Office for Criminal Justice Reform. The following tables show the numbers of offenders prosecuted for, and found guilty of, offences under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 (this is wider than just illegal plying for hire) and section 167 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994[1].

[1] Taxis in England (outside London) must be licensed by the relevant local authority under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847. Individuals who attempt to provide a taxi service without being properly licensed normally do so by contravening section 45 of the 1847 Act by illegally plying for hire or section 167 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 by touting for business.

Number of persons proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for offences related to illegal taxi services North East region and England, 1997-2004[1]

	North East		*England*	
	Proceeded against	*Found guilty*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
Statute: Town Police Clauses Act 1847 SS.40-68				
1997	61	50	502	405
1998	47	36	657	574
1999	58	44	570	482
2000	42	29	527	451
2001	11	9	374	312
2002	5	3	416	362
2003	13	9	322	257
2004	24	20	254	215

	North East		*England*	
	Proceeded against	*Found guilty*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
Offence: Touting for hire car service				
Statute: Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 S.167				
1997	—	—	218	166
1998	—	—	214	159
1999	—	—	182	146
2000	—	—	156	127
2001	—	—	178	141
2002	—	—	229	182

	North East		England	
	Proceeded against	Found guilty	Proceeded against	Found guilty
2003	—	—	256	194
2004	—	—	483	311

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis.
Note:
Offence only applies outside London
Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform

It has not been possible to break the data down in such a way as to identify the prosecutions and convictions just in the Tees Valley.

Level Crossings

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many incidents on level crossings there were in each of the last three years; and how many incidents in each year resulted in a fatality. [72467]

Derek Twigg: This information can be found in the annual reports on railway safety published by HMRI which are available from the House Library. The Office of Rail Regulation plans to publish HMRI's annual report on rail safety for 2005 on 12 July 2006.

London Underground

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how long the trial of detector equipment at Canary Wharf underground station will last; and what further trials of detector equipment on the transport infrastructure are planned. [71704]

Derek Twigg: As the Secretary of State said in his written statement to the House of Commons on 16 May 2006, the passenger screening trial at Canary Wharf will last for about four weeks starting on 17 May 2006. We plan to have the trial operational on 20 days throughout that period. A further passenger screening trial at Greenford station and work with detection dogs were also announced on 16 May 2006. These trials will start as soon as practicable after the end of the Canary Wharf trial, with the exact date yet to be fixed. The trial at Greenford, like that at Canary Wharf, is planned to last for 20 days spread over a four week period.

M25

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he plans to re-surface the slip roads on the M25 motorway between junctions 28 and 31; and if he will make a statement. [73314]

Dr. Ladyman: Resurfacing of the M25 junction 28 anticlockwise exit and entry slips roads is planned for mid-June 2006. The M25 junction 28 clockwise exit slip road will also be resurfaced later this financial year.

There is no resurfacing of the other slip roads planned between junctions 29 and 31 as they are still in a safe and serviceable condition.

Milton Keynes South Midlands Growth Area

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what consideration *(a)* his Department and *(b)* Network Rail have given to improving the frequency of services and the infrastructure of the rail network from the Milton Keynes South Midlands growth area to and from the West Midlands region following the projected population increase in the growth area. [72985]

Derek Twigg: Part of the West Coast Main Line Modernisation Project, led by the Department of Transport, will include significant enhancements to the whole route, and in particular, will provide capacity increases at Milton Keynes and Rugby stations. Network Rail aims to finish the work by the end of 2008.

Much work has already been carried out, including, for example, platform extensions, allowing 12 car trains to operate between Northampton, Milton Keynes and London.

The Department for Transport is currently considering the future pattern of train services to be provided over the route, including the new West Midlands franchise, taking account of the impact of the growth area, and expects to consult publicly on its proposals during the course of this summer. The Department has published a progress report on the West Coast Main Line Strategy which sets out the latest position regarding the pattern of inter-city services on the route.

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make it his policy to establish Birmingham International Airport as the main long haul aviation hub for Milton Keynes; and what assessment he has made of the policy outcomes of such a development. [73068]

Gillian Merron: The Government's 'The Future of Air Transport' White Paper supported growth at Birmingham International Airport, identifying the need for a second runway around 2016. Birmingham Airport's recently published draft master plan also proposes an extension to the existing runway, by 2012, which will enable the airport to offer a full network of direct long-haul services.

Ministerial Travel

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on how many occasions *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department have stayed overnight in (i) five-star, (ii) four-star and (iii) three-star hotels in each of the last three years. [69081]

Gillian Merron: The Department for Transport and its agencies do not record the star ratings of hotels used by staff or by special advisers. Minimum accommodation standards are set out in staff handbooks, and equate approximately to a three star rating. Any more detailed information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

MOT Computer System

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many days have elapsed on average between the receipt of a letter to the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency requesting compensation and the payment of compensation to garage owners to compensate them for problems they have experienced with the new MOT computer system. [72914]

Dr. Ladyman: The average time between the receipt of a letter to the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency requesting compensation and the receipt of compensation by the claimant is 75 days. On average, 45 of these 75 days are spent clarifying and validating the claim.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money has been paid in compensation to garage owners to compensate them for problems they have experienced with the new MOT computer system. [72915]

Dr. Ladyman: In total, £7,095 has been paid to Vehicle Testing Stations as compensation for disruptions to service of the MOT computerisation system since rollout (18 April 2005) to date.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many garage *(a)* owners and *(b)* managers have written to the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency requesting compensation for problems they have experienced with the new MOT computer system. [72916]

Dr. Ladyman: At the time of writing, The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) has received requests for compensation from 253 of 18,300 Vehicle Testing Stations for disruptions to service of the MOT computerisation system. 158 of these claims relate to the incident of 25 April when emergency testing was invoked.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the expected expenditure of the MOT computerisation programme was *(a)* from the inception of the project to the commencement of rollout and *(b)* for annual maintenance costs. [72942]

Dr. Ladyman: For part *(a)* of the question I refer the hon. Member to the answer of 16 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 532-33W.

(b) The annual maintenance costs of the MOT computerisation programme are £645,000 at 2006-07 levels.

Oystercard

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress is being made towards the introduction of the Oyster Card system to overland trains for commuters to London; and if he will make a statement. [73120]

Derek Twigg: Agreement has been reached with the Mayor of London to deliver compatibility between the Oyster Card system and the Integrated Transport Smartcard Organisation (ITSO) standard, in London. An element of this agreement will ensure that rail stations in London zones 1-6 currently without access to some Oyster products will be part of the completed system. Oyster will not be extended beyond the London boundary, but bidders for the new South Western rail franchise are being required to set out how an ITSO smart ticketing system could be introduced across its franchise area from London to the South Coast.

Private Members' Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list those Private Members' Bills in respect of which his Department has adopted a policy of neutrality in each session since 2001-02; and if he will make a statement. [72472]

Gillian Merron: Since the Department for Transport was formed in May 2002 it has not adopted a neutral stance on any Private Member's Bill which received its second reading.

Private Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what percentage of his private office staff is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled. [69087]

Gillian Merron: In Department for Transport Private Offices (including the parliamentary and correspondence branches), the staff breakdown is 46 per cent. male, 54 per cent. female and 2 per cent. are disabled. The declaration of a disability is voluntary.

Private Sector Fund Recipients

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the 10 non-public sector entities that have received the largest total sum of payments from the Department in each of the last five years. [71812]

Gillian Merron: The information requested is tabled as follows:

	Organisation
2005-06	
Amey Mouchel Joint Venture	HA
IBM United Kingdom Ltd.	DVLA
Edmund Nuttall Ltd.	HA
Interroute	HA
Carillion Highway Maintenance Ltd.	HA
Atkins Ltd.	HA
Interserve Project Services Ltd.	HA
Balfour Beatty Civil Engineering Ltd.	HA
Alfred Mcalpine Capital Projects Ltd.	HA
Birse Civils Ltd.	HA
Connect M1-A1 Ltd.	HA
2004-05	
Amey Mouchel Joint Venture	HA

	Organisation
IBM United Kingdom Ltd.	DVLA
Network Rail	SRA
Edmund Nuttall Ltd.	HA
Birse Civils Ltd.	HA
Atkins Ltd.	HA
Raynesway Const. Sthrn. Ltd.	HA
Carillion Highway Maintenance Ltd.	HA
Post Office Ltd.	DVLA
Balfour Beatty Civil Engineering Ltd.	HA
2003-04	
Amey Mouchel Joint Venture	HA
IBM United Kingdom Ltd.	DVLA
Network Rail	SRA
Edmund Nuttall Ltd.	HA
Carillion Highway Maintenance Ltd.	HA
Costain Ltd.	HA
Raynesway Const. Sthrn. Ltd.	HA
Post Office Ltd.	DVLA
Birse Civils Ltd.	HA
Yorkshire Link Ltd.	HA
2002-03	
Carillion Highway Maintenance Ltd	HA
Edmund Nuttall Ltd.	HA
Post Office Ltd.	DVLA
IBM United Kingdom Ltd.	DVLA
Costain Ltd.	HA
Balfour Beatty Civil Engineering Ltd.	HA
Amey Mouchel Joint Venture	HA
Yorkshire Link Ltd.	HA
Alfred Mcalpine Capital Projects Ltd.	HA
Network Rail	SRA
2001-02	
KPMG	SRA
John Sisk & Son Ltd.	VOSA
Eds	VOSA
Linklaters	SRA
Atoc	SRA
Babtie	SRA
Lazards	SRA
Railtrack	SRA
Ove Arup	SRA
Nichols Group	SRA

Public Consultations

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many public consultations his Department undertook in 2005; and what the cost was *(a)* in total and *(b)* of each consultation. [72869]

Gillian Merron: The Department published 36 consultations during the calendar year 2005. The Department also regularly consults key stakeholders on a less formal basis through meetings or seminars, to help inform policy development. Information on the cost of each consultation and the total cost of all consultations could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Consultations are made available on our web site: http://www.dft.gov.uk.

Public Transport

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to encourage bus and train operators to recruit more women into the transport sector. [68859]

Gillian Merron: The Department for Transport facilitates the Women's Transport Network (WTN) to provide a forum for women to contribute to policy development in the transport field and to encourage women to enter and progress in the transport industries. However the recruitment of staff is a commercial matter for individual bus operators and train operating companies to manage.

Railways

Dr. Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to facilitate the re-opening of the Leamside Line in Durham for *(a)* passenger and *(b)* freight use. [72805]

Derek Twigg: There are no plans by the Department for Transport to facilitate the re-opening of the Leamside Line in Durham for passenger and freight use. It would be for the local authority working in partnership with Network Rail, to develop a suitable business case which demonstrates value for money.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department is taking to ensure the re-opening of the Bletchley-Bicester section of the East-West rail link; and if he will make a statement. [72983]

Derek Twigg: The Government provided funding, through the Growth Areas Fund, for the recent "East-West Links Study", which looked at the overall need for improved east-west transport links in the Milton Keynes-South Midlands growth area. The Government welcomed the publication of the study report by the "East-West" consortium of local authorities on 11 April.

The Government are now providing funding support to the Consortium for further work to establish the costs, benefits and opportunities for funding the scheme. Among the questions being addressed by this work are the scope to fund the scheme from land developer contributions, and whether Milton Keynes Central station could and should be served by "east-west" services. The Consortium expect to complete this further work later this year.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many Sunday rail services have been cancelled in each of the last five years, broken down by train operator; and if he will make a statement. [71896]

Derek Twigg: The information requested is not available in the format requested and would incur disproportionate costs in resources to obtain.

Information is however available for 2005 at an aggregate level for all days in the week as follows:

Train operating company	*Percentage of total trains planned*
Arriva Trains Wales	1.11
Central Trains	1.89
Chiltern	1.42
C2C	0.97
First Great Western	1.03
First Great Western Link	0.97
Gatwick Express	1.08
GNER	1.52
Island Line	0.28
Mersey rail	1.48
Midland Main Line	1.18
Northern	0.71
one	1.26
Silverlink	1.66
South Eastern Trains	1.31
Southern	1.14
South Western Trains	1.02
Thameslink	2.22
Trans Pennine Express	1.14
Virgin Cross Country	0.97
Virgin West Coast	1.40
WAGN	1.05
Wessex	1.04

Source:
Network Rail (Data for the period 9 January 2005 to 8 January 2006 inclusive)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average cost was of constructing a mile of *(a)* railway line and *(b)* light rail line in each year since 1997. [71995]

Derek Twigg: This information is as follows:

(a) The only significant heavy railway line constructed in England and Wales since 1997 is the channel tunnel rail link and details of the costs can be seen on the Department's website at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_railways/documents/page/dft_railways_035482.hcsp

(b) Light rail—costs per mile vary from scheme to scheme. The National Audit Office report "Improving public transport in England through light rail" published in April 2004, listed the construction costs per kilometre for schemes and a copy is in the House Libraries.

Resilience Exercises

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the resilience exercises carried out on *(a)* the transport infrastructure and *(b)* Eurotunnel since 11 September 2001. [72352]

Derek Twigg: Transport resilience exercises are regularly carried out across the transport infrastructure by transport operators and by agencies of government or in combination. Details are not held centrally by the Department. The value of multi-level exercises was shown clearly on 7 July 2005 and on other occasions when an emergency response has been required.

Since 11 September 2001, 22 emergency response exercises have been held involving Eurotunnel. These have been run variously in conjunction with Kent police, other relevant authorities, and the UK and French Government.

Road Pricing

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the percentage increase in motoring costs required to provide an effective disincentive to motorists to drive on congested roads. [71874]

Dr. Ladyman: The Feasibility Study of Road Pricing in the UK, which reported to the Secretary of State in July 2004 (a copy of the study is available in the Library of the House), considered a number of different scenarios for a national road pricing scheme. The study presents estimates of the potential reduction in congestion arising from a number of illustrative 'revenue neutral' and 'marginal social cost' pricing scenarios. The analysis completed for the study suggested that a 'revenue neutral' scenario of national road pricing, could lead to an overall reduction in congestion of 41 per cent. on all roads and a 48 per cent. reduction on urban roads.

Roads

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the latest cost estimates are for *(a)* road schemes in the Targeted Programme of Improvements, *(b)* road schemes approved under the local transport plans and *(c)* road schemes approved under the Community Infrastructure Fund. [71862]

Dr. Ladyman: I have arranged for three tables to be placed in the House Library. The tables provide information on latest cost estimates for *(a)* schemes in the Targeted Programme of Improvements, *(b)* local major road schemes, costing over £5 million, that have been approved for funding through the local transport plan programme and *(c)* road schemes approved under the Community Infrastructure Fund. Funding allocated for road schemes under the Community Infrastructure Fund are for fixed amounts and are time-limited to 2006-07 and 2007-08.

Rolls-Royce Engines

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the compliance with *(a)* health and *(b)* safety standards of the nickel super alloy content of the Rolls-Royce (i) RB211-535C and (ii) E4 engines. [71201]

Gillian Merron: The Civil Aviation Authority assessed the engine designs and the manufacturer's production processes against the relevant airworthiness safety standards applicable to them at the time applications for safety approvals were made.

The Rolls Royce RB211-535 and E4 series engine designs and the manufacturer's engine production

processes were assessed against safety standards established in British Civil Airworthiness Requirements documents. These were superseded first by European-wide Joint Aviation Authorities Airworthiness Requirement documents and subsequently by Commission Regulation (EC)1702/2003, one of the implementing rules made under Regulation (EC) 1592/2002 which set up the European Aviation Safety Agency.

Ryanair

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action is being taken by his Department to ensure that Ryanair complies with all the existing applicable rules when it operates from airports within the UK; and what meetings officials have held with Ryanair to discuss these matters. [70865]

Gillian Merron: If information is received which suggests that a foreign airline has committed a significant breach of UK legislation this will be followed up with both the airline and its regulatory authority and could result in prosecution or the refusal of permission to operate to the UK.

The Department is not aware of any ongoing issues of non-compliance by Ryanair with UK legislation governing aviation safety. Therefore no specific action has been taken and no specific meetings have been held with Ryanair.

South East Manchester Multi-modal Study

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the implementation of the South East Manchester Multi-Modal Study objectives by the constituent local authorities and partner organisations; and if he will make a statement. [72652]

Gillian Merron: Following the response to the South East Manchester Multi-Modal Study in March 2002, an Implementation Group was set up, chaired by the Government Office for the North West. The objectives of the Group include the co-ordination of the delivery and development programmes for the multi-modal strategy, as well as to monitor and review progress.

Many of the objectives of SEMMMS are progressed through the authorities Local Transport Plan. An assessment of Final (Second) Local Transport Plans is currently being undertaken by the Department and Government Office for the North West. The monitoring of LTP integrated transport objectives and targets, as agreed by local authorities, are carried out through Annual Progress and Delivery Reports.

Ministers are currently considering the scheme appraisal for the SEMMMS Relief Road and advice from the North West region on the priority it attaches to the conventional funding element of this and other schemes in the North West. Ministers plan to make an announcement in due course.

Southampton Tunnel

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made in upgrading the Southampton tunnel to take larger containers; what the cost of the project has been to date; and what the estimated final cost will be. [72578]

Derek Twigg: Over the next few months Network Rail will be undertaking work to refine cost estimates and develop designs to gauge clear Southampton tunnel.

Any work to upgrade the tunnel is part of a wider project to allow the efficient passage of trains carrying large, 9'6" containers from Southampton to the West Coast Main Line. The overall cost of the core scheme from Southampton to the West Coast Main Line is estimated at circa £57 million.

Staff Surveys

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many staff surveys have been conducted in his Department in each of the last three years. [72872]

Gillian Merron: The Department has carried out the following staff surveys in each of the last three years.

	1 April to 31 March		
	2003-04	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
DfT(C)	1	0	1
HA	1	0	1
DVLA	1	1	1
DSA	0	1	0
VGA	1	0	1
VOSA	0	0	0
GCDA	—	—	0
MCA	1	0	0
Total	5	2	4

Staff Team Building

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total cost was of *(a)* staff away-days and *(b)* staff team-building exercises in his Department in each of the last three years. [69085]

Gillian Merron: The information requested is not collected centrally in the form requested and could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Terrorist Threats

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many terrorist threats there have been on average per month on *(a)* the Channel Tunnel and *(b)* Merseyrail since 11 September 2001. [72841]

Derek Twigg: Due to security considerations it would not be appropriate to comment on threats to specific elements of national transport infrastructure.

If and where threats to transport infrastructure arise, the Department for Transport has security procedures in place and works closely with partner organisations to respond appropriately.

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans the Government have to increase security against terrorist attacks on UK airlines. [72957]

Gillian Merron: The security measures in place, both for aviation in the UK and for UK airlines overseas, are kept under constant review and are adjusted as and when necessary, including in the light of any change in threat assessments.

Transport Improvements (Hackney, North and Stoke Newington)

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what transport improvements for which his Department is responsible there have been in Hackney, North and Stoke Newington constituency in the past 12 months; what further improvements are planned; and if he will make a statement. [66133]

Gillian Merron: The Department provides Transport for London with a block grant, which doubled over the last five years, to £2,181 million 2005-06. The Mayor is responsible for providing a Transport Strategy for London while the boroughs are required to provide Local Implementation Plans which set out how they will contribute to the Mayor's strategy.

In addition, the Department funds improvements to rail services in London. This investment includes the current preparatory rail bridge building work for the East London Line Extension to Dalston. The project will provide three new stations for North Hackney and Stoke Newington. Further investment is planned for improvements to the North London Line (NLL) which have been confirmed by the Mayor when he takes control of the line in 2007.

These include new, higher capacity, accessible trains replacing the existing fleet and a £25 million station enhancement programme of NLL stations. The funding of further rail enhancements across the country will be considered as part of the development of the High Level Output Specification for the railway to be published in Summer 2007.

Transport Infrastructure Projects

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with the Institution of Civil Engineers on improvements to the management of transport infrastructure projects; and when such discussions took place. [62693]

Gillian Merron: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport has had no discussions with the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) on improvements to the management of transport infrastructure projects.

Officials are aware of ICE work in the transportation sector, and from time to time contribute to this work both a regional and national level.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 25 May 2006

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Security (Abingdon Street Barrier)

Mr. Amess: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon representing the House of Commons Commission (1) if the Commission will arrange for a police box at the steel barrier in Abingdon Street to protect police and security guards on duty from adverse weather conditions; what representations he has received from *(a)* the Police Federation and *(b)* other representatives of security guards and police officers about the installation of a police box; and if he will make a statement; [73295]

(2) whether police officers and security guards working at the steel barrier in Abingdon Street are provided with waterproof clothing; and if he will make a statement. [73296]

Nick Harvey: Arrangements at the Corus barriers outside the Palace of Westminster are kept under regular review. The Metropolitan Police have received representations from the Police Federation and others about the health, safety and welfare of the security team who staff the barriers. The final arrangements at the barriers are still under consideration and improvements may result in a reduction in the numbers of staff on duty. Waterproof clothing is already supplied. Following a review, improved protective clothing has been identified and is due to be supplied shortly.

TREASURY

Average Incomes

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his most recent estimate is of the average income per person in Coventry, South. [73463]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 25 May 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about average income per person in the Coventry South constituency. I am replying in her absence. (73463)

The ONS published estimates of household income for regions and local areas of the UK on 9 May 2006. Coventry South is within the NUTS[1] 3 area of Coventry. This is the most detailed level of geography for which estimates are produced.

Table A contains estimates of total incomes per head and Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) per head for Coventry.

[1] Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics

Table A: Coventry NUTS3

	Total income[2]	*£ per head*[3] *GDHI*[3]
1995	11,118	7,318
1996	11,467	7,615
1997	12,113	8,099
1998	12,868	8,370
1999	13,447	8,789
2000	14,401	9,348
2001	15,106	9,897
2002	15,428	10,145
2003	16,004	10,515
2004	16,790	10,847

[1] Population measure is based upon mid-year estimate for total population

[2] All household income including employers' social contributions, imputed social contributions, social benefits and other current transfers received.

[3] Gross disposable household income (GDHI) is the amount of money that households have available for spending or saving after deductions and expenditure associated with income, eg taxes and social contributions, and provision for future pension income.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire of 8 March 2006. [67130]

John Healey: The Treasury has no record of having received the letter. Having obtained a copy, I have now written to the hon. Gentleman.

Criminal Justice

Mr. Francois: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment his Department has made of the Home Office against its public service agreement targets for *(a)* reducing the fear of crime and *(b)* increasing confidence in the criminal justice system; and if he will make a statement. [73555]

Mr. Timms: The Treasury's assessment of the Home Office's progress against public service agreement targets can be found on the Treasury website under www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/performance This shows the progress against departmental PSA targets as detailed in annual departmental reports, published each spring, and the Department's autumn performance report.

The latest figures on the Home Office's performance against its PSA target to 'Reassure the public, reducing the fear of crime and antisocial behaviour, and building confidence in the criminal justice system without compromising fairness', show that the Department is on course or ahead of target in all components of the target.

Further information about the targets and the latest progress assessment can be found in the Home Office's autumn 2005 progress report which is available on the Home Office website.

Economic Growth

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the prospects for future economic growth in the United Kingdom economy. [73721]

John Healey: The Government set out its latest assessment of UK economic developments and prospects in Financial Statement and Budget Report 2006 (HC 968) on 22 March 2006.

European Commissioners

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many times he has met *(a)* Commissioner McCreevy and *(b)* Commissioner Kroes since their appointment to the European Commission. [73572]

Ed Balls: Treasury Ministers and officials have conversations and discussions with a wide range of organisations and individuals as part of the process of policy development, analysis and delivery.

As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of every such meeting.

European Union

Mr. Brady: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* net contribution to the EU budget, *(b)* net contribution to the EU institutions and *(c)* net expenditure transfers (i) were in each year from 2001-02 to 2005-06 and (ii) are forecast to be from 2007-08 to 2012-13; and what assessment he has made of how each would change should (A) Romania and (B) Bulgaria's accession to the EU be delayed for a year. [73736]

Ed Balls: The UK net contributions to the EC budget and net payments to EC institutions for the period 2001-02 to 2007-08 are presented in Table 3.2 of the European community finances White Paper (Cm 6770) published on 24 May 2006. Net expenditure transfers over this period are in Table 1.1 of the public expenditure statistical analyses (Cm 6811) published on 15 May 2006. 2007-08 is the final year of the current public expenditure planning cycle and forecasts beyond this period will be included in the comprehensive spending review 2007. For estimated net contributions to the EC budget over the next financial perspective I refer the hon. Member to the reply to the hon. Member for Surrey Heath (Michael Gove) on 31 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 399W.

The Government have not produced estimates for the financial implications of delaying the accession of Romania and Bulgaria.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the Answer of 6 March 2006, *Official Report*, column1099W, on EU membership, if he will list the studies undertaken by his Department. [68758]

Ed Balls: My earlier answer gave details of the Treasury's work on this issue.

Insurance Mediation

John McDonnell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to review the implementation of the EU Directive on insurance mediation in the UK. [73753]

Ed Balls: The financial services authority (FSA) assumed responsibility for the regulation of general insurance on 14 January 2005. The FSA's regime served to implement the EU's insurance mediation directive in the UK.

The FSA began a review of the effectiveness of the general insurance regime in April 2006. This review will include seeking feedback from firms and consumer research.

Separately, the Treasury will review early in 2007 whether travel insurance sold as part of a package should be subject to FSA regulation. The IMD only requires the regulation of travel insurance if sold on a stand-alone basis.

John McDonnell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what representations he has received on the impact of the EU directive on insurance mediation on small and medium-sized *(a)* enterprises traders and *(b)* freight forwarders in the UK; [73754]

(2) what assessment he has made of the impact of the implementation of the EU directive on insurance mediation on small and medium-sized enterprises traders and freight forwarders in the UK. [73755]

Ed Balls: The financial services authority (FSA) assumed responsibility for the regulation of general insurance on 14 January 2005. The FSA's regime served to implement the EU's insurance mediation directive in the UK.

The FSA will begin a review of the effectiveness of the general insurance regime in April 2006. This will include seeking feedback from firms and consumer research.

The impact of the IMD implementation on the UK's freight forwarding sector has been the subject of discussions between the British international freight association (BIFA) and HM Treasury. The Government are confident that the UK has correctly translated the IMD into UK legislation.

Public Sector Reform

Mr. Francois: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the Prime Minister's announcement on 15 May 2006 that he is to play a lead role in public sector reform, when he plans to outline his proposals; what his remit is in relation to the Home Office; how he will co-ordinate this role with that of the Home Secretary; and if he will make a statement. [73535]

Mr. Timms: As the Prime Minister set out, the Chancellor remains responsible for public spending. The forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review will represent a long-term and fundamental review of government expenditure across all Government Departments, including an assessment of the future trends and challenges for public services.

Mr. Francois: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has held with the Home Secretary following the Prime Minister's announcement that he is to take a lead role in public service reform. [73538]

Mr. Timms: The Chancellor regularly meets with Secretaries of State and other Ministers to discuss a wide range of issues.

Tax Credits

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in Denton and Reddish constituency received overpayments of *(a)* child tax credit and *(b)* working tax credit for each year since 2003. [73131]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to the hon. Member for West Suffolk (Mr. Spring) on 24 May (72637).

Tax Revenue

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Government raised in tax revenue in each of the last five years. [73464]

John Healey: Total public sector current receipts in the last five financial years are included by the Office for National Statistics in "Public Sector finances: Supplementary (Quarterly) Data", which was last published on 27 April 2006.

This publication can be accessed on-line via the following link: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/ssdataset.asp?vlnk=8885&More=Y.

Taxation

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effect on tax revenue in the financial year 2006-07 of the decisions *(a)* to remove the 0 per cent. starting rate of corporation tax, *(b)* not to up-rate the corporation tax thresholds in line with inflation and *(c)* the removal of the tax exemption for employer-provided laptop computers. [62450]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* The information is as follows:

(a) The decision to remove both the 0 per cent. starting rate and the 19 per cent. non-corporate distribution rate of corporation tax was announced in the 2005 Pre-Budget Report. The effect on tax revenue in the financial year 2006-07 of this decision may be found at: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/20F/2F/bud06_cha_134.pdf in Table A2 under Building a Fairer Society: tackling tax motivated incorporation.

(b) There is no requirement to increase the corporation tax profit limits in line with inflation. The upper profit limit (currently £1,500,000) is tied through regulations to the limit below which companies no longer pay corporation tax through quarterly instalments, so increasing it would have an impact on the timing of tax receipts from some companies. Given this, it is not possible to estimate accurately the impact of increasing the profit limits on tax receipts in advance of setting the transitional rules that would be required for these companies.

(c) The decision to remove the tax exemption for employer provided computer equipment was announced at Budget 2006. The effect of this decision on Exchequer revenue in the financial year 2006-07 may be found at: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/20F/2F/bud06_cha_134.pdf in Table A1 under Building a Fairer Society: Duties and other tax changes.

Vehicle Sharing

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what incentives his Department offers to encourage staff to share vehicles when travelling to work. [73039]

John Healey: The Treasury is located in Westminster and is well served by public transport. Very few staff travel to work by car and no special incentives exist to encourage car sharing except when public transport is disrupted.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Avian Influenza

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the chief veterinary officer's report on the H5 avian influenza exposure in October 2005, on what date the antibodies were found; where they were found; how many birds revealed antibodies; and whether the geese were *(a)* (i) imported and (ii) homebred and *(b)* kept for (A) consumption and (B) eggs. [72619]

Mr. Bradshaw: Samples taken from a number of geese on 31 October 2005 from an informal bird rescue centre in Somerset tested positive for antibodies to H5 avian influenza. Three geese had positive antibody titres to H5N2 and 10 geese had positive antibody titres to H5N7.

The geese, sourced locally, were not kept for consumption or egg production.

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the chief veterinary officer's report on the avian influenza exposure in October 2005, what tests were undertaken on wild birds in the area; what the results were of these tests; whether antibodies showed the birds were exposed to the H5 virus; whether there was evidence the birds had recovered from infection; and what assessment he has made of the length of time H5 viruses have been spread between wild birds. [72620]

Mr. Bradshaw: No additional tests were undertaken in response to the findings of H5N2 and H5N7 antibodies in geese in October 2005. A veterinary inquiry was instigated and clinical examination revealed that the geese were healthy. Further sampling and laboratory tests did not isolate avian influenza viruses and the presence of infection with avian influenza viruses was ruled out. It is likely that the positive antibody result was due to previous exposure to low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI) viruses.

It is not uncommon to find LPAI viruses in wild birds and any event of unusually high wild bird mortality in the area would have been investigated through virological testing.

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 16 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 833W, on avian influenza, how many approved commercial landfill sites there are; what estimate his Department has made of the maximum disposal capacity they provide; and if he will make a statement. [72832]

Mr. Bradshaw: My officials are working with the Environment Agency to review the capacity of suitably permitted landfills for the disposal of infected poultry carcases in the event that there is insufficient capacity at incineration and rendering plants.

Based on the capacity as assessed following the foot and mouth disease outbreak in 2001, my officials advise that there would be more than sufficient capacity in commercial licensed landfill to dispose of the projected number of poultry carcases.

Part III of the "Exotic Animal Disease Generic Contingency Plan", published by Defra in December 2005, sets out the structures and systems that would be implemented in the event of an outbreak of avian influenza and describes the Government's capability to provide the resources to implement the control policies. The Plan is available on the Defra website:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/footandmouth/pdf/genericcp.pdf

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 16 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 833W, on avian influenza, what measures his Department has in place to prevent wild birds from scavenging from *(a)* on-farm burial sites and *(b)* commercial landfill sites; and if he will make a statement. [72833]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are no plans for the on-farm burial of poultry carcases in the event of an outbreak of avian influenza. In the event that commercial licensed landfill was used for carcase disposal, this risk would be mitigated by ensuring that carcases were immediately covered with other material to a depth of at least 1 m and that at the end of each working day, carcases were covered by at least 2m of cover material.

All landfill sites used for carcase disposal will have Pollution, Prevention and Control (PPC) conditions in place as well as a bespoke bird deterrent/management plan drawn up and implemented by bird control experts from the Central Science Laboratory.

Part III of the "Exotic Animal Disease Generic Contingency Plan", published by Defra in December 2005, sets out the structures and systems that would be implemented in the event of an outbreak of avian influenza and describes the Government's capability to provide the resources to implement the control policies. The Plan is available on the Defra website:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/footandmouth/pdf/genericcp.pdf

Bovine TB

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs why the pilot study of the gamma interferon bovine tuberculosis test was abandoned; which part of the Department *(a)* designed and *(b)* implemented the pilot study; and what assessment has been made of the process. [70989]

Mr. Bradshaw: The pilot study of the gamma interferon blood test was halted in October 2005 because the slow recruitment rate of herds (195 herds against a projected requirement of 600) meant that the project was unlikely to be completed before 2012. Given the significance of the bovine tuberculosis problem, we believed this was too long to wait.

Defra's Animal Health Division and the Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) designed the study, which was implemented by the VLA and the State Veterinary Service.

Some useful lessons have been learnt from the process, and these are being applied as we develop new policies for the wider roll out of the gamma interferon test.

Derby/London (Emissions)

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will estimate the amount of carbon emissions produced by a train journey from Derby to London. [68800]

Ian Pearson: The Derby to London train journey is 193 kilometres, which produces approximately 2.7kg of carbon dioxide emissions in total.

European Landfill Directive

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress has been made with changes to the effects of the European Landfill Directive in its application to pet cemeteries since May 2005; and if he will make a statement. [71951]

Mr. Bradshaw: Pet cemeteries are landfill sites and their operation is subject to the requirements of the Landfill Directive. Previously they operated under waste management licences issued by the Environment Agency (EA), but under the Landfill Directive, operators of pet cemeteries will now instead be required to apply for a pollution prevention and control permit.

DEFRA has been working very closely with the EA to ensure that increases in the cost of regulation are kept to a minimum. The EA has classified pet cemeteries as a low risk activity which will attract lower application fees and subsistence charges.

DEFRA officials are currently working with the EA to investigate the scope for taking an alternative approach to the regulation of pet cemeteries. We expect to announce a proposal for their future regulation very shortly.

Gamebirds

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many commercial hatcheries are listed in the Great Britain Poultry Register in respect of each species. [70781]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information requested is set out in the following table:

Species	*Number of premises that hatch birds*
Chicken	271
Turkey	54
Ducks	173
Geese	92
Other	603
Unknown	2
Total number of premises registered as being a commercial hatchery	649

This information was produced using data from the Great Britain Poultry Register taken on 12 May 2006. All data are subject to change.

The GB Poultry Register allows people to register themselves as a commercial hatchery without necessarily indicating which species they hatch, hence the unknown category. It is also possible that premises may have registered themselves as having an incubator capacity but have not registered that they use this for commercial purposes.

The GB Poultry Register captures data under the Avian Influenza (Preventive Measures) (No2) Regulations 2005. Registration is mandatory for premises with 50 or more birds kept for commercial purposes. In addition, the Register also includes voluntary registrations for non-commercial premises and those where fewer than 50 poultry are kept.

The completeness of the data is dependent on the level of compliance with the legislation as specified above. Owners are required to de-register if they no longer keep poultry.

Only the major poultry hatchery species i.e. chicken, turkey, duck, goose, have been listed. All other species have grouped in the 'Other' category.

Two premises in the GB Poultry Register had registered as a commercial hatchery. However, they indicated in a free text field that they did not hatch anything. These premises were removed from this report.

GM Crops

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) when he plans to begin the consultation on the co-existence arrangements for genetically modified crops; and if he will make a statement; [69567]

(2) what plans he has to ensure maximum public involvement in the consultation on the co-existence arrangements for genetically modified crops. [69568]

David Miliband *[holding answer 9 May 2006]:* We plan to issue a consultation paper in due course. This will be sent to relevant stakeholder groups and it will also be available on the Defra website. We will encourage everyone who wants to make a contribution on this subject to do so.

Ministerial Flight

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will estimate the amount of carbon emissions produced by the use of the RAF Queen's Flight to fly from his constituency to London. [68799]

Ian Pearson: The rules on the use of special flights are set out in Travel by Ministers. The annual lists of overseas travel by Cabinet Ministers costing over £500 set out when special flights are used, and the purpose of each trip. Copies are available in the Library. The then Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs made use of 32 Squadron to attend EU Council meetings in Brussels and Luxemburg.

Carbon dioxide emissions arising from 32 Squadron flights are included in the Government's carbon offsetting commitment. Carbon emissions arising from the use of these flights have been recorded and offset in the same way as the use of scheduled flights since April 2005.

Nuclear Waste

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research his Department has undertaken into the environmental effects of deep-burial of nuclear waste. [71634]

Ian Pearson: The independent Committee on Radioactive Waste Management, which was appointed by the Government in November 2003, has considered existing research into the environmental effects of the disposal of nuclear waste.

The Committee recently announced an integrated package of draft recommendations for the long-term management of the UK's radioactive waste, which are subject to further consultation with interested parties. The report when completed will be available on www.corwm.org.

The Environment Agency also maintains a small research and development programme.

Perfluorooctane Sulphonate

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice and guidance *(a)* the Department, *(b)* the Environment Agency, *(c)* the Government's Advisory Committee on Hazardous Substances and *(d)* the Drinking Water Inspectorate has issued on the use of perfluorooctane sulphonate. [70022]

Ian Pearson: DEFRA, and the Government's Advisory Committee on Hazardous Substances have not issued any guidance on the use of perflurooctane sulphonate. However, a European Commission proposal for a Directive (76/769/EC), relating to restrictions on the marketing and use of perfluorooctane sulphonates (PFOSs) is currently being negotiated. While the UK welcomes the proposals we do not feel that they go far enough, and the UK is now aiming to strengthen these proposals by working through a co-decision process at EU level.

We have reached agreement with member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on the hazard profile of PFOS see www.oecd.org/dataoecd/23/18/2382880.pdf We are also working to have PFOS agreed as a persistent organic pollutant and subject to international controls under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the UNECE Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants. This is a longer-term aim.

The Environment Agency has not issued advice or guidance on the use of PFOS. It has however requested that it be phased out on the basis of its toxicty to the environment and humans.

While the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) has not issued specific advice or guidance on the use of PFOS, it has provided advice to organisations involved in the response to the Buncefield fire on the regulation of PFOS in drinking water. A value of three micrograms per litre was provided by the DWI to the Three Valleys water company as reflecting the best available evidence on which the water company can base its judgment of wholesomeness and safety, and the actions, if any, that it may need to take to safeguard drinking water quality going forward.

The current national advice provided by the Health Protection Agency is that it appears unlikely that a lifetime's consumption of drinking-water containing concentrations of up to three micrograms of PFOS per litre would harm human health.

Pheasants

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many pheasants have been imported from France in each of the last 10 years; whether bird imports are still permitted; and if she will make a statement. [61045]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 27 March 2006]:* The EU-wide system for recording the number of livestock imported into each member state, TRACES, does not differentiate between different types of game birds. Further, there are inconsistencies in the way that data can be inputted and interpreted, so the available figures are not reliable. However, the database does show that, to date, no game birds have been imported into the UK from France in 2006.

Representatives from the shooting industry in this country estimate that around three million pheasants are imported every year into the UK.

If avian influenza was confirmed or even strongly suspected in wild birds or poultry, then trade in live birds from the affected zone would stop.

REACH Directive

Ian Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps he is taking to ensure that the competent authority for the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals regulations in the UK will be suitably equipped in terms of staff and expertise to take account of the occupational health issues arising from the regulations. [72366]

Ian Pearson: DEFRA is considering a number of options for the competent authority for the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals (REACH) in the UK. In evaluating these options consideration will be given to whether they have the ability to address the wide range of issues arising from the regulations, including their capability in terms of staff and expertise to ensure adequate protection of both human health and the environment. As REACH applies without prejudice to existing health and safety legislation, the chosen competent authority will need to demonstrate an ability to work closely with Health and Safety Executive who have overall policy and enforcement responsibility for occupational health legislation.

Water Charges

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* standing charges, *(b)* cost per litre and *(c)* other charges levied by each water company in England and Wales are to individual households (i) with and (ii) without water meters. [73324]

Ian Pearson: The following tables summarise the charges that are levied by water companies on households both with and without water meters.

Unmeasured bills 2006-07

	Fixed Charge £/year water	*Rateable value charge p/£RV water*	*Average bill 2006-07 £ water*	*Fixed Charge £/year sewerage*	*Rateable value charge p/£RV sewerage*	*Average bill 2006-07 £ sewerage*
Water and sewerage companies						
Anglian	—	—	165.00	126.38	44.40	204.00
Anglian	104.82	40.77	—	—	—	—
Hartlepool	108.84	—	—	—	—	—
Dwr Cymru	99.95	56.83	162.00	124.62	75.81	211.00
Northumbrian (incl. Essex and Suffolk)						
Northumbrian	63.60	38.37	120.00	89.40	42.68	153.00

Unmeasured bills 2006-07

	Fixed Charge £/year water	*Rateable value charge p/£RV water*	*Average bill 2006-07 £ water*	*Fixed Charge £/year sewerage*	*Rateable value charge p/£RV sewerage*	*Average bill 2006-07 £ sewerage*
Essex and Suffolk	36.25	—	167.00	—	—	—
Essex	—	53.48	—	—	—	—
Suffolk	—	94.53	—	—	—	—
Severn Trent	—	—	140.00	—	—	133.00
Zone 1	—	81.08	—	—	75.52	—
Zone 2	—	73.00	—	—	63.60	—
Zone 3	—	70.78	—	—	67.00	—
Zone 4	—	73.96	—	—	72.65	—
Zone 5	—	85.02	—	—	74.77	—
Zone 6	—	88.44	—	—	82.10	
Zone 7	—	89.02	—	—	80.01	—
Zone 8	—	70.78	—	—	68.53	—
South West	79.30	84.10	207.00	71.70	194.37	359.00
Southern	27.76	45.00	115.00	52.89	84.00	216.00
Thames	24.00	—	166.00	31.00	—	105.00
Area 1	—	53.96	—	—	28.96	—
Area 2	—	54.93	—	—	30.02	—
Area 3	—	41.29	—	—	18.85	—
Area 4	—	49.44	—	—	27.07	—
Area 5	—	63.50	—	—	35.48	—
Area 6	—	55.08	—	—	29.36	—
Area 7	—	75.67	—	—	41.26	—
United Utilities	44.00	63.60	148.00	—	102.20	168.00
Wessex	7.00	97.32	176.00	7.00	100.20	187.00
Yorkshire	—	—	141.00	32.55	96.60	155.00
Yorkshire	29.63	89.80	—	—	—	—
York	23.25	51.10	—	—	—	—
Water only companies						
Bournemouth and W Hampshire	21.00	57.19	142.00	—	—	—
Bristol	21.00	65.10	139.00	—	—	—
Cambridge	22.50	43.10	118.00	—	—	—
Cholderton	33.00	62.39	174.00	—	—	—
Dee Valley	—	—	127.00	—	—	—
Chester	29.44	43.74	—	—	—	—
Wrexham	74.64	46.70		—	—	—
Folkestone and Dover	40.00	87.30	182.00	—	—	—
Mid Kent	49.00	60.68	163.00	—	—	—
Portsmouth	19.00	—	80.00	—	—	—
South East	12.00	28.70	168.00	—	—	—
Eastbourne	—	88.77	—	—	—	—
Mid-Southern	—	51.37	—	—	—	—
Mid-Sussex	—	94.48	—	—	—	—
West Kent	—	82.73	—	—	—	—
South Staffordshire	—	51.40	106.00	—	—	—
Sutton and East Surrey	—	—	159.00	—	—	—
Croydon	37.00	33.60	—	—	—	—
Northern area	137.80	—	—	—	—	—
Southern area	37.00	57.48	—	—	—	—
Tendring Hundred	33.00	90.06	200.00	—	—	—
Three Valleys (incl. North Surrey)	—	—	150.00	—	—	—
Three Valleys	32.40	—	—	—	—	—
Colne valley	—	41.11	—	—	—	—
Lee valley	—	50.49	—	—	—	—
Rickmansworth	—	40.06	—	—	—	—
North Surrey	32.40	42.21	—	—	—	—

Note:
Bill = fixed charge + (rateable value charge x rateable value of property)

Measured bills 2006-07

	*Volumetric charge p/m³**	*Standing charge £/year water*	*Average bill 2006-07 £ water*	*Volumetric charge p/m³* sewerage*	*Standing charge £/year sewerage*	*Average bill 2006-07 £ sewerage*
Water and sewerage companies						
Anglian	—	—	121.00	—	—	156.00
Anglian: Standard	106.46	24.00	—	106.58	62.00	—
SoLow	138.46	0.00	—	189.25	0.00	—
Aquacare Plus	58.46	60.00	—	50.58	104.00	—
Hartlepool: Standard	74.41	24.00	—	—	—	—
SoLow	106.41	0.00	—	—	—	—
Aquacare Plus	43.75	47.00	—	—	—	—
Dwr Cymru	113.93	27.00	103.00	125.32	50.00	134.00
Northumbrian (incl. Essex and Suffolk)	—	26.40	—	76.47	60.00	134.00
Northumbrian	78.95	—	104.00	—	—	—
Essex and Suffolk	—	—	129.00	—	—	—
Essex	87.95	—	—	—	—	—
Suffolk	119.32	—	—	—	—	—
Severn Trent	108.77	19.80	121.00	73.23	10.24	130.00
South West	124.97	23.76	138.00	232.48	11.04	222.00
Southern	76.00	24.57	108.00	119.70	43.95	170.00
Thames	95.10	23.00	144.00	47.49	42.00	102.00
United Utilities	112.60	25.00	135.00	91.40	71.00	157.00
Wessex	128.76	17.00	132.00	124.26	34.00	144.00
Yorkshire	—	—	120.00	101.37	32.55	128.00
Yorkshire	102.00	24.05	—	—	—	—
York	57.10	21.21	—	—	—	
Water only companies						
Bournemouth and W Hampshire	87.57	21.00	121.00	—	—	—
Bristol	93.45	29.00	125.00	—	—	—
Cambridge	72.00	24.50	97.00	—	—	—
Cholderton	103.00	23.00	149.00	—	—	—
Dee Valley	—	23.00	93.00	—	—	—
Chester	73.91	—	—	—	—	—
Wrexham	80.01	—	—	—	—	—
Folkestone and Dover	112.68	25.56	152.00	—	—	—
Mid Kent	—	—	132.00	—	—	—
Standard	89.98	22.20	—	—	—	—
Low User	119.58	0.00	—	—	—	—
Helpu/medico	57.88	54.40	—	—	—	—
Portsmouth	53.10	23.00	82.00	—	—	—
South East	—	15.00	144.00	—	—	—
Eastbourne	130.85	—	—	—	—	—
Mid-Southern	74.41	—	—	—	—	—
Mid-Sussex	136.74	—	—	—	—	—
West Kent	109.29	—	—	—	—	—
South Staffs	77.00	25.00	109.00	—	—	—
Sutton and East Surrey	—	23.00	114.00	—	—	—
Northern Area	74.47	—	—	—	—	—
Southern Area	96.52	—	—	—	—	—
Tendring Hundred	148.13	23.40	149.00	—	—	—
Three Valleys (incl. North Surrey)	80.60	24.80	134.00	—	—	—

* Volumetric charges for water and sewerage are calculated per cubic metre, rather than on a per litre basis [one cubic metre = 1000 litres].

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Braille/Audio/Large Print Publications

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the provision of Braille books, newspapers and magazines in libraries in *(a)* England, *(b)* the North East, *(c)* Tees Valley and *(d)* Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland constituency. [73658]

Mr. Lammy: DCMS is working in conjunction with English local authority library services to recognise the position of those with sight problems. There is no ring-fenced core central Government funding for public libraries, but there is an expectation that a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service as set out in the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, will address the needs of visually impaired people. This includes the provision of alternative format materials.

We are not aware of any published regional or local data regarding provision of Braille. While there are no holdings of Braille books at Middlesbrough borough council or Redcar and Cleveland borough council, both can quickly source Braille content from the National Library for the Blind on request. Both authorities offer alternatives to Braille such as Supernova, which enhance access to both mainstream on-line and printed content (via scanner). Middlesbrough also partner with "Action for the Blind" to obtain Braille content typically within 24 hours.

Circuses

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment her Department has made of the impact of legislative reforms to the licensing regime on circuses *(a)* prior to the introduction of the Licensing Bill to Parliament, *(b)* during the passage of the Bill through Parliament and *(c)* since the Licensing Act 2003 received Royal Assent. [71609]

Mr. Woodward: The Department has made no specific assessment of the impact of the legislative reforms to the licensing regime on circuses. We are currently monitoring and evaluating the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 nationally, but it is too early as yet to draw firm conclusions.

My predecessor and the Department's officials have met the Association of Circus Proprietors of Great Britain and other circuses representatives, the Arts Council and Equity, on several occasions. We will continue to work with circuses in order to help them to maximise the benefits of the licensing reforms.

Drought Orders

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what discussions she has had with representatives of the tourism, hotel and conference industry in London and the South East on measures which could be taken to mitigate the effect on the industry if drought orders were to be introduced; [72806]

(2) what assessment she has made of the likely impact of a drought order in the Thames Water region on the number of tourists coming through London and its airports; [72807]

(3) when she last met the Mayor of London to discuss the possible impact of drought orders on London's tourist, conference and hotel industries. [72808]

Mr. Woodward: VisitBritain and the UK tourism industry, including the Mayor of London who has responsibility for tourism in London, have strong and well rehearsed mechanisms in place for dealing with events which can impact on the visitor economy; my Department is closely involved in these arrangements.

VisitBritain is consulting partners in London and the South East, such as the Tourism Alliance and Tourism South East, about the possible implications for the tourism industry of drought orders. The information and advice from this exercise will be discussed with the Secretary of State and myself as necessary. We see no need as yet for a meeting with the Mayor of London to discuss possible drought orders but will keep this, along with other potential actions, under review as circumstances demand.

Football

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to her answer of 8 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 48W, on football, how the 92 Premier and Football League Club Chairmen responded to the previous letters from the Minister for Sport. [73418]

Mr. Caborn: In my previous letters to the 92 Premiership and Football League Chairmen I asked them to remind their players of the issue of fair play and of the responsibilities they have in being positive role models for the game.

I was not expecting responses, but of the few that did respond, and in my ongoing conversations with the football club Chairmen, they have been broadly supportive of my views.

Gambling Act

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when the Gambling Commission will issue its guidance on compliance and enforcement responsibilities in respect of the Gambling Act 2005. [73328]

Mr. Caborn: The Gambling Commission is aiming to consult in the next few weeks on its arrangements for licensing, compliance and enforcement under the Gambling Act 2005. It plans to publish its finalised guidance in the autumn 2006. Copies of the published guidance will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Information Technology

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much was spent on information technology (IT) sourced from outside her Department in each of the last five years; who is responsible for such projects in her Department; and what IT *(a)* expertise and *(b)* qualifications they possess. [71801]

Mr. Lammy: My Department has fully outsourced IT so the figures given represent the total expenditure on information technology.

	£ million
2001-02	22.8
2002-03	32.8
2003-04	42
2004-05	55.6
2005-06	64.6

Responsibility for information technology projects rests with the Department's CIO who has over 20 years experience of working in information technology.

Licensed Premises

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many licensed premises in *(a)* Greater Manchester, *(b)* Tameside metropolitan borough and (c) Stockport metropolitan borough have had renewal licences refused under the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003. [72648]

Mr. Woodward: This information is not held centrally.

Licensing Act

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) how many *(a)* public houses, *(b)* convenience stores and *(c)* off licences have had their licences revoked under the Licensing Act 2003 for (i) the sale of alcohol to people under 18 years of age and (ii) causing antisocial behaviour related to the sale of alcohol in each licensing authority area; [71027]

(2) how many reviews of alcohol licences have been requested by local residents under the Licensing Act 2003; and how many of these reviews have resulted in licences being revoked in *(a)* public houses, *(b)* convenience stores and *(c)* off licences in each licensing authority area; [71028]

(3) how many *(a)* public houses, *(b)* convenience stores and *(c)* off licences have had their licences revoked by the police under the Licensing Act 2003 in each licensing authority area; [71030]

(4) what the average fine issued to *(a)* public houses, *(b)* convenience stores and *(c)* off licences under the Licensing Act 2003 has been to date to premises found guilty of selling alcohol to people under 18 years of age; and what the average fine was for this offence in each type of premises in each of the previous five years in each licensing authority area. [71031]

Mr. Woodward: This information is not held centrally.

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many new licences have been issued under the Licensing Act 2003; and how many licences were issued for *(a)* public houses, *(b)* convenience stores and *(c)* off licences in each of the previous five years in each licensing authority area. [71029]

Mr. Woodward: Statistics concerning new licences issued under the Licensing Act 2003 (the 2003 Act), which came into force on 24 November 2005, are not available. However, the Department estimates that some 190,000 premises have been licensed under the 2003 Act, the majority of which are for the sale of alcohol.

Data for the number of new licences issued in England and Wales under the Licensing Act 1964, which has now been replaced by the 2003 Act, were collected every three years and are available for a 12 month period to the 30 June 2004 as detailed in the following table:

	Total licences issued	*Total public houses*	*Total off-licensed premises*
30 June 2001	6,482	3,072	2,057
30 June 2004	7,717	3,485	2,800

Source:
DCMS Statistical Bulletin: Liquor Licensing: England and Wales, July 2003-June 2004, Table 5.

Separate data for convenience stores are not available.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when her Department will publish its first review of the guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003. [71610]

Mr. Woodward: The guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 is being reviewed in two stages. Following the initial review, which covers issues where a broad consensus exists among stakeholders, it is expected that supplementary guidance will be laid before Parliament in June 2006.

In parallel with this, a full review is being conducted, including a formal public consultation. As a result of this process, we expect to lay a revised version of the guidance before Parliament by the end of 2006.

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many outlets in Greater London have been prosecuted under the Licensing Act 2003. [71845]

Mr. Woodward: This information is not held centrally.

Licensing Applications

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the Answer of 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 89W, on licensing applications, whether an event, a garden fete or function of a similar nature held solely to raise money for a charity or local church would be considered as 'not for private gain' and therefore be exempt from the requirement for a licence. [72826]

Mr. Woodward *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The provision of entertainment at a garden fete or similar event is not 'regulated entertainment' for the purposes of the Licensing Act 2003. Such an event would therefore be exempt from the requirement for a licence.

However, this exemption does not apply if the fete or similar function is promoted with a view to applying some or all of its proceeds for the purposes of private gain.

The provision of a benefit to one or more individuals is not regarded as being for private gain if made in the course of the activities of a non-commercial society established and conducted: *(a)* for charitable purposes, or *(b)* for the purpose of enabling participation in, or of supporting, sport, athletics or a cultural activity. In addition, no exemption from licensing would arise if the fete, event or similar function involved the sale or supply of alcohol.

London Olympics

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the different inflation rates were which were applied by the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games, referred to in the Minister for Sport's letter of 17 May 2006 to the hon. Member for Faversham and Mid Kent, when raising its budget from £1.5 billion to £2 billion. [72817]

Tessa Jowell *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) budget reflects an average annual rate of inflation over the seven-year period from 2004 to 2011 of approximately 4 per cent.

I am advised by LOCOG that they have used prudent but not excessive rates of inflation dependent upon the nature of the relevant costs. LOCOG has also taken into consideration the fact that the costs will be spent at different points in the lifecycle of the project.

National Heritage Memorial Fund

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much the National Heritage Memorial Fund has spent on acquiring works of art for British museums in each of the last 10 years. [73233]

Mr. Lammy: The National Heritage Memorial Fund has awarded the following amounts to British museums and galleries for acquisitions of works of art in each of the last 10 financial years:

Financial year	*Value of awards (£)*
1996-97	396,625
1997-98	733,000
1998-99	9,342
1999-2000	0
2000-01	100,000
2001-02	1,256,530
2002-03	0
2003-04	1,012,500
2004-05	0
2005-06	1,770,000
Total	5,277,997

Portland PR

Jim Sheridan: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what meetings officials in her Department have had with representatives of the public relations company Portland PR; what contracts Portland PR has with her Department and agencies for which she has responsibility; and what the nature of the contract is in each case. [70050]

Mr. Lammy: DCMS has no contracts with Portland PR and the department does not maintain a central list of such meetings. Civil servants meet many people as part of the process of policy development and business delivery. All such meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Service Code and Guidance for civil servants on contacts with lobbyists and people outside Government.

Schools' Olympics

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many organisations applied to run the Schools' Olympics; and on what criteria the winner was selected. [73620]

Mr. Caborn: The selection of an operator to organise the UK School Games this September was a matter for the Millennium Commission. In my other capacity as chair of the Commission, I will write to the hon. Member and arrange for copies of my reply to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Temporary Event Notices

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will place in the Library a copy of the summary of responses to the consultation on temporary event notices; and if she will make a statement. [71615]

Mr. Woodward: We shall soon be announcing the results of our review of temporary events notices (TENs) and consideration of responses to the associated consultation. Shortly thereafter, we shall place a copy of those responses on the Department's website (www.culture.gov.uk). Where an individual has written on his or her own behalf, and not in the course of representing an organisation, we will have redacted any personal details such as the name and address.

The Public

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on what date the Arts Council commissioned the options appraisal of the arts organisation 'The Public'; and what its remit was. [73838]

Mr. Lammy: The options appraisal was commissioned on 2 February 2006. The remit of the options appraisal was to assist the Arts Council to understand: the immediate cash flow requirements of the charity; the possible funding requirement of 'The Public' on opening; the likely further funding required, in addition to that already agreed, to achieve completion of the building; whether there are any viable options which may involve less funding; the impact of the group entering into an insolvency process and the impact on the Arts Council of any such insolvency process; and the current position of the remainder of the charity's activities.

World Cup

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans *(a)* she and *(b)* Ministers in her Department have to attend matches at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [73631]

Mr. Caborn: Both my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and I will be attending a number of games during the 2006 World Cup finals being held in Germany this summer.

All travel by DCMS Ministers will be arranged in accordance with the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Animal Experiments

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether his plans to protect the names and addresses of shareholders will apply only to companies which carry out animal experiments. [70806]

Mr. McCartney: No: the members of all companies will be protected by the provision in the Company Law Reform Bill that a company need not comply with a request for a copy of its register of members if the court is satisfied that it is not sought for a proper purpose. The Government amendments to the Bill to strengthen further this protection, which were tabled on 18 May, also apply to all companies.

Bank Fees

Mark Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action his Department is taking to encourage banks to reduce late payment fees and other charges following the recent ruling from the Office of Fair Trading; and if he will make a statement. [72375]

Mr. McCartney: The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) statement relates to the principles they think credit card issuers should follow in order to set fair default charges. The issuers are being asked to confirm by 31 May their response to this statement and their willingness to make any necessary adjustments to their credit card default charges. They are also being asked to consider how these principles may be applicable in other related areas, including the way default charges are applied to current accounts. The OFT has indicated that it has not ruled out future legal action if the market does not respond positively and it would not be appropriate for me to comment further at this stage.

Consumer Protection

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the operation of section 75 of the Consumer Credit Act 1974; what recent representations he has received about the operation of this *(a)* section and *(b)* Act; and what amendments have been made to the Act. [72466]

Mr. McCartney: Section 75 of the 1974 Consumer Credit Act has the effect that where a purchase for an amount over £100 and not more than £30,000 has been funded by a credit card, the purchaser will have the same rights in respect of a breach of contract or misrepresentation against the credit card company, as he would have against the supplier himself.

One area of section 75 around which there has been a degree of uncertainty relates to overseas transactions (i.e. where a credit card is used to buy something abroad). The Office of Fair Trading sought to resolve this issue by way of a Court declaration. The case reached its conclusion on 22 March 2006, when the Court of Appeal ruled that section 75 of the Consumer Credit Act 1974 does apply to overseas transactions, as well as to domestic ones.

Before this ruling and during the passage of the Consumer Credit Bill (now the Consumer Credit Act 2006), Baroness Miller of Hendon tabled an amendment to try and clarify the issue of overseas application of section 75. The Government resisted Baroness Miller's amendment on the grounds that the issue was the subject of an ongoing case at the Court of Appeal, and that it would be inappropriate to amend section 75 before that case had reached its conclusion.

The subsequent Court ruling of 22 March is, the Government believe, a good outcome for consumers and they have no plans at present to make changes to section 75 of the 1974 Act.

More generally, as the 2006 Act is brought into force, they will make a number of significant changes to the 1974 Act. In particular:

(a) Improving consumer rights and redress:

by replacing the extortionate credit test (in the 1974 Act) with a new, broader test concerned with the principle of 'unfairness';

(b) Improving the regulation of consumer credit businesses:

by altering the powers of the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) to enable it to take targeted action to drive out rogues, and by requiring minimum standards of information provision to consumers throughout the life of the loan; and

(c) More appropriate regulation of consumer credit agreements:

by abolishing the £25,000 limit for regulation and making the rules concerning enforceability consistent and proportionate.

Correspondence

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he will provide a substantive response to question 64606, tabled by the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight on 18 April, on telephone numbers. [70139]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* I answered the hon. Member's question on 12 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 542W, by transferring it to the chief executive of Ofcom and I understand that Ofcom should now be replying substantively in about 10 working days.

Entrepreneurs

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures his Department plans to take to encourage more *(a)* women and *(b)* people from ethnic minorities to become business entrepreneurs. [71094]

Margaret Hodge: Levels of women's enterprise are increasing. The number of self-employed women in the UK has risen from 915,000 in 1997 to 1,022,000 in 2006. This is the highest figure since records began in 1984. But we still have further to go to match levels of women's enterprise in some comparator nations, such as the USA. That is why, from June this year, we will have a taskforce on women's enterprise to encourage the development of women's enterprise working with the development agencies and other partners. Regional development agencies, including the North East, are piloting women's enterprise units to trial different approaches to supporting the start-up and growth of women-owned businesses.

We are also making some progress in reducing differences in self-employment rates between different ethnic groups. The gap in self-employment rates between under-represented groups and others in England has come down from 4 percentage points for the year ending spring 2005 to 3.4 percentage points for the year ending winter 2005. In the last four years, the number of self-employed people of working age from under-represented groups has increased from around 80,000 to 120,000 in England. The Department and the small business service are working with colleagues across Whitehall to help deliver the recommendations on enterprise made by the national employment panel in their 2005 report 'Enterprising People, Enterprising Places'.

This includes working with the learning and skills council on the development of centres of vocational excellence in entrepreneurship in five designated cities (London, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds/Bradford and Leicester) and working with banks and financial intermediaries to review the availability and accessibility of finance for ethnic minority firms in those designated cities.

The small business service also supports a detailed programme of activity led by the ethnic minority business forum to promote enterprise amongst ethnic minority groups. Key actions include:

drawing up a three-year action plan and following this with a national conference to promote ethnic minority enterprise;

promoting and developing regional engagement through a series of regional networking meetings;

developing an online community to encourage continued dialogue with stakeholders;

ensuring that initiatives to facilitate access to public sector procurement markets meet the needs of ethnic minority businesses through the work on the recently launched web portal for lower value opportunities, and the development of training for small and medium enterprises in selling to the public sector.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated into the biological effects of myalgic encephalomyelitis. [72846]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Department supports medical and clinical research through the Medical Research Council (MRC). In May 2003, the MRC invited research proposals on chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME) covering basic research through to more applied health services research and interventions; the invitation can be found at: http: www.mrc.ac.uk/strategy-chronic_fatigue_syndrome_me.htm.

The MRC has funded seven research studies into CFS/ME as follows:

University/institute	*Project title*
University of Manchester	The role of noradrenalin in the neuropsychological pathogenesis of the chronic fatigue syndrome
University of Manchester	Randomised control trial of nurse led self-help treatment for primary care patients with chronic fatigue syndrome
University of Manchester	The feasibility of a population base study of CFS (chronic fatigue syndrome), IBS (irritable bowel syndrome), and CWP (chronic wide pain)
Queen Mary and Westfield College	Chronic fatigue and ethnicity
Queen Mary and Westfield College	The PACE Trial: A RCT (randomised control trial) of CBT (cognitive behaviour therapy), graded exercise, adaptive pacing and usual medical care for the chronic fatigue syndrome
University of Liverpool	Exploratory RCT of training GPs to manage patients with persistent medically unexplained symptoms
University of Edinburgh	A complex intervention for patients with medically unexplained symptoms in neurology clinics

Parcelforce

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of Government funding announced on 18 May for the Royal Mail will be made available for Parcelforce activities; and if he will make a statement. [73612]

Jim Fitzpatrick: No proportion of these facilities has been set aside for Parcelforce.

Pensioner Debt

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what assessment he has made of the level of personal debt among pensioners; and if he will make a statement; [72584]

(2) what steps he is taking to ease the burden of debt experienced by pensioners; and if he will make a statement; [72585]

(3) if he will introduce a scheme to relieve pensioners of personal debt; and if he will make a statement. [72586]

Mr. McCartney: We are doing much to help those with personal debt problems as outlined in the Government's 2004 "Tackling Over-indebtedness: Action Plan" and the subsequent 2005 annual report. DTI examples include the recently launched £45 million Face-to-Face Debt Advice Project, that will result in hundreds of new debt advisers and the multi-million pound support given to the National Debtline phone service. Such assistance is open to all and we much welcome the use of them by vulnerable pensioners.

Overall, the Government's strategy for older people is focused on tackling poverty in old age. The measures include: pension credit which targets help to the poorest pensioners; the state second pension which will provide a more generous additional provision for people on low and moderate earnings; and one-off payments for eligible pensioners to help ensure financial security in retirement and reduce the risk of falling into problem debt.

Priorities for the Government's strategy for older people in 2006-07 include maximising take-up activity to ensure that those entitled to pension credit receive it and increasing take-up of the state second pension, including among carers and the long-term disabled, and the 200 winter fuel payments.

Post Office Branch Network

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the Government's long-term policy is on the Post Office branch network, with particular reference to rural areas. [73594]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Government are committed to supporting the rural post office network with annual social network payments of £150 million for the next two years. The level of any support beyond 2008 will depend, following public consultation, on decisions on the future of the post office network.

Royal Mail

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of part-employee share ownership in respect of Royal Mail. [73591]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Government are considering Royal Mail management's proposals for the incentivisation of its workforce through an employee shares scheme. No decisions have been taken on these proposals.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of options for the long-term ownership structure for the Royal Mail. [73595]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Government have made it clear that they will not privatise Royal Mail.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the rate of return the Government will receive on its loan to the Royal Mail. [73613]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The details of the arrangements for the extension of the debt facilities have yet to be decided. The rate of return on the utilisation of the facilities will be set on a commercial basis.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what criteria were used in deciding to support the Royal Mail in respect of its pension fund deficit. [73614]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Government, as shareholder, considered Royal Mail's investment case on a commercial basis. Under the Government's proposed financial framework, no funds are paid directly into the pension fund. The Government intend to release £850 million of reserves that Royal Mail has built up through past profitable performance so those funds can be transferred to a special account, the pension escrow account, upon which the pension fund trustees could draw, in the unlikely event that Royal Mail should fail as a business. When the pension fund deficit has been recovered and Royal Mail's balance sheet strengthened by successful operation, it is expected that the escrow fund will be released and surplus cash returned to the Government as shareholder. This arrangement provides confidence to pensioners and a sustainable financial framework for Royal Mail.

Small Business Friendly Concordat

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many local authorities have signed up to the Small Business Friendly Concordat; what steps are being taken by the Government to encourage local authorities to do so; and what target he has set for take up by local authorities of the Concordat. [66609]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

Records maintained by the Small Business Service (SBS) suggest that presently 63 local authorities in England have formally signed up to the Small Business Friendly Concordat (March 2004).

The "National Procurement Strategy for Local Government" includes a milestone for all local authorities to have adopted the Concordat by the end of 2005. The Government recognise that small businesses can provide best value in procurement and that is why they are keen to continue encouraging adoption of the Concordat throughout local government.

ODPM has written to local authorities on two occasions encouraging sign-up to the Concordat. In conjunction with key partners the ODPM is exploring further ways to promote the Concordat to local authorities.

Sunday Trading

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what his Department's expenditure has been on research into the *(a)* economic and *(b)* social implications of the easing or removing of Sunday trading restrictions. [72882]

Mr. McCartney: DTI appointed Indepen Consulting Ltd to produce an economic cost-benefit analysis of easing the restrictions on Sunday shopping. The cost was around £60,000. We published Indepen's report on 5 May on the DTI website:

www.dti.gov.uk/consmners/buying-selling/Sunday%20Shopping.

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will organise and fund a conference to discuss the social costs and benefits of easing or removing Sunday trading restrictions. [72883]

Mr. McCartney: There are no current plans to organise and fund a conference to discuss the social costs and benefits of easing or removing Sunday trading restrictions.

From 13 January to 14 April, as part of the review of Sunday shop opening hours, we asked for views and evidence from consumers, religious groups, employees and businesses not only on the economic case, but on all aspects of extending Sunday shopping hours. We have received a large number of responses and are currently analysing them.

On 5 May, we published an independent economic cost-benefit analysis, commissioned by DTI. On 10 May, DTI held a stakeholder conference where the independent consultants presented the cost-benefit analysis and participants were able to discuss the assumptions and findings. This was followed by optional forums on specific themes; one of the themes was the impact on society of extended Sunday shopping hours. We intend to publish a report of this event on our website shortly.

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the Answer of 26 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1129W, on Sunday trading, what plans he has to commission research into the social effects of easing or removing Sunday trading restrictions. [72886]

Mr. McCartney: There are no current plans to commission research into the social effects of easing or removing Sunday trading restrictions.

From 13 January to 14 April, as part of the review of Sunday shop opening hours, we asked for views and evidence from consumers, religious groups, employees and businesses not only on the economic case, but on all aspects of extending Sunday shopping hours. We have received a large number of responses and are currently analysing them.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Convicting Rapists and Protecting Victims (Consultation Paper)

Barbara Follett: To ask the Solicitor-General what responses he has received to his Department's consultation paper "Convicting Rapists and Protecting Victims". [73360]

The Solicitor-General: The consultation period runs until 31 July 2006 and we normally expect responses towards the end of the period. Nonetheless I have already received three responses and the Office for Criminal Justice Reform has received six responses. Seven of these have come from individuals and two from organisations.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Solicitor-General on how many occasions *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisors in his Department have stayed overnight in (i) five star, (ii) four star and (iii) three star hotels in each of the last three years. [69009]

The Solicitor-General: The Law Officers' Departments had no special advisers in the period in question. The information on hotel star ratings is not recorded centrally by the Crown Prosecution Service, Serious Fraud Office, Treasury Solicitor's Department, HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate and the Attorney General's Office and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. The Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office was able to obtain the following information for 2005-06 since it was set up on 18 April 2005:

Rating	*Nights*
5	2
4	63
3	43

Serious Fraud Office

John Robertson: To ask the Solicitor-General what assessment he has made of the likely trends in the number of cases demanding the attention of the Serious Fraud Office over the next three years. [73365]

The Solicitor-General: Between 2001 and 2005 the SFO had 223 cases referred to it and it has so far accepted 82 of these cases. The remaining cases are mostly referred to other agencies.

From 2001 to 2005 the SFO has seen a considerable increase in case referrals and it does not anticipate that

this trend will change. Moreover the cases that the SFO sees are growing in complexity and are commonly linked to international financial markets.

It is not possible to provide accurate data for the future as this depends on the number of frauds, their nature and their referral to the SFO.

Treasury Solicitor Annual Report

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General how many copies of the Treasury Solicitor Annual Report 2003-04 were distributed by his Department; if he will list those who were sent copies; how many copies were printed; what the cost was of *(a)* distribution and *(b)* printing; who was awarded the contract to undertake the printing; how (i) hon. Members, (ii) Members of the House of Lords and (iii) members of the public may obtain a copy; at what cost; when he expects to publish the 2004-05 edition; and if he will make a statement. [70079]

The Solicitor-General: 550 copies of the Treasury Solicitor's Annual Report and Accounts 2003-04 were printed at a total cost for design, print and distribution of £10,038. The Central Office of Information printed the Reports. Copies were laid before Parliament (HC 1012). They were also distributed across the Attorney General's Departments but no record was kept of the distribution. 300 copies were supplied to the Stationery Office for public purchase (ISBN 0102930023) at £15.10 each. A copy is also available electronically on the TSol website (www.tsol.gov.uk).

The 2004-05 Treasury Solicitor's edition was published and laid before Parliament on 21 July 2005 (HC 274) and is similarly available at the Stationery Office (ISBN 010293438X) at £16.25 or on the TSol website. The 2005-06 edition is scheduled to be published and laid before Parliament on 20 July 2006.

WALES

Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the occasions when an amendment has been moved by *(a)* a Labour Back Bencher, *(b)* an Opposition Back Bencher and *(c)* an Opposition Front-Bench spokesman to a Bill sponsored by his Department that has been accepted by his Department during the 2005-06 session; and if he will make a statement. [72489]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office has sponsored the following Bills during the current session: Government of Wales Bill 2005, Transport (Wales) Bill and the Commissioner for Older People (Wales) Bill.

Information on amendments moved and accepted during the Committee, Report and Lords Third Reading stages on these Bills is published in the *Official Report*.

Consultations

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many public consultations his Department undertook in the last year for which figures are available; and what the cost was *(a)* in total and *(b)* of each consultation. [72894]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office undertook one public consultation last year on the "Better Governance for Wales" White Paper. The cost of this was £23,462.54. We also contributed to a joint consultation with the Department of Health seeking views on banning smoking in enclosed public places, and to a joint consultation with the National Assembly for Wales on the Commissioner for Old People.

Departmental Credit Cards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what facility is available for senior civil servants in his Department to use credit cards supplied by the Department. [72898]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office has not issued any credit cards to senior civil servants.

Departmental Expenditure

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the 10 non-public sector entities that have received the largest total sum of payments from his Department in each of the last five years. [71758]

Mr. Hain: Expenditure records are not kept in this format, and this information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Disability Access

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales whether any building in his Department falls short of disability access regulations. [73051]

Mr. Hain: No.

Free Air Miles

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many free air miles have been earned by senior civil servants in his Department in each of the last three years; and how they were used. [72899]

Mr. Hain: None.

Information Technology

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much was spent on information technology (IT) sourced from outside his Department in each of the last five years; who is responsible for such projects in his Department; and what IT *(a)* expertise and *(b)* qualifications they possess. [71758]

Mr. Hain: The National Assembly of Wales provided information technology support service functions to the Wales Office until 31 March 2004, and the Department of Constitutional Affairs (DCA) has provided these services since then. Accordingly the Assembly were responsible for sourcing and awarding any contracts up to March 2004 and the DCA has done so since then. In the last financial year the Wales Office spent £176,161.40 on IT services provided via DCA.

Expenditure records before this time are not kept in this format, and this information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the *(a)* originally estimated, *(b)* most recently estimated and *(c)* outturn cost was in each of the five largest information technology contracts agreed with outside suppliers over the last five years. [71757]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office has not let any information technology contracts in the last five years. We are covered by contracts let by the Department of Constitutional Affairs.

Ministerial Visits

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what visits he has made to each of the prisons in Wales; and when each visit took place. [73732]

Mr. Hain: I have not visited any prisons in my capacity as Secretary of State for Wales. Responsibility for prisons in England and Wales is a matter for my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary.

Private Members' Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list those private Members' Bills in respect of which his Department has adopted a policy of neutrality in each session since 2001-02; and if he will make a statement. [72488]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office does not collect the relevant information and to provide it would incur disproportionate costs.

Small Change Big Difference

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what steps his Department has taken following the launch of the Government's "small change big difference" campaign. [72009]

Mr. Hain: Responsibility for delivering health policy in Wales has been devolved to the National Assembly for Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government have in place the 'health challenge Wales' campaign—a call to people and organisations to work together for a healthier nation. Further information is available on the Welsh Assembly Government's website at:

http://new.wales.gov.uk

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Complaints (Solicitors)

Dr. Cable: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans she has to improve the process of handling complaints against solicitors. [73362]

Bridget Prentice: On 24 May, the Government published their draft Legal Services Bill. The draft Bill provides for the establishment of a Legal Services Board (LSB), which will provide consistent oversight of the legal profession's front line regulators. The draft Bill also provides for the establishment of an office for legal complaints (OLC) that will provide a single and fully independent body for dealing with all consumer complaints about legal service providers who are members of bodies or organisations that are regulated by the Legal Services Board (LSB). The OLC will, therefore, replace the existing complaints handling bodies, such as the Law Society's Consumer Complaints Services.

The OLC will be accountable to the LSB, which will also set targets for the OLC.

The draft Bill will be receiving pre-legislative scrutiny by Joint Committee.

Departmental Responsibilities

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list responsibilities which her Department and its predecessors have lost since 1997; what the *(a)* date and *(b)* destination Department was in each case; what responsibilities the Department and its predecessors have taken on since 1997; and what the (i) date and (ii) source Department was in each case. [71136]

Bridget Prentice: Ministerial responsibilities are set out in the "List of Ministerial Responsibilities", which is updated regularly. A revised version will be published shortly. Copies of previous versions are available in the Library.

Small Claims Limit

Mr. O'Hara: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the timetable is for the consultation on alternative options for dealing with the small claims limit. [69903]

Vera Baird: The Government are currently working with stakeholders to make the claims process more timely, proportionate, and cost-effective. We plan to publish a consultation paper on any proposals which emerge, but no date for this has been set.

SCOTLAND

Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the occasions when an amendment has been moved by *(a)* a Labour backbencher, *(b)* an Opposition backbencher and *(c)* an Opposition front bench spokesman to a Bill sponsored by his Department which has been accepted by his Department during the 2005-06 Session; and if he will make a statement. [72485]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office has not sponsored any legislation in the current Session.

Departmental Legislation

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list those *(a)* Acts and *(b)* parts of Acts which received Royal Assent between 1976 and 2006 for which his Department has policy responsibility and which remain in force. [70396]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office has policy responsibility for the Scotland Act 1998 and the Scottish Parliament (Constituencies) Act 2004, both of which remain in force.

Scotland Act

David Mundell: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether the Government plans to transfer additional functions to Scottish Ministers under section 63 of the Scotland Act 1998. [72543]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government and the Scottish Executive have no immediate plans for any transfers under section 63 of the Scotland Act 1998.

Scottish Parliament

David Mundell: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what discussions he has had with the First Minister of Scotland on proposals for the establishment of a second Scottish Constitutional Convention to review the powers of the Scottish Parliament; [72813]

(2) whether he has discussed the recommendations of the Steel Commission report, Moving to Federalism—A New Settlement for Scotland, with the First Minister of Scotland. [72815]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I have frequent discussions with the First Minister on a wide range of issues.

Small Change Big Difference

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what steps his Department has taken following the launch of the Government's "small change big difference campaign". [72000]

David Cairns: The statutory functions of the Scotland Office relate to constitutional matters arising from the devolution settlement for Scotland and the conduct of elections to the Scottish Parliament. The focus of the 'small change big difference' campaign is the encouragement of healthier lifestyles which is primarily a devolved matter for the Scottish Executive to determine.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan (Women)

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of women's rights in Afghanistan; and what steps are being taken to further the empowerment of women in Afghanistan in accordance with Millennium Development Goal 3, to promote gender equality and empower women. [73481]

Hilary Benn: The current status of women's rights indicates that Afghanistan will not meet the Millennium Development Goal targets by 2015. Raising awareness of the existing gender bias and discrimination is important if things are going to change. The Afghan Government have demonstrated its commitment to ensuring equality between men and women by signing the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and by protecting women's rights within the new Afghan constitution.

In March 2006, the Afghan Government set out its strategy for greater gender equality in its first Interim National Action Plan for the Women. The UK is supporting this through our contributions to the Afghan Reconstruction Fund (£140 million over three years) which help pay the Government's recurrent costs as well as fund their own development priorities.

DFID also supports a number of specific development programmes which support the role of women in Afghan society. At the national level we provided significant support to the election process in 2005 and have worked with the Government to strengthen the role of women in the democratic process. The Parliamentary and Provincial elections had a strong turn-out of women voters (43 per cent. of voters were women).

DFID's support to the Government's National Priority Programmes includes support to enhancing the role of women at a community level including the National Solidarity Programme which ensures that women are engaged in determining community development priorities through the formation of Community Development Councils. DFID is also supporting the Government's National Micro-finance Programme, which provides access to credit and savings services to over 140,000 clients, 60 per cent. Of whom are women.

Cayman Islands

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he expects to receive from the EU the recovery grant of €7.4 million for the Cayman Islands for the purposes of defraying some of the costs of repair following the damage done by Hurricane Ivan. [73610]

Mr. Thomas: The European Commission has proposed an allocation of €3.7 million for post-Hurricane Ivan rehabilitation aid for the Cayman Islands. We hope that remaining procedures will be completed speedily and the funds disbursed in the near future.

We are following up with the Commission on the details of this decision and exploring the options open to the Cayman Islands to have their original request of €7 million reconsidered.

Departmental Bills (Amendments)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the occasions when an amendment has been moved by *(a)* a Labour backbencher, *(b)* an Opposition backbencher and *(c)* an Opposition front bench spokesman to a Bill sponsored by his Department that has been accepted by his Department during the current session; and if he will make a statement. [72105]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not sponsored any legislation during the current session.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many staff from his Department attended the Civil Service Islamic Society Eid-Ul-Adha event in London in 2005; and what the total cost was to his Department of their attendance. [73000]

Mr. Thomas: My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster will write to the hon. Member with details of the Civil Service Islamic Society Eid-Ul-Adha event. Copies of her letter will be placed in the Library.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what incentives his Department offers to encourage staff to share vehicles when travelling to work. [73002]

Mr. Thomas: DFID is strongly committed to the travel targets set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. We operate a car sharing scheme for our East Kilbride office on our internal website and we have also included links to similar schemes available on external websites. We also maintain updated bus and train timetables on our internal website and actively encourage staff to use public transport through regular notices, permanent displays of maps and guides, and promotion of events such as Bike Week 2006. We have no car parking spaces for staff in our London offices, but over 70 secure bicycle parking spaces, with storage and shower facilities.

Information Technology

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much was spent on information technology (IT) sourced from outside his Department in each of the last five years; who is responsible for such projects in his Department; and what IT *(a)* expertise and *(b)* qualifications they possess. [71768]

Mr. Thomas: DFID's central records do not distinguish IT purchases, so provision of spending information for these purchases would incur disproportionate costs. DFID procurement conforms to guidance from the Office of Government Commerce, and purchases are approved by a number of officials with delegated authority. All major IT purchases are reviewed by the Head of Information Systems, who has a mathematics degree and more than 25 years' experience of working in IT, including 16 years in a managerial role.

Legislation

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list those *(a)* Acts and *(b)* parts of Acts which received Royal Assent between 1976 and 2006 and for which his Department has policy responsibility which remain in force. [70373]

Hilary Benn: DFID has policy responsibility for the Commonwealth Development Corporation Act (1978), the Crown Agents Act (1995), the Commonwealth Development Corporation Act (1999) and the International Development Act (2002).

Small Change Big Difference

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department and its agencies have taken following the launch of the Government's "small change big difference" campaign. [72004]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has embraced the "small change big difference" campaign in many ways by encouraging its staff to improve their future health and well-being by making small, easily achievable changes to their lifestyle. The Department supports these changes by ensuring that our staff restaurants offer nutritious food, using fresh produce and offering "healthy options" wherever possible.

DFID encourages its staff to take control of their health and lives and to achieve a healthy work-life balance. The Department offers its staff flexible work patterns and provides a website that provides information and advice on how to deal with everyday issues such as bereavement, stress, nutrition, smoking and drinking.

Our well-being centres offer gym facilities to encourage staff to improve their health and well-being through physical activity. We also have secure bicycle parking spaces for staff who cycle to work, with storage and shower facilities.

As the programme of work develops, the Department of Health (DOH) will be working across all of Government to ensure the programme joins up to promote maximum impact. The DOH is leading the implementation for this initiative as part of its cross-government commitment to deliver the public health White Paper "Choosing Health".

TRANSPORT

Air Travel

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of changes in the demography of air passengers in the UK within the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [71147]

Gillian Merron: The last formal assessment undertaken was for the Air Transport White Paper in December 2003. The Department keeps these matters under review through regular surveys (eg CAA Airport Passenger Survey, British Social Attitudes Survey, International Passenger Survey and ONS Omnibus Survey).

As part of the analysis leading up to the Air Transport White Paper (ATWP), the Department carried out a formal assessment of the public "Attitudes to Air Travel", by population characteristics, using data from February 2002 ONS Omnibus Survey which can be found on the DfT Website.

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_transstats/documents/page/dft_transstats_505963.hcsp

Another supporting paper to the ATWP "Passenger Forecasts: Additional Analysis" reported differences between countries and regions within the UK in the propensity to fly, ie the relationship between the number of passengers and the general population. This can be found on the DfT website.

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_aviation/documents/page/dft_aviation_031861.pdf

Airbus A380

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) which Ministers were present for the arrival of the Airbus A380 at Heathrow Airport on 18 May; [74183]

(2) what departmental costs were incurred in transporting officials and Ministers to the arrival of the Airbus A380 at Heathrow Airport on 18 May. [74184]

Gillian Merron: The total cost incurred by the Department in transporting officials to the arrival of the Airbus A380 at Heathrow Airport on 18 May was £55. No Ministers from the Department were present, but my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer attended.

Aircraft Emissions

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the flights taken by Ministers in his Department since 2001; and what measures to offset the carbon emissions were taken for each flight. [68937]

Gillian Merron: Information about flights undertaken by Ministers in the Department for Transport on official business since its formation on 29 May 2002 has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the 'Ministerial Code' and 'Travel by Ministers', copies of which are available in the Library. Since 1999, the Government have published on an annual basis a list of all overseas visits by Cabinet Ministers costing in excess of £500. Copies of the lists are available in the Library. Information for 2005-06 is currently being compiled and will be published when it is ready.

All central Government ministerial and official air travel is being offset from 1 April 2006. Departmental aviation emissions will be calculated on an annual basis and subsequently offset through payments to a central fund. The fund will purchase certified emissions reductions credits from energy efficiency and renewable energy projects with high sustainable development benefits, located in developing countries.

Carbon dioxide emissions arising from 32 (Royal) Squadron flights are included in the Government's carbon offsetting commitment. Carbon emissions arising from the use of these flights will be recorded and offset in the same way as those for scheduled flights.

Buses

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action his Department is taking to ensure bus fares do not rise faster than the cost of motoring. [68689]

Gillian Merron: The Government are very concerned about the growing divergence between the cost of public transport and private motoring which is largely due to market forces. The rise in bus fares mostly reflects the increased costs of labour, fuel and insurance to bus operators. These costs need to be met either through fare increases or subsidy. The Department makes it clear in its dealings with the bus industry that affordable fares are a crucial factor in promoting patronage growth and accessibility of services.

The Government provide support for local bus services in the form of Bus Service Operators Grant, worth over £370 million annually to the industry. This grant reduces operating costs and therefore helps to minimise fares.

In addition, the Government have introduced free concessionary bus travel for over-60s and disabled people and made available an additional £350 million to local authorities to reimburse to operators the revenue foregone. As from 1 April 2008, holders of concessionary passes will be eligible for free local bus travel in any part of the country.

We are working up arrangements to develop new ways in which local authorities and operators can plan bus networks together by mutual agreement and consistently with competition law. This could include agreement on bus fares and ticketing.

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with bus companies about the impact of above-inflation increases in bus fares on socially excluded communities. [64690]

Gillian Merron: Transport Ministers regularly have meetings with bus companies and discuss a variety of matters with them. It is made clear at these meetings that affordable fares are seen as a crucial factor in promoting patronage growth and accessibility of services.

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has undertaken into the effects of above-inflation increases in bus fares on socially excluded communities. [68691]

Gillian Merron: No research has been undertaken by the Department specifically on the effect of high bus fares on socially excluded communities. However, we know from other social exclusion research that the affordability of public transport can be an issue for these communities. Relevant reports include:

"Social Exclusion and the Provision & Availability of Public Transport" (DTLR, 2000).

"Making the Connections: Final Report on Transport and Social Exclusion" (Social Exclusion Unit, 2003).

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will consider the extension of the free transport concession for those over 60 years in the West Yorkshire metro district for bus travel to include rail travel. [68853]

Gillian Merron: The Department has no plans to extend the statutory entitlement to concessionary travel to include rail services.

Mr. Ian Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how the extension nationwide of the free bus travel scheme for older and disabled people will be funded. [70994]

Gillian Merron: The Chancellor announced that up to £250 million in additional government funding would be made available for providing a national concessionary travel scheme from April 2008. We are currently looking at the options for delivering the national scheme and will consult with stakeholders including local authorities and bus operators in due course.

Calypso

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what safety deficiencies were identified when the Calypso was inspected at Tilbury in May; and why the ship was not detained at the docks on grounds of safety. [73436]

Dr. Ladyman: The passenger ship the Calypso was inspected in Tilbury under Port State Control on 5 May 2006. The ship was attended by Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) surveyors, London Port Health and a radio inspector. A full inspection and satisfactory safety drill was carried out. A total of 13 deficiencies were found and the nature of these deficiencies was not considered serious enough to warrant detention of the ship.

Departmental Bills (Amendments)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the occasions when an amendment has been moved by *(a)* a Labour back bencher, *(b)* Opposition back bencher and *(c)* Opposition front bench spokesman to a Bill sponsored by his Department which has been accepted by his Department during the 2005-06 Session; and if he will make a statement. [72474]

Gillian Merron: The Department for Transport has sponsored the following Bills during the current session: Crossrail (Hybrid) Bill, Merchant Shipping Pollution Act [*Lords*], Road Safety Bill [*Lords*] and the Civil Aviation Bill. Information on amendments moved and accepted during the committee and report stages on these Bills is published in the *Official Report*.

Departmental Budget

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much of the budget for his Department remained unspent in the 2005-06 financial year. [72868]

Gillian Merron: 2005-06 estimated outturn was published in the Department for Transport Annual Report 2006 (Cm 6817). Provisional outturn against final departmental expenditure limits will be published before the summer recess, in July.

Departmental Funding (Halifax)

Mrs. Riordan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding for which his Department is responsible has been allocated to the Halifax constituency in the past 12 months. [72313]

Gillian Merron: The Department allocates funding to support local transport to Calderdale borough council and West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority/Executive, which both cover the constituency. The local transport capital funding allocations that the Department announced in December 2004 for 2005-06 is set out in the following table.

£ million

Nature of funding	*Calderdale*	*West Yorkshire PTA*
Highways capital maintenance	3.639	0
Integrated transport improvements	2.337	8.442
Total	5.976	8.442

West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive received in the past 12 months a Rural Bus Subsidy Grant of £1.019 million of which £139,518 has been spent on bus services in Calderdale.

With regards to funding for rail and trunk roads, it is not possible to allocate funding to a specific constituency.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people in his Department have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* dismissed for (i) inappropriate use of the internet while at work and (ii) using work telephones to access premium rate numbers in each of the last five years. [67989]

Gillian Merron: The Department for Transport was established in May 2002.

Number of people disciplined or dismissed for inappropriate use of the internet at work in the Department for Transport

	Disciplined	*Dismissed*
2002	0	2
2003	1	2
2004	13	2
2005	2	0
2006	0	1

For using work telephones to access premium rate numbers one member of staff was disciplined in 2003, one in 2004 and one in 2005.

Regular reminders are issued to staff about their responsibility to not misuse the telephone, e-mail and internet systems. In order to ensure that these are not abused, or that the Department's security is not compromised, telephone, e-mails and internet use may be monitored periodically.

The Department's Staff Handbook establishes that staff must not make inappropriate use of official time including use of telephones and computer-related services. Such inappropriate use may constitute a disciplinary offence. There is also a separate policy on the use of the internet.

Staff are encouraged to regularly review these items to ensure they are complying with their responsibilities.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* EU foreign nationals and *(b)* non-EU foreign nationals have been employed in his Department in each of the last five years; what vetting procedures are in place for each category of staff; and whether these include liaison with foreign law enforcement agencies. [68021]

Gillian Merron: The Department for Transport does not hold information on EU foreign nationals, and non-EU foreign nationals centrally.

The Department's procedures for security vetting comply with the policy set out to Parliament by the then Prime Minister on 15 December 1994, which came into force on 1 January 1995. All staff who require security clearance for their posts in the Department are subject to this policy, regardless of their nationality.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many non-pensionable bonuses were awarded to members of his staff in each of the last three years; and what the total cost was. [73119]

Gillian Merron: The number and cost of non-pensionable bonuses awarded to Department for Transport staff (including all of its agencies) for each of the last three years was as follows:

	Number of bonuses	*Cost of bonuses (£000)*
2003-04	2,949	1,229
2004-05	3,419	1,500
2005-06	5,918	2,165

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many staff from his Department attended the Civil Service Islamic Society Eid-Ul-Adha event in London in 2005; and what the total cost was to his Department of their attendance. [73115]

Gillian Merron: My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster will write to the hon. Member with details of the Civil Service Islamic Society Eid-Ul-Adha event. Copies of her letter will be placed in the Library.

Leased Land

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* land and *(b)* property his Department and its predecessors (i) leases and (ii) leased in (A) Southend West constituency, (B) Essex, (C) Hertfordshire and (D) the metropolitan police area of London in (1) 1979, (2) 1983, (3) 1987, (4) 1992 and (5) 1997. [72473]

Gillian Merron: The Department leases 46 properties in the areas mentioned above and detailed information has been placed in the Library of the House. The Department does not lease land. The Department was formed in 2002 and information for the period prior to this date can be obtained only at disproportionate costs.

Maritime and Coastguard Agency

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he next expects to review the effectiveness of safety inspections carried out by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency; and if he will make a statement. [73435]

Dr. Ladyman: The UK attaches the highest priority to maritime safety. We are committed to promoting safer shipping and to minimising the incidence of accidents at sea.

MCA surveyors carry out flag state inspections of UK ships, and Port State Control inspections of foreign flag ships calling at UK ports. They are respected and recognised internationally for their commitment to provide a professional and high quality service.

Standards on UK ships are maintained at a high level. The UK is near the top of the Paris MoU's Port State Control white list and our vessels were less likely to be detained in Paris MOU Ports in the last three years than those of all but two other flags.

The UK's performance as port state was reviewed this year in an independent European Maritime Safety Agency Audit. The audit found that our Port State Control organisation (MCA) had good management, well developed structure and experienced and committed personnel. It also noted that we have developed

"a remarkable quality conscious culture which stimulates and provides opportunities for improvement of performance".

There is no need for a further review.

Ministerial Cars (Cleaning)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance he has issued on the cleaning of Ministers' cars in circumstances of *(a)* a hosepipe ban and *(b)* a drought order in the Thames Water region. [73638]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA) introduced restrictions on the cleaning of ministerial cars on 3 April 2006. If a hosepipe ban or drought order is introduced GCDA will comply fully with their conditions.

Nuclear Rail Freight

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the *(a)* safety and *(b)* security of trains transporting nuclear material; and with whom responsibility lies for providing the risk assessment for such trains. [73317]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is as follows.

(a) The regulations for the safe transport of radioactive material require that periodic assessments of the radiological impact of the transport of radioactive material are carried out. This Department has carried out surveys which show that the radiation doses from the transport of radioactive material under both normal and abnormal conditions are low.

The latest reports that include rail transport are: Survey into the Radiological Impact of the Normal Transport of Radioactive Material in the UK by Road and Rail (NRPB-W66) and Radiological Consequences Resulting from Accidents and Incidents Involving the Transport of Radioactive Materials in the UK 2004 Review (HPA-RPD-007). Copies of these reports have been placed in the House Library and are also available on the internet at the following websites:

http://www.hpa.org.uk/radiation/publications/w_series_reports/2005/nrpb_w66.htm

http://www.hpa.org.uk/radiation/publications/hpa_rpd_reports/2005/hpa_rpd_007.htm

(b) The security of nuclear transport is a matter for the Department of Trade and Industry. The transportation of spent nuclear fuel by rail is carried out in a secure manner and in accordance with stringent security regulations: the Nuclear Industries Security Regulations 2003. These regulations are administered and enforced by the Office for Civil Nuclear Security (OCNS), who regulate the security of such movements of spent nuclear fuel. The security of the transportation of civil nuclear material was thoroughly reviewed following the events of 11 September 2001, and is regularly reviewed in light of the prevailing threat. OCNS is satisfied that the measures in place to prevent theft or sabotage are adequately robust.

Under health and safety legislation it is the responsibility of the organisation carrying out any activity to carry out a risk assessment. In the specific case of activities involving radioactive material this is a requirement of the Ionising Radiations Regulations 1999 (1999 No. 3232).

Officials' Travel Costs

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discounts are available in relation to hotel accommodation used by *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers in his Department. [69083]

Gillian Merron: The Department for Transport, Highways Agency and Driving Standards Agency all use a centrally negotiated contract with Expotel, providing discounted rates for hotels throughout the UK. This is available to both civil servants and special advisers.

The Vehicle Certification Agency uses a centrally negotiated contract, and has a discount arrangement with a hotel in Detroit.

The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency has negotiated a preferential rate with Arnos Manor Hotel in Bristol, and MCA has similar arrangements with the Jury's Inn and Ibis West hotels in Southampton.

The Government Car and Despatch Agency and the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency currently have no discounted hotel rates in place.

Public Transport

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what steps he is taking to improve the skills of employees in the transport sector; and what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on this subject; [68856]

(2) what steps he is taking to improve the recruitment and retention of workers in the transport sector; [68857]

(3) what steps he is taking to encourage the recruitment of a more diverse cross section of workers in the transport sector; [68858]

(4) what discussions he has had with *(a)* the leaders of transport sector employers and *(b)* the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on their capacity to (i) train and (ii) improve the skills of their work force. [68860]

Gillian Merron: The Department for Transport is committed to valuing diversity and promoting equality. The Department facilitates the Women's Transport Network (WTN) to provide a forum for women to contribute to policy development in the transport field and to encourage women to enter and progress in the transport industries.

However, the recruitment and training of staff are commercial matters for individual transport sectors and employers to manage.

Railways

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport from which rolling stock manufacturers new rail vehicles have been purchased in each of the last seven years, broken down into companies based in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* mainland Europe and *(c)* elsewhere. [73608]

Derek Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Crewe and Nantwich (Mrs. Dunwoody) on 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2934-37W.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for which stations his Department has specified a reduction in the number of stopping trains each day since Ministers took over responsibility for passenger rail franchising from the Strategic Rail Authority. [62518]

Derek Twigg: Over the past 12 months since taking over responsibility for passenger rail franchising from the Strategic Rail Authority the Secretary of State for Transport has only specified the service at stations covered by the South Western Franchise. The Department has specified a minimum service level, outline details of which are found in the stakeholder briefing document available at www.dft.gov.uk. Bids for the replacement franchise are currently being prepared following the issue of the ITT on 31 March 2006. The contents of the ITT are confidential to bidders until the franchise is awarded later this year. The winning bidder will then develop the timetable.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the railway stations for which he has specified a reduction in the number of services in the past 12 months. [62465]

Derek Twigg: Over the past 12 months the Secretary of State for Transport has only specified services at stations covered by the South Western Franchise. The Department has specified a minimum service level, outline details of which are found in the stakeholder briefing document available at www.dft.gov.uk. Bids for the replacement franchise are currently being prepared following the issue of the ITT on 31 March 2006. The contents of the ITT are confidential to bidders until the franchise is awarded later this year. The winning bidder will then develop the timetable.

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures are in place to ensure disabled access to trains at rural railway stations. [71732]

Gillian Merron: All station operators, including those in rural areas, are required to meet the requirements of Part 3 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 with regard to access for disabled people. The Act requires them to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled people do not find it impossible or unreasonably difficult to access their services by removing or altering physical features, by finding a way to avoid them, or by providing the service by a reasonable alternative means. This may be done by making physical alterations to stations or taking such other action as is reasonable for any particular station. Operators are responding to these duties. Currently over half of railway journeys originate from step-free stations.

We do, however, recognise that further work at stations may be needed in some cases to make the railway system accessible to disabled people. We published the 'railways for all' strategy on 23 March which includes details of how the £370 million 'access for all' funding will be targeted to deliver access improvements at stations over the next 10 years.

We have also made available an additional £7 million a year that train operators, local authorities and other third parties can bid for on a match funding basis to make smaller scale accessibility improvements at stations, including rural stations.

We are also taking steps to ensure rail vehicles are accessible to disabled people and the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 1998 require that all new passenger rolling stock introduced from 1 January 1999 is accessible to disabled people. Over 4,500 rail vehicles which meet the requirements of those regulations have already been introduced and from no later than 1 January 2020 all rail vehicles will have to comply.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2403W on railways, whether *(a)* he and *(b)* other Ministers in his Department attended Northern Night at the 2005 Labour party conference. [63179]

Derek Twigg: The Department does not hold information about political engagements undertaken at party conferences.

Road Pricing

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether his road pricing pilot will be revenue neutral; [71860]

(2) what his policy will be for charging drivers based outside the geographic area of his proposed road pricing pilots who enter those areas during the course of the pilot; [71868]

(3) whether participation in his proposed road pricing pilot will be voluntary. [71869]

Dr. Ladyman: There are no current applications to the Secretary of State for the confirmation of road pricing (charging) schemes. The Secretary of State cannot pre-judge any applications that might be made to him in the future, and he has not done so.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will announce which region will host the pilot project for his road pricing policy. [71861]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 22 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1281W given to the hon. Member for Bristol East.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport who will meet the *(a)* management, *(b)* administration and *(c)* technology costs of his proposed road pricing pilot. [71867]

Dr. Ladyman: No decisions have been taken on what the balance of central Government contributions to local contributions might be in the case of the road pricing elements of TIF schemes. This will depend on what proposals are put forward by local authorities.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether motorists participating in the proposed road pricing pilot will be entitled to a fuel duty rebate; and how differential petrol prices will apply to those *(a)* in and *(b)* not participating in the pilot; [71870]

(2) whether motorists participating in the proposed road pricing pilot will be entitled to lower rates of fuel duty when driving outside the area covered by the pricing scheme. [71871]

Dr. Ladyman: Decisions on fuel duty are taken by the Chancellor through the usual Budget process. The Government's policy is that fuel duties should be applied at uniform rates across the country.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his policy will be on road pricing on major trunk roads passing through the areas covered by his proposed pilot. [71872]

Dr. Ladyman: We expect local authorities to work closely with the Highways Agency as they develop proposals for road pricing schemes. Should this result in proposals for pricing on the trunk road network these will be considered on their merits. The Secretary of State cannot pre-judge any decision that he may be called upon to make in the future and has not done so.

Rotherwas Access Road

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 801W, on the Rotherwas Access Road, when a decision will be announced on the Rotherwas Access Road. [73834]

Gillian Merron: The Department is currently considering Herefordshire's business case for this scheme alongside the West Midland region's advice on its priorities for major transport schemes within the indicative regional funding allocations announced in July 2005. The Department expects to announce our response later this year.

School Transport

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will encourage passenger transport executives *(a)* to pilot and *(b)* to develop the yellow bus system for school transport; [69536]

(2) what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* passenger transport authorities, *(b)* bus operators and *(c)* local authorities on new ways of transporting children to school; [69588]

(3) what initiatives his Department has undertaken to encourage *(a)* passenger transport executives and *(b)* local authorities to develop innovative systems of transportation of school children; and what funding he has allocated for this purpose for 2006-07; [69590]

(4) what recent discussions he has had with local authorities on their plans to promote safer, more sustainable transport for school children; [69591]

(5) whether his Department has evaluated the pilots of the yellow bus system of transporting children to school. [69595]

Gillian Merron: The Department has set out our plans for promoting safer, more sustainable travel to school and our expectations of local authorities in Travelling to School: an action plan which we published jointly with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in September 2003.

The Department wants children to walk or cycle to school but, where it is too far or it is considered not safe for them to do so, we want to see more children catching the bus.

The Department is not planning a national roll out of dedicated school buses, but we want to encourage individual local authorities and Passenger Transport Executives to consider school bus schemes as part of broader local transport planning and decide if they would be appropriate to their area. The Department knows from our earlier evaluation of various small-scale yellow and other dedicated school bus schemes that well-designed schemes have the potential to reduce car dependency for journeys to school and the traffic congestion that results from this. But care also needs to be taken to ensure that they are appropriate to local circumstances and do not reduce levels of walking or cycling or undermine the viability of important bus services available to the wider public.

The Department is providing £18.7 million over the next three years to purchase 150 dedicated buses for West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive's MyBus school bus scheme. The evaluation of this scheme should be completed next year but the initial signs are that there has been some impact in reducing the number of children travelling to school by car and other non-transport benefits have also been reported.

The Education and Inspections Bill includes provisions to improve home to school transport, including enabling a small number of local authorities to propose Pathfinder schemes to test innovative approaches to home to school transport. These schemes would support school choice, and increase the proportion travelling by sustainable means.

DfES has policy responsibility for home to school transport and will be talking to local authorities interested in running Pathfinder schemes, including passenger transport executives where relevant, later this year. Formal expressions of interest will only be sought after the Bill has been enacted, and formal consultation on the Pathfinder guidance and prospectus has taken place. DfES will support schemes, which it anticipates will start in September 2009, with £4 million pump priming and annual revenue support building up over several years to £12 million.

Small Change Big Difference Campaign

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department and its agencies have taken following the launch of the Government's 'small change big difference' campaign. [72001]

Gillian Merron: The Department for Transport promotes the health benefits of more walking and cycling through its initiatives to encourage more sustainable travel and through publications, such as 'walk in to work out'.

As the programme of work develops the Department of Health will be working across all of Government to ensure the programme joins up to promote maximum impact. DH is leading the implementation for this initiative as part of its cross-Government commitment to deliver the public health White Paper 'Choosing Health'.

Special Advisers

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been paid in *(a)* salary, *(b)* travelling expenses, *(c)* subsistence allowance and *(d)* removal expenses to special advisers in his private office in each of the last five years. [69084]

Gillian Merron: In respect of *(a)* since 2003, the Government have published on an annual basis the names and overall cost of special advisers and the number in each payband. For information relating to the last financial year I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement made by my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, on 21 July 2005 *Official Report*, columns 158-61WS.

Information on Special Advisers' salaries for the last financial year is currently being collected and will be published in the normal way when it is ready.

The Department for Transport was formed in May 2002. The total recorded travel *(b)* and subsistence costs *(c)* for Special Advisers since then are:

Financial Year	*Travel and Subsistence (£)*
2002-03	1,296.51
2003-04	834.30
2004-05	1,080.08
2005-06	5,425.26

It is not possible to disaggregate amounts spent on travel and subsistence.

The amount spent on travel and subsistence in 2005-06 is higher than in previous years, largely as a consequence of travel required due to the UK's Presidency of the European Union between July and December 2005.

All official travel by Special Advisers is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Ministerial Code and the Civil Service Management Code.

The Department for Transport has no record of payments of removal expenses for Special Advisers.

Telephone Advice Lines

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many telephone advice lines his Department and its non-departmental public bodies support; and how many telephone advisers each employs; and how much funding is provided by *(a)* his Department and its non-departmental public bodies, *(b)* other Government Departments, *(c)* the private sector and *(d)* the voluntary sector. [66589]

Gillian Merron: Within DfT(c) the only area running advice lines is Mobility Advice Vehicle Information Service (MAVIS), who have three lines:

MAVIS information line

National number for the UK Forum of Mobility Centres

Blue Badge Enquiry Line

A total of three staff are employed to provide information services, which include answering the advice lines. It is therefore not possible to calculate the cost of answering these advice lines.

The overall number of advice lines in use by DfT's agencies and NDPBs is 41, with the number of staff involved in support of these advice lines being 836.

Identifying the specific costs associated with these lines would incur disproportionate cost—many staff involved are not solely employed as telephone advisors. Funding for the agencies' and NDPBs' advice lines come from both the DfT and the private sector.

Tables giving details for the agencies' and NDPBs' advice lines, including funding have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Transport Infrastructure Funding

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list publicly-funded schemes of greater than £50,000 in value for transport infrastructure in *(a)* London and *(b)* West Yorkshire. [71502]

Gillian Merron: The Department does not hold comprehensive lists of all publicly funded transport infrastructure schemes in London and West Yorkshire.

For schemes in London, the Department allocates funds to Transport for London through the London Transport Grant. It is for Transport for London to decide how to allocate that money.

For improvement and maintenance schemes in West Yorkshire costing less than £5 million, the Department allocates block (not scheme-specific) support to the metropolitan district councils and passenger transport authority to implement the West Yorkshire local transport plan.

In addition, railway schemes in London and West Yorkshire are funded mainly by Network Rail.

The major schemes which have been funded directly by this Department, and which have opened or been fully approved in the last five years in London and West Yorkshire are as follows:

London

King's Cross station LUL ticket hall modernisation. Under construction.

West Yorkshire

A64 York Road Guided Bus scheme (Leeds). Opened 2001.

A641 Manchester Road Guided Bus scheme (Bradford). Opened 2002.

South Bradford Integrated Transport Scheme. Opened 2004.

Connecting the City (Bradford City Centre). Opened 2004

Leeds Inner Ring Road Stage 7. Under construction.

East Leeds Link Road. Fully approved with construction due to commence autumn 2006.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Music Education

13. **Dr. Cable:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on future Standards Fund funding of music education in schools. [73383]

Mr. Dhanda: Funding beyond 2007-08 is dependent on the outcome of the comprehensive spending review. However, there has been an overall increase in funding of music education in schools through the standards fund for this year and next.

In addition to grant of around £60 million made to local music services, there has been a further £30 million identified for schools intended specifically to support instrumental and vocal tuition for key stage 2 pupils.

Children's Directors

14. **Kali Mountford:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance he has issued to children's directors on co-ordination of their different policy responsibilities. [73384]

Beverley Hughes: There has been guidance since 2004 when 'Every child matters: change for children' was published along with a joint DH/DfES publication on supporting local delivery. The White Paper 'Our health our care, our say' (January 2006) set out expectations for joint working between PCTs, GPs and children's trusts, including commissioning of services, local area agreements, delivery through multi-disciplinary networks and teams, performance assessment and alignment of planning and finance cycles for PCTs and local authorities. Guidance for practitioners and managers is also kept up to date.

Communications with local authorities are coordinated through a communications gateway which significantly contributes to the coherence of communications to local authorities.

Single Sciences

15. **Mrs. Dorries:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on changes to the arrangements for studying single sciences at GCSE level. [73385]

Mr. Dhanda: The "science and innovation investment framework 2004 to 2014: next steps" document outlines our commitment to encourage schools to provide greater access to the three separate sciences. By September 2008 our aim is that all pupils achieving at least level 6 at key stage 3 will have access to study three separate science GCSEs, to increase progression to, and attainment at, A-level science.

Africa (Children's Policies)

16. **Ms. Keeble:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action his Department has taken to pursue the Commission for Africa's recommendation on support for children's policies in Africa. [73386]

Bill Rammell: We have recently supported a very successful young carer's workshop in Nairobi in partnership with the Commonwealth organisation for social work, the Commonwealth youth programme and the Children's Society.

I am particularly pleased there was such a strong contribution from young carers' from Africa and the UK. The conference has strengthened the voice of young people who carry out these difficult responsibilities in very challenging situations.

Financial Capability Education

17. **Ms. Diana R. Johnson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proposals the qualification and curriculum authority has developed for making financial capability education more explicit in the national mathematics curriculum. [73387]

Jim Knight: QCA are taking forward the remit to raise the profile of financial capability education in a number of ways. To identify financial contexts within the development of functional mathematics; through guidance for mathematics teachers; and through a suite of sample lesson plans, set in the context of shopping and retailing.

Ataullah Siddiqui

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what process was undertaken to assess the suitability of Ataullah Siddiqui for the role of adviser to the Government on Islam in Higher Education; [72455]

(2) what steps his Department took to investigate whether there were links between Ataullah Siddiqui and the Jamaat-e-Islami Party prior to his appointment as adviser to the Government on Islam in Higher Education; [72456]

(3) what steps his Department took to investigate whether there were links between the Islamic Foundation of Leicester, the Markfield Institute of Higher Education and the Jamaat-e-Islami Party prior to the appointment of Ataullah Siddiqui as adviser to the Government on Islam in Higher Education. [72457]

Bill Rammell: I have appointed Dr. Siddiqi to advise the Department on how the quality of information about Islam available to students in universities and colleges can be improved. Dr. Siddiqi will be taking account of a range of views, and will be making recommendations early in 2007.

I appointed Dr. Siddiqi to this role because after careful consideration I decided he was the best qualified of a number of candidates. Dr. Siddiqi has a commitment to improving relationships between Muslims and the wider community, and is vice-chair of the Christian-Muslim forum launched by the Archbishop of Canterbury in January 2006. He has a distinguished academic record and an appropriate level of understanding of the education system. While the content of his report is a matter for him to decide, after appropriate consultation, Dr. Siddiqi shares the Government's concern that the material available about Islam in educational institutions is often unduly narrow in its outlook, and does not deal adequately with the role of Islam in a modern pluralistic society.

Dr. Siddiqi has assured me categorically that he has no links to the Jamaat-e-Islami Party.

Dr. Siddiqi is director of the Markfield Institute for Higher Education, although his appointment is in a personal capacity. The Markfield Institute of Higher Education is a higher education institution whose courses are validated by the University of Loughborough, and are subject to an audit of quality by the Quality Assurance Agency. It is sponsored by the Islamic Foundation Trust, an organisation which has a number of collaborations with universities in the UK and overseas. Neither Markfield nor the Islamic Foundation Trust have organisational links to Jamaat-e-Islami.

Children Centre Support

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which individuals and organisations his Department consulted before making the decision to contract out children's centre support work from the Department. [73466]

Beverley Hughes: The decision to contract out support for the roll-out of children's centres followed a recommendation from a wider review of the Government's 10-Year Childcare Strategy, during which a wide range of stakeholders were consulted, including local authority lead officials, children's centre managers and Sure Start and Children's Fund regional team leaders.

Before deciding to accept this recommendation the Department—in addition to work with a range of its own staff—held discussions with the Training and Development Agency for Schools, the Children's Workforce Development Council, with Government Office Directors of Children and Learners and with the Department's Trade Union side.

Connexions

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Connexions Card, with particular reference to take-up. [71720]

Beverley Hughes: The latest independent evaluation report of the effectiveness of the Connexions Card, undertaken by York Consulting Ltd. and published in January 2005 found that there had been improvements in engagement of schools and colleges and young people since 2003. There was also indicative evidence that the card may be having a positive effect on some cardholders and that many cardholders are positive about the potential benefits of the card. However, there was no evidence that the originally intended impact on increasing post-16 participation in further education and training is yet being achieved. Numbers taking up the card at that time were lower than original expectations. There are currently 604,645 Connexions cardholders.

Foreign Languages

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which foreign languages are taught in schools in Coventry South. [73462]

Jim Knight: Information is not collected on the subjects taught in schools. While it is possible to provide information on schools where at least one pupil has been entered for a particular subject, it is not possible, however, to say whether the school has actually taught the subject or whether the pupil has been entered privately. 15-year old pupils in Coventry South entered GCSEs in 2005 in the following languages—Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Classical Civilisation, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Italian, Latin, Panjabi, Portuguese, Spanish, Turkish and Urdu. Similar information is not readily available for other age groups.

Information Technology

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* originally estimated, *(b)* most recently estimated and *(c)* outturn cost was in each of the five largest information technology contracts agreed by his Department with outside suppliers over the last five years. [71796]

Phil Hope: The information as requested is not readily available centrally within the Department for Education and Skills. To respond fully would involve an extensive internal and external information collection exercise which would exceed the recommended disproportionate cost threshold.

An analysis of the Department's individual learning account (ILA) programme is given in the report: 'The House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts (2003), individual learning accounts, tenth report of session 2002-03' (Ref: HC 544), TSO, London.

An analysis of the Department's UK e-university project is given in the report: 'The House of Commons Education and Skills select committee (2005), UK e-university, third report of session 2004-05' (Ref: HC 205), TSO, London.

In addition, I refer the hon. Member to the answers given by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children Young People and Families on 13 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 192W; and, 3 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1314W.

Margaret Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to improve the quality of information and communication technology teaching in schools. [73382]

Phil Hope: Through the national strategies and national council for school leadership we are developing materials and peer-to-peer support to help school leaders and teachers make the best use of information and communications technology teaching to raise standards across the curriculum. We are supporting schools to invest in new teaching technologies such as interactive whiteboards and tablet PCs that are transforming many classrooms.

Private Contractors

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills with which private companies the Department has contracts; and what the *(a)* value and *(b)* purpose of each contract is. [73467]

Bill Rammell: This information could be supplied only at disproportionate cost.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Abdul Razzaq Ali al-Jedda

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations she has made to the Iraqi government on the detention since October 2004 without charge or trial of joint UK/Iraqi national Abdul Razzaq Ali al-Jedda; and if she will make a statement. [73596]

Dr. Howells: Mr. al-Jedda is being detained by the British contingent of the Multi-National Force in Iraq for imperative reasons of security under the authority conferred by United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1546 (2004) and 1637 (2005).

Cayman Islands

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what timetable has been set for the modernisation of the Cayman Islands Constitution; and if she will make a statement. [73611]

Mr. Hoon: The timetable for Overseas Territory constitutional reviews is a matter for agreement between the Government and the Territory concerned. Following the publication of the Cayman Islands Constitution Review Commissioners' report in March 2002, there were initial negotiations on a new constitution between representatives of the UK and the Cayman Islands in December 2002. A new draft Constitution was prepared to reflect the outcome of these discussions and sent to the Islands in February 2003. This was debated by the Legislative Assembly in November 2003. The then Cayman Islands Government put the review process on hold in early 2004. Following the election of a new government in May 2005, constructive exploratory talks were held between a UK team and Cayman Islands representatives in March 2006. Once the consultation process, which we understand the Cayman Islands intends to hold, has been completed, the UK stands ready to participate in further discussions with Cayman Islands representatives.

Chad

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of *(a)* the rebel attack on 13 April on N'Djamena and *(b)* allegations of Sudanese involvement (i) in this action and (ii) with rebel groups in Chad; and if he will make a statement. [66688]

Mr. McCartney: The United Nations Security Council has condemned the recent attempt to overthrow the Government of Chad by force and called on the parties in Chad to resolve their political differences by negotiation.

We are aware of reports concerning the Government of Sudan's alleged support for Chadian rebels. We welcome the African Union's (AU) initiative to send a mission to Chad to examine the political situation and investigate such allegations. This mission arrived in N'Djamena on 21 April and will report to the AU Peace and Security Council.

We continue to call on all sides to show restraint, and on the Governments of Chad and Sudan to resolve their differences and restore calm to the region without the use of violence.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to *(a)* Sudan, *(b)* the African Union and *(c)* the UN regarding the attack on N'Djamena. [66717]

Mr. McCartney: The Chadian army defeated attacks on N'Djamena and Adre by rebel groups on 13 April. We are aware of reports concerning the Government of Sudan's alleged support for Chadian rebels. We continue to call on all sides to show restraint, and on the Governments of Chad and Sudan to resolve their differences and restore calm to the region without the use of violence.

Although we have not made recent representations to the African Union (AU), we welcome their initiative to send a mission to Chad to examine the political situation and investigate such allegations. This mission arrived in N'Djamena on 21 April, and will report to the AU Peace and Security Council.

We were proactive in supporting the United Nations Security Council's condemnation of the attempt to overthrow the Government of Chad by force and called on the parties to resolve their political differences by negotiation.

Congo

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make representations to the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo on the arrest of the Reverend Kuthino Fernando; and what discussions she has had with the Government on the use of secret police. [73508]

Mr. McCartney: Through our embassy in Kinshasa, we have registered our concern over the arrest of Reverend Kuthino with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). We continue to remind all parties in the DRC that freedom of expression must be respected and ethnically charged speech must be prevented, particularly during the upcoming electoral campaign.

The international community has repeatedly made clear to the Congolese authorities that major reform of the security services is necessary. We have stated publicly that human rights abuses committed by security agencies need to be prevented, and their perpetrators brought to justice.

Departmental Expenditure

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will list the 10 non-public sector entities that have received the largest total sum of payments from her Department in each of the last five years. [71791]

Mr. Hoon: The top 10 non-public body suppliers for each year are:

2001-02

Computacentre (UK) Ltd.
Armorgroup Services Limited
American Express (Europe)
Global Crossing(UK)Telecom Ltd.
Taylor Woodrow Construction Ltd.
Laing Ltd.
Exel Freight Mgt (UK) Ltd.
NFC Moving Services
Logica UK Ltd.
Atos Kpmg Consulting

2002-03

Global Crossing(UK)Telecom Ltd.
Cap Gemini Ernst and Young UK Plc
Armorgroup Services Limited
Computacenter (UK) Ltd.
American Express Europe Ltd.
NFC Moving Services
Fujitsu Consulting Ltd.
Exel Freight Mgt (UK) Ltd.
Amey BPO Services Ltd.
Logica UK Ltd.

2003-04

Global Crossing(UK)Telecom Ltd.
Armorgroup Services Limited
American Express Europe Ltd.
Computacenter (UK) Ltd.
Cap Gemini Ernst and Young UK Plc
Control Risks Group
NFC Moving Services
Amey BPO Services Ltd
World Television
Exel Freight Mgt (UK) Ltd

2004-05

Control Risks Group
Global Crossing(UK)Telecom Ltd
Rotary International
American Express Europe Ltd
Capgemini UK Plc
Armorgroup Services Limited
Computacenter (UK) Ltd
Orostream Specialised Building Service Group
Exel Freight Mang UK Ltd.
Security Printing and Systems Ltd.

2005-06

Control Risks Group
Global Crossing(UK)Telecom Ltd.
Hewlett-Packard Ltd.
Armorgroup Services Limited
Capgemini UK Plc
American Express Europe Ltd.
Rotary International
Jack Morton Worldwide Limited
Gibs Ltd.
Crown Worldwide Ltd.

Disability Access

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether any building in her Department falls short of disability access regulations. [73032]

Mr. Hoon: All Foreign and Commonwealth Office buildings in the UK meet the access requirements under disability access regulations, with the exception of a small number of portacabins at Hanslope Park which were erected prior to the regulations coming into force. These have limited access for people with a mobility disability and are due for demolition within the next two years. At present no one with such disability requires access to the portacabins. If access were needed we would look at the options available in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act.

EU Directives

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will list the directives in respect of which the European Commission has taken the UK Government to court for failing to transpose them into national law since 1997. [69519]

Mr. Hoon: The following table sets out the information. A number of the cases are marked as being 'Removed from the Register'. These are cases where the application was lodged at the European Court of Justice but did not proceed to judgment, in most cases because the UK satisfied the Commission that the directive had been implemented. Where information on these cases is available it has been included. However, it would incur disproportionate cost to provide details for them all.

ECJ case reference	*Directive*
C-39/99	REMOVED FROM REGISTER
C-69/99	Failure to properly transpose articles 3 and 5 of directive 91/676/EEC on protection of waters against pollution by nitrates from agricultural sources
C-455/99	REMOVED FROM REGISTER
C-468/99	REMOVED FROM REGISTER
C-441/00	Failure to properly implement directive 96/48/EC on the inter-operability of the Trans-European High Speed Rail system
C-30/01	Failure to implement directives in Gibraltar—67/548/EC (packaging and labelling of dangerous substances), 87/1 8/EC (good laboratory practices), 93/12/EC (sulphur content of liquid fuels), 79/113/EC as amended by 85/405/EC (noise emissions of construction equipment), 84/533/EC (sound power level of compressors), 84/534/EDC (sound power level of tower cranes), 84/535/EC (sound power level of welding generators), 84/536/EC (sound power level of power generators), 84/537/EC (sound power level of hand-held concrete breakers), 84/538/EC (sound power level of lawn mowers), 86/594/EC (airborne noise of household appliances), 86/662/EC (limitation of noise of hydraulic excavators etc.), 94/62/EC (packaging and packaging waste), 97/35/EC (deliberate release of GM organisms)
C-31/01	REMOVED FROM REGISTER
C-39/01	Failure to transpose directive 96/61 on integrated pollution prevention and control
C-373/01	REMOVED FROM REGISTER (Failure to transpose directive (91/157/EEC) on batteries in NI and Gibraltar)
C-374/01	REMOVED FROM REGISTER (Failure to transpose directive 98/8/EC on biocidal products)
C-382/01	REMOVED FROM REGISTER
C-489/01	Failure to transpose directive 97/9/EC on investor compensation schemes in Gibraltar
C-63/02	Failure to transpose directive 98/83/EC on the quality of water intended for human consumption in Wales and Northern Ireland
C-210/02	REMOVED FROM REGISTER (Failure to adopt for Gibraltar all the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with directive 97/43/Euratom (health protection of individuals against the dangers of ionising radiation in relation to medical exposure))
C-218/02	Failure to fully transpose directive 96/29/Euratom (protection of health of workers and public against dangers from ionising radiation)
C-305/02	REMOVED FROM REGISTER (Failure to transpose directive 2000/21/EC on the list of legislation referred to in article 13 of directive 67/548/EEC)
C-310/02	REMOVED FROM REGISTER (Failure to transpose directive 1998/98/EC on classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances in Gibraltar)
C-331/02	REMOVED FROM REGISTER (Failure to transpose directive 1999/30/EC relating to the limit values for sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, oxides of nitrogen, particulate matter and lead in ambient air in Gibraltar)
C-332/02	Failure to transpose directive 1999/13/EC (limitation of emissions of volatile organic compounds due to the use of organic solvents)
C-405/02	REMOVED FROM REGISTER (Failure to transpose directive 99/42/EC on recognition of professional qualifications)
C-421/02	Failure to fully transpose directive 85/337/EC (assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment)
C-423/02	Failure to transpose directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste
C-424/02	Failure to transpose article 3 of directive 75/439/EC as amended by directive 87/101/EC on the disposal of waste oils
C-431/02	Failure to fully transpose directive 91/689/EC on hazardous waste
C-458/02	REMOVED FROM REGISTER (Failure to correctly implement/comply with article 8 of directive 92/100 on rental right and lending right and on certain rights related to copyright)
C-62/03	Failure to properly transpose directive 75/442/EEC on waste as amended by directive 91/156/EEC and decision 96/350/EC
C-277/03	Failure to transpose directive 2000/53/EC on end of life vehicles
C-349/03	Failure to transpose directive 77/799/EC on mutual assistance in the field of direct and indirect taxation in Gibraltar
C-483/03	Failure to transpose directive 2001/12 (development of Community's railways), 2001/13 (licensing of railway undertakings) and 2001/14 (allocation of infrastructure capacity and charging for use of infrastructure)
C-508/03	Failure to properly transpose and apply directive 85/337/EC (assessment of effects of certain projects on the environment)
C-6/04	Failure to correctly transpose directive 92/43/EEC (the habitats directive)
C-88/04	Failure to transpose directive 2001/29/EC on the harmonisation of aspects of copyright and related rights
C-164/04	Failure to fully transpose directive 2001/17/EC (re-organisation and winding up of insurance undertakings)
C-199/04	Failure to interpret and apply national legislation so as to correctly implement directive 85/337/EC (assessment of effects of certain projects on the environment)
C-385/04	Failure to transpose directive 2001/16/EC (interoperability of conventional rail system)
C-455/04	Failure to transpose directive 2001/55/EC (minimum standards for temporary protection in event of mass influx of displaced persons)
C-484/04	Failure to correctly implement directive 93/104/EC (organisation of working time)
C-505/04	Failure to transpose directive 2001/19/EC (mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other qualifications) in Gibraltar
C-37/05	Failure to correctly transpose articles 2 and 4 of directive 85/337 (assessment of effects of certain projects on the environment)
C-126/05	REMOVED FROM REGISTER (Failure to transpose directive 2000/34/EC amending directive 93/104/EC (working time))
C-131/05	Failure to correctly transpose article 6 of directive 79/409/EEC (birds directive) and articles 12 and 13 of directive 92/43/EEC (habitats directive)
C-323/05	REMOVED FROM REGISTER (Failure to transpose directive 2001/95/EC on general product safety)
C-138/06	Failure to transpose directive 2002/49/EC on the assessment and management of environmental noise
C-139/06	Failure to transpose directives 2002/96/EC and 2003/108/EC on waste electronic and electrical equipment
C-455/06	Failure to fully transpose directive 96/29/Euratom on safety standards for the protection of workers and the public against the dangers of ionising radiation

European Council

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make a statement on the future of the vetoes held by individual member states over measures proposed in the European Council. [73780]

Mr. Hoon: The European Council operates by consensus. There are no proposals to change this.

Information Technology

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much was spent on information technology (IT) sourced from outside her Department in each of the last five years; who is responsible for such projects in her Department; and what IT *(a)* expertise and *(b)* qualifications they possess. [71789]

Mr. Hoon: The total value of information technology contracts greater than £1 million let by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) over the last five years is £478,245,262.

Some of these contracts run for more than five years. The total includes a £180 million contract with Global Crossing for provision of both voice and data communications for the FCO's Telecommunications Network.

In accordance with the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) best practice, each project has a senior responsible owner at an appropriate level with responsibility for, and knowledge of, the business requirement. Project management is provided internally or sourced externally according to the skills and qualifications required for the scale of project concerned. All IT-enabled projects above the relevant threshold are approved and monitored by the FCO's Investment Committee, and are subject to external validation through the OGC Gateway review process. Both ensure that the project team is adequately staffed and professionally skilled to deliver effectively. To give full details of all staff concerned would incur disproportionate cost.

Nepal

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what her Department's policy is on the granting of export licences to Nepal for the sale of arms. [73722]

Dr. Howells: All applications from the UK are rigorously assessed on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Export Licensing Criteria, taking full account of the prevailing circumstances at the time of application. This process includes specific criteria whereby we will not issue a licence where there is a clear risk that the proposed export might be used for internal repression, might aggravate existing tensions or conflict in the country of final destination or that the export may be used aggressively against another country. Details of all export licences approved to Nepal are available in the Quarterly and Annual Reports on Strategic Export Controls (available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website at: http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c= Page &cid=1089131553823), and are subject to detailed retrospective scrutiny by the Quadripartite Committees.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what monitoring of the ceasefire in Nepal is undertaken by UK representatives; and if she will make a statement. [73745]

Dr. Howells: None. The UK has no locus to act as a ceasefire monitor.

Prisoners (Iraq/Afghanistan)

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations she has received from the US Administration in the last six months regarding UK policy on the transfer of prisoners held by UK forces in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan to the custody of US forces in those countries. [73725]

Dr. Howells: We have received no formal representations in the last six months. But we regularly discuss the range of issues relating to the operational theatres in Iraq and Afghanistan, including detention, with the US.

Uganda

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment she has made of reports that the British law firm Denton Wilde Sapte is to prosecute the Ugandan opposition leader Dr. Kizza Besigye for treason in a trial which carries the death penalty; and if she will make a statement. [73073]

Mr. McCartney: We are aware of media reports that a British firm of solicitors may have been approached by the Ugandan public prosecutor to assist in the prosecution of Dr Besigye. This is a matter for the parties concerned.

The prosecution has however given no indication that they will seek the death penalty should Dr. Besigye be convicted. The last occasion on which a capital sentence imposed by the High Court was carried out in Uganda was in 1999. We have repeatedly made clear to the Ugandan Government our opposition to the death penalty and the need for a fair and transparent judicial process.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment she has made of the internal situation in Uganda; and if she will make a statement. [73113]

Mr. McCartney: Uganda faces two main internal challenges: developing and sustaining democratic accountability and good governance, and bringing to an end the long-running conflict in the North. We have a regular dialogue with the Ugandan authorities on both issues and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of

State for International Development discussed them in depth during his visit on 15-16 May. He emphasised that this was a crucial time in Uganda's political development. The re-introduction of a multi-party political system after 25 years was an important achievement: both Government and Opposition must work together to achieve an accountable and transparent political process. He welcomed the President's manifesto commitment to tackle corruption and to hold those responsible to account. We welcome commitments by the Government of Uganda to deal with the conflict in the North.

UK Prisoners Abroad

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 16 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 905-7W, on UK prisoners abroad, how many UK citizens detained in overseas gaols had a last residential address in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend West. [73245]

Dr. Howells: As British nationals detained overseas are not required to inform local consular officials of their last UK residential address, I am unable to provide the information requested by the hon. Member.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will take steps to ensure that Arthur Mutambara of the Movement for Democratic Change is released from custody in Zimbabwe or given a fair trial. [73668]

Mr. McCartney: We note with concern the arrest of Arthur Mutumbara and his party colleagues. They were released on 19 May. It is not yet clear if charges will be pressed. Our embassy in Harare has been and remains in contact with Mr. Mutambara's associates. This appears to be yet another instance of the Zimbabwean Government harassing those who oppose them. We will continue to press for the restoration of democracy and the rule of law.

CABINET OFFICE

Information Technology

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much was spent on information technology (IT) sourced from outside her Cabinet Office in each of the last five years; who is responsible for such projects in the Cabinet Office; and what IT *(a)* expertise and *(b)* qualifications they possess. [71783]

Mr. McFadden: The amount spent on information technology (IT) hardware, software, consultancy and services sourced from outside the Department in each of the last five financial years is shown in the table.

	Expenditure (£)
2001-02	16,630,784
2002-03	16,719,547
2003-04	21,195,208
2004-05	22,385,617
2005-06	35,756,263

These totals do not include the costs of ancillary or supporting IT provided as an integral part of contracts for other goods and services and not separately identified.

The figures for 2005-06 are subject to audit. Audited figures will be available in the published resource accounts, due before the summer recess.

Overall policy for IT projects in the Department falls under the shared services director in the e-Government unit. The current post holder has 20 years experience in IT management roles in both private and public sectors and is a qualified accountant.

Ministerial Tenure

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what the average length of time in office has been for *(a)* Cabinet Ministers, *(b)* Ministers of State and *(c)* Parliamentary Under-Secretaries of State since 1997. [73603]

Hilary Armstrong: Information on ministerial appointments can be obtained from the 'List of Ministerial Responsibilities'. Editions since 1997 are available in the Library.

Social Exclusion (Air Travel)

Anne Main: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what assessment she has made of the role of budget airlines in reducing social exclusion by enabling passengers wider access to foreign and internal travel; and if she will make a statement. [71168]

Hilary Armstrong: No formal assessment of the role of budget airlines in reducing social exclusion has been made, however we recognise the value that access to affordable travel may have in helping promote social inclusion.

Tackling social exclusion is one of this Government's most ambitious and important goals and transport problems can reinforce social exclusion. The social exclusion unit has focused on ensuring that local services and activities are accessible, and as a result of the 2003 'Making the Connections: Transport and Social Exclusion' report, accessibility planning is now a central feature of local transport plans.

Vehicle Sharing

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what incentives her Department offers to encourage staff to share vehicles when travelling to work. [73046]

Mr. McFadden: Given that the vast majority of Cabinet Office employees are located in central London and travel to and from work by public transport, the Cabinet Office does not offer specific incentives to encourage its employees to share vehicles when travelling to work.

Despite this, the Cabinet Office will be encouraging more sustainable travel (business and travel to and from work) among its employees depending on the nature and circumstances of particular sites. For example, the Cabinet Office's Environmental Policy is currently being revised and the travel policy section is being strengthened to this effect and will encourage employees to car share where public transport is not reasonably accessible travelling to and from work.

Further initiatives will be considered as part of any Government-wide publicity campaigns on travelling more sustainably and the Cabinet Office's membership of the Civil Service Travel Group (CSTG). The CSTG aims to improve travel sustainability across the entire civil service by developing and delivering on action plans for each Department.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Government Vehicles

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister under what circumstances ministerial cars and drivers under the control of his Department may be used to transport his personal acquaintances on private business; and whether it is his policy to reimburse the costs of such use. [67355]

The Deputy Prime Minister *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* Guidance on the use of ministerial cars is set out in the "Ministerial Code" and "Travel by Ministers".

My Permanent Secretary at the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has replied, on his own behalf and that of the Cabinet Secretary, to a letter from the hon. Member for Old Bexley and Sidcup (Derek Conway) concerning the alleged misuse of my ministerial car. A copy of this reply has been made available in the Library of the House. The Permanent Secretary confirmed he was satisfied that the Department had appropriate systems in place and that at no time did I direct that my car be used as had been alleged.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Civil Service Uniform

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many security guards wearing Crown-based insignia *(a)* there are in and *(b)* have been contracted by the civil service, broken down by community background. [66396]

Mr. Hanson: The following table outlines the number of security guards employed and contracted by the Northern Ireland civil service who are supplied with uniforms bearing a crown based insignia.

Security guards employed and contracted by NICS

	Number
Security guards in NICS who wear crown insignia	49
Security guards contracted by NICS who wear crown insignia	—
Total	49

The following table provides a breakdown by community background for the entire NICS guard force, as the information for only those supplied with uniforms with crown based insignia or who are contracted by the NICS is not readily available.

Community background	*Number of staff*
Protestant	82
Catholic	10
Not determined	14
Total	106

Councillors (Company Boards)

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what steps are being taken to address the reasons for the moratorium preventing local councillors from serving on the boards of arm's length companies; [72922]

(2) if he will bring forward legislation to enable councils to appoint *(a)* councillors and *(b)* officers to serve as directors of arm's length companies. [72923]

David Cairns: There is no moratorium preventing district councillors from serving on the boards of arm's length companies which district councils in Northern Ireland are currently involved in.

At present, district councils do not have the power to establish or participate in companies. However, the Department of the Environment will commence consultation very shortly with district councils and other interested parties on a proposal to make subordinate legislation to allow councils, in exercising certain functions, to establish or participate in companies in order to carry out their duty of Best Value. The legislation will enable councils to appoint councillors or officers to serve as directors of such companies.

In the meantime, until this subordinate legislation is made, the Department has agreed to give sanction to district councils under Article 19 of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 in respect of payments of attendance allowance and expenses to councillors and officers who represent their councils on companies. The approval of the Department prevents local government auditors from taking action which would result in persons responsible for the expenditure having to repay it.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what incentives *(a)* each Department in Northern Ireland and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Office, offer to encourage staff to share vehicles when travelling to work. [73086]

David Cairns: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about what incentives each department in Northern Ireland, including the Northern Ireland Office, offer to encourage staff to share vehicles when travelling to work.

I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

The Travelwise Campaign in Northern Ireland is aimed at promoting more sustainable transport options, including walking, cycling, greater use of public transport and the concept of car sharing, particularly for the journey to work and places of education.

Travelwise NI assists Government Departments as well as private and public sector businesses in promoting workplace travel plans, to encourage staff to travel more sustainably. Car Sharing is only one element of a travel plan.

To facilitate car sharing in Government Departments, in June last year, Nigel Hamilton, Head of the NI Civil Service launched the Travelwise NI Car Share Scheme on behalf of Roads Service. This is a no-charge web-based scheme where Civil Servants are encouraged to go on-line at www.travelwisenicarshare.com and register their journey details. The system automatically searches for a person travelling in the same direction and puts staff in contact with each other to share their journeys.

The scheme has been widely promoted across Government Departments through the media, information days, internal magazines and competitions and has now been rolled out to businesses and to the public. To date, 1,312 members have registered on the scheme and 38% of members have had their journeys matched and are potentially car sharing.

By way of local incentives, the Department for Regional Development created 21 dedicated car share spaces at its Headquarters in Clarence Court, Belfast, to encourage greater car sharing among staff. I also understand that the Department of Finance and Personnel and the Department of Education offer staff who car share a guaranteed car parking space at some of their buildings.

I should also add that Roads Service is currently responsible for 20 Park & Ride/Park & Share car parks across the province which provide 1,478 car park spaces. Civil Servants, like any member of the public, can park their cars at these sites and share the journey to work, thereby reducing travel costs. These sites are promoted at a Divisional level as well as through the Travelwise NI Website (www. travelwiseni.com). Further Park & Ride and Park & Share sites have been identified within the Sub-Regional Transport Plan and the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of staff in *(a)* each department in Northern Ireland and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Office, are making additional voluntary contributions to their pension. [73087]

Mr. Hanson: The following table details the number and percentage of staff in each department in Northern Ireland, including the Northern Ireland Office who are making additional voluntary contributions to their pensions.

Figures relating to the Northern Ireland Office include both members of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Home Civil Service working in that Department.

Employing dept	*Active members*	*AVC contributors*	*Overall percentage*
Department of Education	667	25	3.75
Northern Ireland Office	4303	107	2.49
Department of Finance and Personnel	2982	124	4.16
Department of the Environment	3506	90	2.57
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	3415	177	5.18
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	973	40	4.11
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	450	10	2.22
Department of Regional Development	3092	148	4.79
OFM and DFM	375	36	9.6
Department of Social Development	7914	87	1.1
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Industry	716	45	6.28
Department of Employment and Learning	1818	44	2.42
Total	30,211	933	3.09

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many non-pensionable bonuses were awarded to staff in *(a)* each department in Northern Ireland and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Office, in each of the last three years; and what the total cost was. [73088]

Mr. Hanson: The following table details the non-pensionable bonuses that were awarded to staff in each Department of the Northern Ireland Administration and the Northern Ireland Office (including Agencies), in each of the last three financial years.

It is part of the Government's pay policy that not all reward should be in the form of consolidated increases: non-consolidated, non-pensionable payments should also be part of civil service pay strategies and should focus on in-year performance. These payments, which form part of the annual NICS pay deal, represent the bulk of the following figures.

Department	2003-04 Number of bonuses	2003-04 Cost	2004-05 Number of bonuses	2004-05 Cost	2005-06 Number of bonuses	2005-06 Cost	All three years Total number	All three years Total cost
DFP	2,500	579,547	2,606	354,974	2,733	856,099	7,839	1,790,620
DARD	2,554	524,265	2,868	353,296	2,710	781,372	8,132	1,658,933
OFMDFM	324	130,510	383	113,665	369	207,305	1,076	451,480
DCAL	442	84,388	380	58,760	410	126,786	1,232	269,934
DRD	2,451	520,671	2,753	340,103	2,897	861,459	8,101	1,722,233
DOE	1,984	499,538	2,387	500,367	1,745	485,997	6,116	1,485,902
DETI	553	128,722	586	79,030	632	217,466	1,771	425,218
DSD	6,589	1,160,602	7,500	744,997	7,803	1,967,979	21,892	3,873,578
DHSSPS	843	270,675	939	186,259	951	386,117	2,733	843,051
DE	571	152,338	629	118,880	571	207,665	1,771	478,883
DEL	1,245	228,849	1,349	122,607	1,591	415,092	4,185	766,548
NIO	990	250,714	2,709	499,138	2,004	650,772	5,703	1,400,624
Total	21,046	4,530,819	25,089	3,472,076	24,416	7,164,109	70,551	15,167,004

Roads

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much the Department for Regional Development spent on improving the road network in County *(a)* Tyrone, *(b)* Derry and *(c)* Fermanagh in each of the past five years; and how much the Department has budgeted for (i) 2006-07 and (ii) the next two years for roads in these counties. [73222]

David Cairns: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 25 May 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about how much the Department for Regional Development spent on improving the road network in County (a) Tyrone, (b) Derry and (c) Fermanagh in each of the past five years; and how much the Department has budgeted for (i) 2006-07 and (ii) the next two years for roads in these counties.

I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

First of all I must advise that Roads Service does not maintain details of expenditure on a county basis. However, such information is available on a district council basis. The table below details Roads Service's expenditure on major and minor capital works improvements for the nine district councils whose boundaries straddle Counties Tyrone, Londonderry and Fermanagh:

Roads Service expenditure on major and minor works by council area

£000

Council Area	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Fermanagh					
Major Capital	114	2	0	0	345
Minor Capital	847	581	831	1,565	994
Total Fermanagh	961	583	831	1,565	1,339
Strabane					
Major Capital	4,350	7,324	1,299	660	373
Minor Capital	382	291	557	1,088	1,446
Total Strabane	4,732	7,615	1,856	1,748	1,819
Omagh					
Major Capital	103	137	340	76	0
Minor Capital	766	1,254	542	1,139	1,889
Total Omagh	869	1,391	882	1,215	1,889
Dungannon					
Major Capital	89	0	173	1,928	64
Minor Capital	696	249	318	1,197	1,669
Total Dungannon	785	249	491	3,125	1,733
Cookstown					
Major Capital	0	0	0	0	0
Minor Capital	460	201	350	757	434
Total Cookstown	460	201	350	757	434
Londonderry					
Major Capital	824	73	82	352	426
Minor Capital	1,062	1,423	1,082	1,412	1,360
Total Londonderry	1,886	1,496	1,164	1,764	1,786
Limavady					
Major Capital	1,241	7,228	3,268	230	241

Roads Service expenditure on major and minor works by council area

£000

Council Area	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Minor Capital	601	149	0	1,596	952
Total Limavady	1,842	7,377	3268	1,826	1,193
Coleraine					
Major Capital	33	4	1	0	0
Minor Capital	858	496	886	1,121	934
Total Coleraine	891	500	887	1,121	934
Magherafelt					
Major Capital Works	16	0	0	0	0
Minor Capital Works	661	434	274	1,308	1,693
Total Magherafelt	677	434	274	1,308	1,693

In providing the above information I should explain that Roads Service does not simply split its total budget for capital expenditure on roads across all the district council areas. Major road improvements are prioritised on a countrywide basis taking account of a broad range of criteria such as strategic planning policy, traffic flow, number of accidents, potential travel save times, environment impact and value for money. While the actual spend on a major works scheme may be within one district council area, the benefits of such schemes are not confined to the district council, constituency or county in which they are located.

Roads Service expenditure on minor road improvements includes minor works, accident remedial schemes, transportation measure and minor bridge strengthening. The resources available for such works are allocated to the 4 Roads Service Divisions and, in turn, apportioned across district council areas on a needs-based priority approach using indicators such as population, weighted road lengths and the number of accidents. This ensures, so far as possible, an equitable distribution of funds across the country.

With regard to the capital budget for 2006-07, again it is not possible to split this budget into counties. The total Roads Service Capital Budget in 2006/07 is £111M and the split per the relevant Roads Service Division is as follows:

The initial budget allocation for major and minor works in Western Division is £22M (£7M Minor, £15M Major). Our Western Division incorporates 6 District Council areas—Cookstown, Dungannon, Fermanagh, Omagh, Magherafelt, and Strabane.

The initial budget allocation for major and minor works in Northern Division is £12M (£6M Minor, £6M Major). Our Northern Division incorporates 8 District Council areas—Antrim, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Derry, Larne, Limavady, and Moyle.

With regard to the capital budget for the next two years I can advise that the total Roads Service capital budget in 2007/08 is £112M. However, this budget has not yet been allocated to our Divisions. The 2008/09 budget is outside the current budget period and cannot be confirmed.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* budget and *(b)* timetable is for construction of the Skeoge Link Road in Derry. [73308]

David Cairns: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr Malcolm McKibbin, dated 25 May 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about what the (a) budget and (b) timetable is for construction of the Skeoge Link Road in Derry. I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

I can confirm that good progress is being made by Roads Service to secure the delivery of the Skeoge Link Road in Derry. The road is to be constructed to dual carriageway standard at an estimated cost of £5 million.

The Notice of Intention to make a Vesting Order was published in March 2006 and no objections to the Notice were received. The Scheme was passed for planning approval at a meeting with Derry City Council on 16 May 2006 and discussions are ongoing with developers to complete the statutory agreements.

Roads Service has completed the detailed design of the scheme and will be in a position to invite tenders at the end of June 2006. This would enable construction to commence in September. However, this time scale remains dependant on the agreed transfer of lands from the developers, which has still not been secured.

I would like to assure you of Roads Service's continued commitment to provide this much needed road scheme, which would complete the strategic route from the Foyle Bridge through to Buncrana Road, remove through traffic from Glengalliagh Road, and will also unlock land for further housing and industrial development.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much roads maintenance funding has been allocated to each of the district electoral areas in *(a)* Down and *(b)* Newry and Mourne Council area in each of the last 10 years. [73476]

David Cairns: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 25 May 2006

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about how much roads maintenance funding has been allocated to each of the district electoral areas in (a) Down and (b) Newry and Mourne Council area in each of the last 10 years.

I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

First of all I must advise that Roads Service does not maintain details of expenditure on a district electoral area basis. However, such information is available on a district council basis. Details of roads maintenance funding allocated by district council area are only available from 1999/2000 and are detailed in the table below:

£000

	Council area	
	Down	Newry and Mourne
1999/2000	2,328	3,234
2000/01	3,608	4,466
2001/02	4,366	5,456
2002/03	4,641	5,256
2003/04	5,089	5,042
2004/05	7,069	7,567

In providing this information I should explain that the funds available for roads maintenance are allocated to the 4 Roads Service Divisions who, in turn, allocate across district council areas. The resources available for each maintenance activity (resurfacing, patching, gully emptying, grass cutting etc.) are apportioned to district councils using appropriate indicators of need. This ensures, so far as is possible, an equitable distribution of funds.

Water Services

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of the Northern Ireland regional rate revenue is allocated to water services in Northern Ireland in 2006-07. [73477]

Mr. Hanson: The regional rate is an un-hypothecated tax and is not allocated to specific areas of expenditure, but instead contributes to the overall resources available to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to allocate to regional public services in Northern Ireland.

PRIME MINISTER

Assisted Dying for the Terminally Ill Bill

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister how many representations he has received *(a)* supporting and *(b)* opposing the Assisted Dying for the Terminally Ill Bill [Lords]; what percentage the latter represents of the former; and if he will make a statement. [72042]

The Prime Minister: My Office has received a petition containing approximately 100,000 signatures against the Assisted Dying for the Terminally Ill Bill [Lords].

Departmental Bills (Amendments)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the occasions when an amendment has been moved by *(a)* a Labour backbencher, *(b)* an Opposition backbencher and *(c)* an Opposition front bench spokesman to a Bill sponsored by his Department that has been accepted by his Department during the current session; and if he will make a statement. [72129]

The Prime Minister: I support all Bills introduced by the Government, however my Office does not have direct responsibility for introducing or taking through the House any individual Bills.

Information Technology

Chris Huhne: To ask the Prime Minister how much was spent on information technology (IT) sourced from outside his Office in each of the last five years; who is responsible for such projects in his Office; and what IT *(a)* expertise and *(b)* qualifications they possess. [71774]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office (Mr. McFadden) today.

Israel

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister when he visited the State of Israel in an official capacity in each year since 1997; what matters were discussed; and if he will make a statement. [72044]

The Prime Minister: Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. Copies of these lists are available in the Library of the House. Information on the number of officials accompanying me on overseas visits is included in the list. All travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the ministerial code and travel by Ministers. Information for the year 2005-06 will be published as soon as it is ready after the end of the financial year.

I have regular discussions with the Israeli Government on a wide range of issues. Transcripts of press conferences I have held are available on the No. 10 website.

Journalists (Foreign Visits)

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Prime Minister which journalists accompanied him on *(a)* his recent trip to Iraq and *(b)* his trip to Australia and New Zealand in March; and how much each paid for their airfare. [73550]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to him on 3 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1675W.

Meetings

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Prime Minister whether (1) he has met *(a)* Mr Richard Caring, *(b)* Mr Ron Aldridge, *(c)* Dr Chai Patel, *(d)* Mr Barry Townsley, *(e)* Mr Andrew Rosenfeld, *(f)* Mr Derek Tullett, *(g)* Sir Gulam Noon, *(h)* Mr Nigel Morris, *(i)* Sir David Garrard and *(j)* Sir Christopher Evans on official business at 10 Downing Street in the past 12 months; and if he will make a statement; [61429]

(2) whether he has met representatives of Merlin Biosciences Limited on official business in the past 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [61478]

The Prime Minister: My officials and I have meetings with a wide range of organisations and individuals on a wide range of subjects. Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Portland PR

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Prime Minister what meetings officials in his private office have had with Portland PR; what contracts Portland PR has with persons who report directly to him; what contractual relationship exists between the Government and Portland PR which is not covered by the responsibilities of any other Minister in the Government; and what the terms of the contract are in each case. [72170]

The Prime Minister: My officials and I have meetings with a wide range of organisations and individuals on a wide range of subjects. Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Private Members' Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list those Private Members' Bills in respect of which his Department adopted a policy of neutrality in each session since 2001-02; and if he will make a statement. [72127]

The Prime Minister: My Office does not have direct responsibility for individual Private Members Bills.

Public Sector Reform

Mr. Francois: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his announcement on 15 May 2006, on public service reform, what guidance he has issued to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on his new role in leading public sector reform. [73536]

The Prime Minister: I have regular meetings and discussions with ministerial colleagues and others on a wide range of subjects. Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Reshuffle (Costs)

Philip Davies: To ask the Prime Minister what the cost was of the recent Cabinet reshuffle, broken down by main budget heading. [71950]

The Prime Minister: The numbers of salaried Ministers is governed by the Ministerial and Other Salaries Act 1975. The cost of machinery of Government changes will be met by relevant departments within existing departmental budgets.

Whaling

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions he had at the recent EU summit in Vienna with Latin American and Caribbean' leaders concerning their countries' voting intentions at the next International Whaling Commission meeting in June; and if he will make a statement. [72638]

The Prime Minister: While the subject of whaling was not raised at the EU summit in Vienna, this Government's strong opposition to commercial and scientific whaling is well known and Ministers continue to raise the issue at every appropriate opportunity.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

IT Infrastructure

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Leader of the House what recent assessment the Commission has made of the *(a)* effectiveness and *(b)* reliability of information technology (i) equipment and (ii) infrastructure provided for hon. Members' constituency offices. [72613]

Mr. Straw: The Administration Committee monitors the quality of ICT services in the House on behalf of the Leader of the House of Commons. The Committee asks for reports and oral updates from the Parliamentary ICT Service, on a regular basis. The Committee recently received a briefing on the current performance of the VPN service and all Members were informed by email of the outcome of that meeting. The Committee intends to undertake a fuller review of ICT services later in the year.

Private Members' Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Leader of the House if he will list those Private Members' Bills on which he or his predecessor has adopted a policy of neutrality in each session since 2001-02; and if he will make a statement. [72100]

Mr. Straw: So far as I am aware, there have been no such cases. The only recent Private Members' Bill that the Leader of the House (then my predecessor the right hon. Member for Ashfield) has been responsible for responding to, was Clare Short's Armed Forces (Participation in Armed Conflict) Bill, where the Government stance was not neutral. It is rare for the Leader of the House to be the responsible Minister for responding to a Private Member's Bill.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the role of UK forces in Afghanistan. [72972]

Mr. Ingram: UK forces are deployed in Afghanistan in support of a UN authorised, NATO-led mission, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), and as part of the US-led international coalition. We are there to prevent Afghanistan from again harbouring terrorism, to build security and Government institutions, and to support the Afghan Security Forces in combating insurgents and illegally armed groups, all of which remain threats to Afghan security and stability.

Commonwealth Recruits

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of recruits to the Army in each of the last 10 years came from other Commonwealth countries. [73738]

Mr. Watson: The proportion of those personnel who have entered untrained strength to the Army who have a nationality of a Commonwealth country (excluding UK) are as follows:

Proportion of Commonwealth (excluding the UK) inflow into the untrained strength of the Regular Army

	Officer	Soldier	Percentage Total
1995-96	1.6	0.3	0.4
1996-97	2.1	0.3	0.3
1997-98	1.3	0.2	0.3
1998-99	1.5	0.7	0.7
1999-2000	1.2	2.8	2.7
2000-01	1.5	5.1	4.9
2001-02	1.5	8.1	7.7
2002-03	3.5	12.7	12.2
2003-04	3.3	10.9	10.5
2004-05	4.0	8.8	8.5
2005-06	1.9	5.4	5.1

Notes:
1. The figures are for trained Regular Army only and therefore exclude Gurkhas, Home Service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment, Full Time Reserve Service, Mobilised Reserves, TA and all other Reserves.
2. Figures are based on Untrained Intake into the Army and for soldiers include inflows from Illegal Absence. Rates are based on all inflow regardless of nationality.
3. The nationality given above is that recorded on inflow to the untrained strength and is not necessarily the same as the nationality at birth.
4. Includes inflows only from those with a nationality of a Commonwealth country. It therefore excludes inflows from those with a nationality of UK, UK dependency, Eire and Other Countries.

Defence Information Initiative

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on progress with the Defence Information Initiative. [71907]

Mr. Ingram: The transfer of the first group of legacy systems to ATLAS was achieved in August 2005—on time—and the single point of contact 'help desk' facility went live in November 2005. During January 2006 the timing for rollout was re-scheduled to account for changes in Defence planning since earlier contract negotiations. System build has progressed over the last nine months such that, during May, the first Territorial Army sites will go live on the new DII(Future) system.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will publish his Department's expenditure plans for 2006-07 and 2007-08. [73107]

Mr. Ingram: We will publish the Ministry of Defence's expenditure plans before the summer recess.

Hercules Aircraft

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the level of risk to UK military personnel flying in UK Hercules aircraft without anti-explosive foam in conflict zones. [68386]

Mr. Ingram: We constantly monitor the overall threat to our aircraft and specific research looking at the threats, options for protection and air platform survivability measures is currently under way. Among other issues, this research will review the effectiveness of foam in Hercules fuel tanks. Operational flying can never be a risk free activity but the Air Warfare Centre continually assesses the threats to our aircraft and considers measures to mitigate these risks. The details of these programmes cannot be released as this would be likely to prejudice the capability, effectiveness and security of our armed forces.

Hospitals

Peter Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the most recent valuation is of the land and buildings at the Royal Hospital Haslar. [72583]

Mr. Watson: A valuation of the land and buildings at the Royal Hospital Haslar was undertaken in March 2006.

I am withholding details of the valuation as release would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the Department by unduly influencing the market if and when the properties concerned were sold.

Peter Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many surgical and medical treatments were undertaken in respect of *(a)* service personnel and *(b)* civilians at the Royal Hospital Haslar in the last 12 months, broken down by types of treatments. [72579]

Mr. Watson: The surgical and medical treatments undertaken at the Royal Hospital Haslar in the 12 month period from 1 April 2005 until 31 March 2006 are as follows:

Service personnel

Category	Number
Chronic Pain	19
Endoscopy	166
Ear, Nose and Throat	24
General Surgery	238
Maxillo-facial	376
Orthopaedic	372
Plastic Surgery	57
Total	1,252

Civilians	
Category	*Number*
Chemotherapy	1,107
Chronic Pain	311
Endoscopy	1,903
Ear, Nose and Throat	43
General Surgery	2,733
Maxillo-facial	531
Orthopaedic	6,601
Plastic Surgery	673
Total	13,902

Peter Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* messing, *(b)* accommodation and *(c)* recreational facilities are available to service personnel based at Birmingham hospitals; and what facilities are planned for the Ministry of Defence Hospital Unit at Portsmouth. [72580]

Mr. Watson: Service personnel employed or undergoing training at Birmingham hospitals are placed on the establishment of the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine (RCDM) and are mainly housed in leased accommodation.

There are currently no dedicated messing facilities for service personnel based at the RCDM, but they do have regular access to facilities at HMS Forward (a local Royal Naval Reserve Unit) and at the police recreation centre in Birmingham. Similarly there are no dedicated recreational facilities, but Service personnel enjoy free use of a number of leisure centres in Birmingham as a result of contractual arrangements in place between the Ministry of Defence and Birmingham City Council.

With regard to the MOD Hospital Unit (MDHU) in Portsmouth it is planned to have Single Living Accommodation and associated messing facilities in place for 200 Service personnel by 2009. Having identified a number of potential options for meeting this requirement a detailed assessment study is now being undertaken to establish the preferred solution. Service recreation facilities within the Portsmouth area are excellent and will continue to be available to MDHU Portsmouth personnel. Such facilities include the Royal Naval School of Physical Training, HMS Temeraire, which provides a wide range of sports facilities.

Peter Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total operating costs were of *(a)* each of the Ministry of Defence hospital units and *(b)* the Royal Hospital Haslar in the last year for which figures are available; and how the costs for the Royal Hospital Haslar were shared between his Department and the Department of Health. [72582]

Mr. Watson: The operating costs for Royal Hospital Haslar and each of the Ministry of Defence hospital units (MDHU) for the 2004-05 financial year are set out in the following table. This is the last year for which audited figures are available.

Unit	*Operating costs (£ million)*
Royal Hospital Haslar	33.547
MDHU Derriford	8.802
MDHU Peterborough	7.822
MDHU Frimley Park	9.376
MDHU Northallerton	7.063

In 2004-05 the costs for Royal Hospital Haslar included the costs of what is now MDHU(Portsmouth), the fort blockhouse support unit, and military retained services. The cost share arrangements between the Ministry of Defence and the Department of Health resulted in costs of £7.5 million falling to the Portsmouth hospitals trust for the 2004-05 financial year, with the remaining £26.047 million being the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence.

Iraq

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many requests he has received from commanders in Iraq for additional armoured vehicles during the last 12 months; and what the Government's response was to each request. [65447]

Mr. Ingram: The force level and composition of British forces in Iraq is formally reviewed on a regular basis. Commanders in Iraq contribute to this process, which may result in adjustments to the number of armoured vehicles. Should any additional requests be received in addition to these regular reviews, they would be considered and actioned accordingly. However, I can confirm that no such requests for additional armoured vehicles have been received in the last 12 months.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which major units of the British Army are based in Iraq; and where in Iraq they are based. [71705]

Mr. Ingram: Details of the major units deployed to Iraq and where they are based can be found in the following table:

Unit	*Location*
1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards	Muthanna
The Queen's Royal Hussars (The Queen's Own and Royal Irish)	Maysan
12th Regiment Royal Artillery	Basrah and Shaibah
1st Battalion Grenadier Guards	Shaibah and Baghdad
1st Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's and Royal Hampshires)	Shaibah
2nd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment	Shaibah
1st Battalion The Devon and Dorset Light Infantry	Shaibah and Umm Qasr
1st Battalion The Light Infantry	Basrah City
33 Engineer Regiment	Shaibah
35 Engineer Regiment	Shaibah
1 Logistic Support Regiment	Shaibah

A composite company of the Territorial Army drawn from the Lancastrian and Cumbrian Volunteers and The King's and Cheshire Regiment is also currently based in Basrah.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 4 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1813-14W, on Iraq, whether service by a UK civilian police officer engaged in training Iraqi police officers would qualify for the award of an Iraq Medal. [73742]

Mr. Watson: A civilian police officer engaged in training Iraqi police officers would not have been sent to Iraq by the Ministry of Defence to work in direct support of the military and would therefore not qualify to receive the MOD Iraq Medal.

It is possible that such a civilian police officer would qualify to receive a special medal which is to be issued to recognise service by UK civilians in Iraq. This medal has been approved by the Queen and was announced at the end of June 2005 by the Prime Minister. The eligibility criteria for this second Iraq medal currently being considered by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and will be announced in due course.

Medals

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1272W, on medals, for what reason the report of Lord Guthrie did not explicitly state that the 30-day qualifying period had to be continuous. [72190]

Mr. Watson *[holding answer 23 May 2006]*: The report on the meeting of the sub-committee of the Committee on the Grant of Honours Decorations and Medals, which was established to consider the case for a medal for service in the Suez Canal zone in the early 1950s, was produced by the Ceremonial Secretariat at the Cabinet Office. It did not contain and was not intended to contain a detailed account of the eligibility criteria. The main focus of the report was on the justification for the institution of a new medal. It merely indicated that the sub-committee recommended that service of at least 30 days would be required. It did not indicate whether eligible service must be continuous. Neither did the report indicate that it could be aggregated.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the 30-day qualifying period for Army personnel to receive the General Service Medal for service in the 1951 to 1954 Suez Canal zone campaign is required to be continuous. [72191]

Mr. Watson *[holding answer 23 May 2006]*: Command Paper 5999 was presented to Parliament in October 2003 by the Secretary of State for Defence and laid down the qualifying criteria for the Naval General Service Medal and General Service Medal for service in the Suez Canal zone between 16 October 1951 and 19 October 1954. In accordance with standard procedures, a copy was placed in the Library of the House.

The period of time required to qualify for the medal was identical for all three services and stated that 30 days or more continuous service in the qualifying area was necessary to receive the medal.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1272W, on medals, how many Naval General Service Medals have been awarded to Royal Navy personnel for 30 days service in the Zone; and if he will list the Royal Navy *(a)* ships and *(b)* other units which spent 30 days serving continuously in the Suez Canal Zone between 1951 and 1954. [72192]

Mr. Watson *[holding answer 23 May 2006]*: There has been a total of 2,208 Naval General Service Medals with Canal Zone Clasp awarded to Royal Navy and Royal Marines to date.

The following table details the Royal Navy ships and units that spent 30 days serving continuously in the Suez Canal Zone between 16 October 1951 and 19 October 1954.

Ship	*Dates*	*Number of days*
Barfleur	19 January 1954-21 February 1954	34
Bermuda	17 November 1953-29 December 1953	43
Chaplet	30 June 1954-3 August 1954	35
Cheviot	27 May 1953-7 July 1953	42
	19 January 1954-21 February 1954	34
Chevron	15 May 1953-22 June 1953	39
Cleopatra	24 January 1952-24 February 1952	32
Comet	29 June 1954-3 August 1954	36
Cygnet	3 July 1953-11 August 1953	40
Daring	19 January 1953-18 February 1953	31
	15 September 1953-20 October 1953	36
Euryalus	2 June 1952-1 July 1952	30
Gambia	17 October 1951-21 November 1951	36
	2 July 1953-11 August 1953	41
LCA 1969	12 May 1953-13 July 1954	428
LCT 4001	21 July 1953-25 August 1953	36
LCT 4040	9 September 1952-21 October 1952	43
LCT 4063	9 September 1952-16 October 1952	38
	5 December 1953-13 January 1954	40
Liverpool	19 November 1951-19 December 1951	31
Loch Dunveggan	27 January 1952-27 February 1952	32
Magpie	26 February 1952-26 March 1952	30
	9 August 1952-28 September 1952	51
	5 August 1953-8 September 1953	35
	7 March 1954-9 April 1954	34
Manxman	19 March 1953-18 April 1953	31
Marauder	16 May 1953-22 June 1953	38
Mermaid	21 February 1954-25 March 1954	33

Ship	Dates	Number of days
Messina (LCT 3043)	7 October 1952-5 November 1952	30
Osiris (Shore base)	16 October 1951-19 October 1954	1,463
Peacock	3 July 1953-6 August 1953	35
Ranpura	17 December 1953-22 January 1954	37
Roebuck	7 December 1953-19 January 1954	44
Saintes	24 October 1953-7 December 1953	45
St. Kitts	27 October 1953-7 December 1953	42
Wakeful	26 September 1953-27 October 1953	32
Wave Protector	20 February 1952-27 March 1952	37
Whirlwind	7 December 1953-19 January 1954	44
Wrangler	14 April 1954-25 May 1954	42

Military Aircraft

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* Canberra, *(b)* Nimrod and *(c)* Tornado GR4A aircraft are (i) in service and (ii) fit for purpose. [71920]

Mr. Ingram: The following table shows the numbers of Canberra, Nimrod and Tornado GR aircraft that are planned to be in service at the end of March 2007, and that were fit for purpose (FFP) last month.

Aircraft type	Total fleet	Number of Aircraft FFP (Average for April 2006)[1]
Canberra[2]	0	n/a
Nimrod[3]	22	15
Tornado GR[4]	139	49

[1] Figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.
[2] The Canberra fleet is due to be withdrawn from service this year. Because of the small size of the Canberra fleet, FFP is recorded in terms of sorties.
[3] Includes Nimrod R1 and Nimrod MR2 aircraft.
[4] Tornado GR4A fleet numbers are not recorded separately.

Aircraft are deemed fit for purpose if they are capable of undertaking the required task on a given day. Aircraft are not available for tasking if they are undergoing scheduled maintenance, modification programmes or any other unforeseen rectification work that can arise on a day to day basis. The figures do not reflect the fact that an aircraft assessed as not fit for purpose may be returned to the front line at very short notice to meet the operational need.

Military Vehicles

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many working armoured Land Rovers were in the Army's possession in each year since 2001. [72080]

Mr. Ingram: Between 2001 and 2006 a fleet of 982 protected Land Rovers has been maintained. However, as it is not the Ministry of Defence policy to have the whole fleet available to support the front line at all times, vehicles are subject to an ongoing programme of maintenance or repair. The numbers of available Land Rovers is therefore subject to change and the information requested is not held. During the period all operational and training requirements have been met. Those vehicles damaged on operations are either repaired or replaced as necessary.

Nepal

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what direct funding the UK has allocated to the Royal Nepalese Army in 2006-07. [73723]

Mr. Ingram: Following action in February 2005 by the King of Nepal to assume direct personal rule, UK military assistance to the Royal Nepalese Army was significantly reduced. The funding planned for military assistance this financial year (2006-07) is £7,523,000. It covers human rights training, explosive ordnance disposal equipment and training, help to develop professionalism and aid to develop a military engineering capability. In light of the welcome political changes currently taking place in Nepal, HMG is currently reviewing its policy of assistance to the country.

Nuclear Powered Submarines

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the procedure is for dealing with reactor start-up effluent from nuclear powered submarines using X berths; and if he will make a statement. [73322]

Mr. Ingram: Effluent is not produced by reactor start up but by the warming up process. Reactor warm up effluent from Swiftsure and Trafalgar class nuclear powered submarines using X berths is dealt with in accordance with standard operating procedures. At HM Naval Base Clyde it is collected in a primary effluent tank and taken for treatment prior to disposal. At HM Naval Base Devonport effluent is collected either directly into the effluent treatment system or in a primary effluent tank and taken for treatment prior to disposal. For Vanguard class submarines (and the Astute class when they enter service) the effluent is kept on board the submarine and reused when the reactor has cooled down.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence with whom responsibility lies for *(a)* monitoring of any discharges from nuclear powered submarines using (i) Z berths and (ii) X berths and *(b)* clean-up operations which may be required; and if he will make a statement. [73323]

Mr. Ingram: Discharges directly to the environment from nuclear powered submarines at Z berths and X berths are not permitted.

The responsibility for monitoring and clean-up operations, should any be required, rests with the dockyard companies, naval base commanders or the Royal Navy, depending on the location of the berth.

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL) Environmental Sciences Department monitors the level of radioactive pollution around Z and X berths as part of its wider marine environmental survey programme, the findings from which are published annually.

Priory Clinic Group

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department has paid to the Priory Clinic Group for psychiatric services in each of the last five years. [73737]

Mr. Watson: The Ministry of Defence's contract with the Priory Group, which commenced on 1 April 2004, only provides in-patient care. Community-based care is available to every military unit through our 15 Departments of Community Mental Health, located in military establishments in the UK, with additional satellite units in Germany and Cyprus. Medical diagnosis is performed by fully trained and accredited mental health personnel with a full range of National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) platinum standard psychiatric treatments. These help to ensure better access to mental health support within or close to an individual's unit or home. Community-based psychiatry also means Defence Medical Service mental health staff work within their local service community, and so are more closely aligned with their operational role.

The following table gives the sums paid by MOD to the Priory Group since April 2004, plus costs for interim services provided by the Priory Group between December 2003 and the start of the current contract. This figure takes into account the cost of assessing patients as well as any treatment programmes provided. The Priory contract replaced the care provided by the Duchess of Kent Psychiatric Hospital whose costs in its final year of operation were some £10 million.

Financial year	*Amount spent (£)*
2003-04	357,877
2004-05	4,147,963
2005-06	4,441,181
2006 to date	379,283
Total	9,326,304

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether military psychiatric services were contracted to the Priory Clinic Group without open tender, with particular reference to an opportunity for the NHS to submit a bid. [73739]

Mr. Watson: The requirement for the provision of a regionally based in-patient psychiatric healthcare service was put out to competitive tender by the Ministry of Defence Commercial Branch in Glasgow in accordance with MOD policy. During the tendering process, an Industry Day was held on 15 April 2003, attended by four out of the five companies who had originally responded to the relevant adverts. Subsequently, Invitations to Tender were issued to three of the four companies who had attended the Industry Day. The Priory Group's tender best met our requirements for high quality in-patient care, without delay and on a regional basis, and they were awarded the contract. Whilst NHS providers did have the opportunity to bid, there were no expressions of interest from the NHS.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the Answer of 3 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 242-3W, on the private finance initiative, what total value of assets and liabilities for each of the listed private finance initiatives and public private partnerships is recorded on the Government Balance Sheet; what proportion of assets and liabilities is listed; what the accounting treatment is for assets and liabilities; and whether it is compatible with *(a)* generally-accepted accounting practices and *(b)* international financial reporting standards. [15963]

Mr. Ingram: 10 projects are on the Ministry of Defence Balance Sheet from the 49 Private Finance Initiative Projects (PFI) listed in my reply of 13 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 16W. The following table provides details of the 10 On Balance Sheet projects, their asset and liability values and values of these projects expressed as a proportion of the Department totals. The financial data given in the Table accords with the data published in the MOD Annual Reports & Accounts 2004-05.

MOD On Balance sheet PFI projects—FY 2004-05

£

Project Title	*Asset*	*Liability*
Defence Animal Centre (DAC)	16,571,955	9,539,917
Defence Electronic Commerce Service (DECS)	2,008,906	4,143,061
Defence Helicopter Flying School (DHFS)	80,683,442	52,172,982
Field Electrical Power Supplies (FEPS)	69,505,570	71,430,255
Heavy Equipment Transporters (HET)	58,398,745	54,908,345
Joint Services Command and Staff College—Excluding DHE Off Balance Sheet Element	77,823,858	47,698,992
Main Building Refurbishment	342,930,295	342,930,295

MOD On Balance sheet PFI projects—FY 2004-05

Project Title	*Asset*	*£ Liability*
Naval Communications	56,982,073	57,595,523
RAF Fylingdales (Power)	4,871,389	5,127,508
RAF Lossiemouth Family Quarters	23,821,492	22,611,409
Total	733,597,725	668,[illegible],286
Proportion percentage of all MoD	0.72	4.08

The Storage Facilities PFI Project has never resided on the MOD Balance Sheet; it resides on the DTI Balance Sheet.

The Accounting Treatment judgements applied to assets and liabilities are based on:

Accounting Standards Board's Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 5 (entitled "Reporting the Substance of Transactions")

Accounting Standard Board's Application Note F (entitled "FRS5 —Reporting the Substance of Transactions: Private Finance Initiative and Similar Contracts; and

HM Treasury Private Finance Taskforce's Technical (TTF) Note No 1 (How to Account for PFI transactions), ("the Treasury or TTF Guidance").

The objective of the Technical Note (TN) is to provide additional practical guidance to public sector bodies on certain areas of the Application Note to ensure that the overarching principles of the Application Note are consistently applied.

The Accounting Treatment judgements are made in compliance with UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (UKGAAP). International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) have not yet been adopted by HMG for Public Sector reporting.

It should be noted that differences between asset and liability valuations arise due to timing differences emanating from respective write down procedures; Assets are written down on a straight line basis whereas financial liabilities are written down on an actuarial or equivalent basis in accordance with MoD accounting guidance.

Private Members' Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list those Private Members' Bills in respect of which his Department has adopted a policy of neutrality in each session since 2001-02; and if he will make a statement. [72478]

Mr. Watson: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

RAF Heavy Lift

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to augment the RAF's heavy lift capability. [72284]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* We keep our airlift capability under review to ensure that we have access to sufficient capacity to support operations and, where necessary, we charter heavy lift aircraft. We plan to purchase from Boeing the four in-service C-17s currently on lease, and we are looking at the possibility of purchasing a fifth, though we have not yet made a final decision. The RAF's lift capability will also be considerably enhanced when the A400M comes into service early in the next decade.

Training Areas

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many tactical training areas there are in the West Midlands region. [73461]

Mr. Watson: There are seven training areas in total in the West Midlands, of which only three are designated as tactical training areas. These are at Swynnerton, Nesscliff and Leek/Upper Hulme.

Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent research has been commissioned by his Department into the development of unmanned combat aerial vehicles. [71524]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence is pursuing a twin-track strategy for exploring the conceptual thinking and the underlying technology for unmanned combat air vehicles (UCAVs).

The first strand of this strategy concentrates on the concepts of employment, interoperability and cost effectiveness of UCAVs with specific emphasis on a UK/US coalition warfare environment. This work is being carried out as a collaborative Government-to-Government project arrangement under the auspices of the US Joint Unmanned Combat Air System Programme (J-UCAS) and began in March 2005.

The second strand ensures we continue to work with UK industry to develop and explore critical technologies which have relevance to all types of Uninhabited Aerial Vehicles (such as survivability, propulsion and vehicle management). Central to this, and as set out in the Defence Industrial Strategy, will be a Technology Demonstrator Programme. Subject to a satisfactory value for money proposal, we hope to proceed with this later this year. It will be aimed at giving us and industry a better understanding of our indigenous capabilities, to inform any potential acquisition by the UK of a future UCAV capability.

Veterans Day

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer about the *(a)* merits and *(b)* timing of a Veterans' Day (i) prior to and (ii) after the decision was announced. [59677]

Mr. Watson *[holding answer 20 March 2006]:* HM Treasury and Defence Ministers regularly discuss issues relating to defence and security matters, including measures to ensure Veterans receive the recognition they deserve. One such discussion, which had been informed by prior consultation with the Confederation of British Service and Ex-Service Organisations (COBSEO) led to the announcement on 13 February by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer about Veterans Day. The announcement had been preceded by a joint presentation of medals to Veterans by the Chancellor and the then Secretary of State for Defence.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when his Department first announced the decision to hold a Veterans' Day; and how the decision was announced. [59678]

Mr. Watson *[holding answer 20 March 2006]:* The institution of a Veterans Day was announced by my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on 13 February 2006 in a speech he made at the Royal United Services Institute. The then Minister for Veterans wrote to hon. Members on 23 February to advise them that Veterans Day would be on 27 June each year.

Last year's Veterans Awareness Week, which culminated in the memorable celebrations to mark the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, gave us all a chance to pay tribute to those veterans who fought in the service of their country and to remember their immense sacrifice and the debt that we continue to owe to them.

This year the day will focus on veterans of all ages and provide the opportunity to celebrate and raise public awareness of their diversity, achievements and the contribution they have made, and continue to make, to the nation. It will also be an opportunity to recognise the service given by our current armed forces who will become tomorrow's veterans.

We are encouraging organisations throughout the UK to support Veterans Day through their own events, and we are targeting school children, in particular those in the 9-11 age bracket who are currently learning about World War II, through an art competition.

HEALTH

Allergy UK

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much her Department has given to Allergy UK in each of the last three years; for what purposes; what plans she has to give further assistance; what recent discussions *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials have had with Allergy UK; when (i) Ministers and (ii) officials have attended a meeting of Allergy UK in each of the last three years; when her Department has (A) distributed copies of the Allergy UK Annual Report and (B) made reference to Allergy UK in Department of Health materials; and if she will make a statement. [72047]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Allergy UK, in common with other national voluntary organisations working in the health and social care fields, is eligible to apply for funding under the Department's Section 64 general scheme of grants.

In 2002, Allergy UK was awarded a grant of £112,800 over a three-year period to support their network allergy project. The aim of this project was to support the increased involvement of patients, including those from minority ethnic and other hard to reach groups, in the development of local allergy services.

A further project, "Support Contacts", has been awarded funding of £117,000 over a three-year period from 2004-05. The grant is supporting a national network of people with allergies who can offer support and advice to others affected by their own particular condition.

Funding for Section 64 grants is limited though the Department continues to welcome innovative proposals that are of national significance, complement statutory services, and help secure and promote high-quality health and social care in England.

No invitations have been received by Ministers or officials to attend meetings of Allergy UK. As part of the ongoing review into allergy services, officials met with Allergy UK in November 2005. The final report of the review to Ministers will include evidence provided by Allergy UK.

It is not a function of the Department to distribute copies of the annual report of external organisations, whom we would expect to have their own distribution arrangements in place.

All departmental publications, leaflets and other sources of information are published on the internet, either on the Department's website itself (www.dh.gov.uk), other departmental sites, or partner websites. Contributions by external organisations to these publications are acknowledged within their content.

Patient Pathway Target

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) pursuant to the document "Tackling hospital waiting: the 18 week patient pathway", when she expects the action plan to cut waiting times for audiology to be published; [72765]

(2) what progress is being made in measuring waiting times for NHS hearing aid services; and if she will make a statement; [72766]

(3) pursuant to the document "Tackling hospital waiting: the 18 week patient pathway", what measures her Department will put in place to ensure that direct access referrals for audiology are not re-routed to ear, nose and throat consultants. [73224]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department does not collect waiting time data for hearing aid services. However, since January 2006 we have been collecting waiting time and activity data for 15 diagnostic tests/procedures, including pure tone audiometry.

As stated in the publication "Tackling hospital waiting: the 18 week patient pathway-an implementation framework" directly accessed audiology including adult hearing services are outside the scope of the 18 week patient pathway. However, a separate action plan is currently under consideration to improve access to those services outside the 18 week programme. The intention is to develop and take the work forward in partnership with stakeholders.

The Department estimates that 80 per cent. of referrals to adult hearing services from general practitioners are direct to audiology departments. We acknowledge the risk that there may be pressure to redirect these existing direct referrals to ear, nose and throat consultants in secondary care, as this way patients would be covered by the 18 weeks target. The measures that are being taken to address this risk are detailed on page 31 of the publication "18 Week Patient Pathway: Delivery Resource Pack", which is available in the Library and on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/13/46/70/04134670.pdf.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what treatments are *(a)* subject and *(b)* not subject to the 18 week Patient Pathway Target; and for what reasons those in the latter group are not included in each case. [72764]

Andy Burnham: The principles and definitions underpinning the delivery of the 18 week Patient Pathway were published on 10 May 2006 in annex A of the publication "Tackling hospital waiting: the 18 week patient pathway-an implementation framework", which is available in the Library and on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/13/46/69/04134669.pdf

The principles and definitions set out what is included in the 18 week Pathway. The end of the 18 week Pathway is defined as

"the start of the first treatment that is intended to manage a person's disease, condition or injury".

Not all treatments available would be appropriate as a first intervention and it will vary from patient to patient, so it is not possible to provide a list of treatments that are either included or excluded from the target.

Capita

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what meetings *(a)* she and *(b)* Ministers in her Department have held with directors and senior executives of (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries since 1 January 2004; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have provided input (1) in writing and (2) in person to policy discussions in her Department since 1 January 2004. [61076]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The former Minister, Liam Byrne, Parliamentary Under Secretary for Care Services, met with John Tizard of Capita plc on 16 January 2006. Neither the Secretary of State nor the rest of her ministerial team have met with directors and senior executives of Capita plc or its subsidiaries since 1 January 2004.

Capita plc or its subsidiaries have not been invited to input either in writing or in person to the Department's policy discussions.

Choose and Book System

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what proportion of *(a)* GPs and *(b)* GP practices have (i) registered to use and (ii) indicated an interest in using the new"choose and book" system for hospital appointments from (A) within and (B) outside the pilot areas. [65773]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* As at 15 May 2006, 35,577 (97 per cent.) of general practitioners (GPs) had registered to use the "choose and book" service and been issued with chip and pin style "smartcards" to enable them to do so.

As at 16 May 2006, 5,073 (60 per cent.) GP practices had gone live with the 'choose and book' service, defined as having made at least one booking.

As at 17 May 2006, over 344,000 referrals had been made through the "choose and book" service. These bookings come from 300 of the 303 primary care trusts (PCTs) in England, which demonstrates a significantly larger usage of the system than the six PCTs that were "early adopters" or pilots of "choose and book".

The implementation team is now in the process of rolling out the system nationally across England.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people received cognitive behavioural therapy through the national health service in the last period for which figures are available. [73480]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not centrally available.

Departmental Budget

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much of the budget for her Department remained unspent in the 2005-06 financial year. [72855]

Andy Burnham: The Department's 2005-06 financial outturn position will be published in the "Public Expenditure Outturn" White Paper in July 2006.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what proportion of *(a)* staff and *(b)* new staff employed in (i) her Department and (ii) each of the agencies for which she has responsibility were registered as disabled in each of the last three years for which data are available. [61378]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is shown in the following tables.

Staff recorded as disabled, 2004 to 2006

	1 April 2004		1 April 2005		1 April 2006	
	Disabled	Percent of disabled [1]	Disabled	Percent of disabled [1]	Disabled	Percent of disabled [1]
Department of Health	140	7.1	100	6.5	116	6.0
Medicines and healthcare products regulatory agency	10	1.0	7	0.8	9	1.1
National health service estates	10	3.4	—	—	—	—
National health service pensions agency	10	4.1	—	—	—	—
National health service purchasing and supply agency	10	2.5	—	—	—	—

New staff employed; registered as disabled, 2003-04 to 2005-06

Financial year	2003-04		2004-05		2005-06	
	Disabled	Percent of disabled	Disabled	Percent of disabled	Disabled	Percent of disabled
Department of Health	3	2.9	12	7.1	—	—
Medicines and healthcare products regulatory agency	—	—	—	—	2	22
National health service purchasing and supply agency	—	—	—	—	—	—

Notes: [1]
Proportions are based on staff whose disability status is known; unknown values are excluded.

Drug Treatment

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many individuals from Suffolk have entered drug rehabilitation treatment in each of the last five years. [72539]

Andy Burnham: The table shows how many individuals from Suffolk entered drug rehabilitation treatment between 2003 and 2005.

	Number of individuals
2003-04	1,075
2004-05	1,340

The National Treatment Agency introduced a revised and more accurate methodology for counting the numbers in treatment in October 2004. Figures are not available for the years 1999-2000, 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2002-03 although the potential for providing estimates based on data collected using the earlier methodology is being explored.

Health Service Staff (Northamptonshire)

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* hospital doctors, *(b)* nurses, *(c)* general practitioners and *(d)* other health service staff were employed in Northamptonshire in (i) 1997 and (ii) 2005. [70818]

Andy Burnham: The information requested is shown in the following table.

National health service hospital and community health services: NHS staff employed in the Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland strategic health authority (SHA) area by specified staff groups as at 30 September each specified year

		Headcount
	1997	2005
Total NHS staff	28,276	35,869
HCHS doctors[1]	1,611	2,360
General medical practitioners (excluding retainers)[2]	908	1,021
Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff including practice nurses	8,626	11,002
Other NHS staff	17,131	21,486

[1] Excludes hospital medical practitioners and hospital medical clinical assistants, most of whom are general practitioners (GPs) working part time in hospitals
[2] General medical practitioners, excluding retainers and registrars, includes contracted GPs, GMS others and PMS others. Prior to September 2004 this group included GMS unrestricted Principals, PMS contracted GPs, PMS salaried GPs, restricted principals, assistants, salaried doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS others, flexible career scheme GPs and GP returners.
Note:
Data as at 30 September each year except GP and practice nurse data as at 1 October 1997
Sources:
The Information Centre for health and social care general and personal medical services statistics
The Information Centre for health and social care medical and dental workforce statistics
The Information Centre for health and social care non-medical workforce census

Hospital Bed Days

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* emergency and *(b)* non-emergency bed days there were in (i) England and (ii) each strategic health authority in each year since 1997. [47934]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information has been placed in the Library. Care and treatment needs have changed considerably in this period and will continue to do so.

Infant Mortality

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made to date in meeting the 10 per cent. reduction target in the gap in infant mortality rates between routine and manual socio-economic groups in *(a)* Peterborough, *(b)* the Eastern Region and *(c)* England; and if she will make a statement. [73358]

Caroline Flint: Infant mortality has fallen for the whole population since the 1997-99 target baseline, including for routine and manual groups.

The target is not formally monitored at local or regional level as the annual number of infant deaths in the routine and manual group in a local area would be very small. Even after aggregating a number of years' data, the rates would show fluctuations over time too large for them to be statistically reliable.

The latest available national data for England and Wales is for the period 2002-04. This indicates that the overall infant mortality rate for all those within a valid socio-economic group was 4.9 deaths per 1,000 live births, and the rate for those in routine and manual groups was 5.9 per 1,000 live births. The rate is 19 per cent. higher among the routine and manual group compared to the whole population. This rate is unchanged since 2001-03.

The implementation of the children's national service framework for children, young people and maternity services, the priority being given to tackling health inequalities and greater local focus in "Choosing Health, Our health, our care, our say", and the national health service reforms will deliver significant progress in tackling this target as part of a continuing overall reduction in infant mortality.

Information Technology

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the ability of the NHS IT programme to respond to developments in information technology. [70119]

Caroline Flint: The national programme for information technology's (NPfIT) services and systems are based on modern, robust tools and technologies which have been tried and tested widely in business and in the IT industry. They are based on industry standard platforms that have been underpinned by enterprise wide arrangements that achieved large cost savings for the taxpayer and the national health service with market leading IT products from Microsoft, Oracle, Sun, Novell and others. They use industry standards in whose development the Department's NHS connecting for health agency takes an active role, where appropriate.

NPfIT contracts specify service requirements and service levels rather than the underlying technical components. However, each contract contains an obligation for innovation and to keep up to date the technology employed including, as a minimum, a refresh of the relevant hardware and software platforms. Selection of the programme's suppliers was in part informed by their technical development plans and track record for continuing product development. In that way, the applications and technologies procured will not remain static but keep pace with functional needs and technical developments.

NHS connecting for health, under its research services contract with Gartner, maintains an awareness of emerging technology. The agency has also held a technology innovation forum involving contracted IT suppliers and those with whom enterprise-wide arrangements are in place to promote technical innovation for the NHS. In specific areas where patient safety, infection control or clinical utility is an issue, or where innovation to address new policy requirements is needed, NHS connecting for health has taken an active role in the definition of standards in hardware and software to meet these requirements.

In addition, an active programme of research and development is delivered on behalf of the programme by leading industry partners. This brings together the skills of the IT industry, the opportunities offered by NHS connecting for health, and NHS research and development skills to develop and evaluate new products and services of use to the NHS and of global interest. Its objective is to stimulate, support and evaluate innovations in the use of IT to improve patient experience, clinical practice and the process of care that could be generally used when the full functionality of the NPfIT will be universally available.

Maternity Services

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the timetable is for issuing guidance on home birth maternity services; and whether the Healthcare Commission will be producing that guidance. [72434]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence are developing clinical guidelines on "Intrapartum Care: Management and delivery of care to women in labour". The guideline will cover the appropriate place of birth, including care of women giving birth at home.

Under the provisional schedule, a stakeholder consultation on the draft guideline will be held between 22 June and 29 August 2006, with the final guideline being issued in February 2007.

Migraine

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent research she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on migraine; and if she will make a statement. [71974]

Andy Burnham: The main agency through which the Government supports medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an

independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Innovation.

The MRC is not currently funding research specifically relating to migraine. However, a strategic grant award to Dr. Leone Ridsdale, King's College, London for a prospective study on diagnostic management referral and one year outcome for patients with headache in primary care has recently been completed. The aim of this study was to provide evidence about the accuracy of diagnosis, the prognosis, reasons for referral, and the economic costs for patients and society.

The Department funds research to support policy and to provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the national health service and through its health technology assessment programme has supported a pragmatic, randomised trial into the use of acupuncture for migraine and headache in primary care; and a randomised placebo controlled trial of propranolol and Pizotifen in preventing migraine in children.

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by NHS organisations. Details of individual projects, including a number concerned with migraine, are available on the national research register at:
www.dh.gov.uk/research

Ministerial Visits

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many official visits each Minister in her Department has made to *(a)* dental practices, *(b)* opticians, *(c)* pharmacies, *(d)* general practitioner surgeries, *(e)* care homes, *(f)* community hospitals, *(g)* genito-urinary medicine clinics, *(h)* ambulance trusts, *(i)* mental health trusts, *(j)* rehabilitation services and *(k)* stroke units since May 2005; and what the purpose was of each visit. [60585]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested, up to and including March 2006, is shown in the following table.

	SofS	*MS(HS)*	*MS(R)*	*MS(DQ)*	*MS(PH)*	*PS(CS)*
Dental practices	1	7	—	—	—	—
Opticians	1	7	—	—	—	—
Pharmacies	2	—	—	4	—	—
General practitioner surgeries	[1]4	—	[2]8	—	—	—
Care homes	—	—	—	—	—	8
Community hospitals	2	—	1	—	—	—
Genito-urinary medicine clinics	1	—	—	—	3	—
Ambulance trusts	—	—	4	—	—	—
Mental health trusts	2	4	—	—	—	4
Rehabilitation services	—	4	—	—	4	8
Stroke units	—	—	—	—	—	1

Notes:
[1]. Including 1 primary care centre
[2] All PCCs SofS - Secretary of State for Health MS(HS) - Minister of State for Health MS(R) - Minister of State for Reform MS(DQ) - Minister of State for Delivery and Quality MS(PH) - Minister of State for Public Health PS(CS) - Parliamentary Under Secretary for Care Services

Ministerial visits and staff engagement are a key component of the Department's communication strategy. The purpose of visits is to gain a greater understanding of the challenges and successes experienced by staff, patients, carers and users in the national health service and social care economy. Visits also provide an opportunity to engage with frontline staff and patients.

Neo-natal Nursing

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many neo-natal nursing staff are employed in the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire strategic health authority area. [73303]

Andy Burnham: The number of neo-natal nursing staff employed in the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire strategic health authority (SHA) is not collected centrally.

The numbers of qualified maternity nursing staff, including neo-natal nurses in the SHA area, are shown in the following table.

National health service hospital and community health services: qualified maternity nursing staff in the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA area by organisation as at 30 September 2005

Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA	1,387
Cambridge University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	338
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	100
Huntingdonshire PCT	11
Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust	228
James Paget Healthcare NHS Trust	86
Queen Elizabeth Hospital Kings Lynn NHS Trust	119
Norfolk And Norwich University Hospital NHS Trust	237

National health service hospital and community health services: qualified maternity nursing staff in the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA area by organisation as at 30 September 2005

Peterborough Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	165
West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust	103

Source:
The Information Centre for health and social care non-medical workforce census 2005

NHS Appointments Commission

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) pursuant to the answer of 16 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1299W, on Gloucestershire Primary Care Trusts, from what date the NHS Appointments Commission gained responsibility for the appointment of chairs and board members of primary care trusts; and what criteria she used to assess the suitability of the candidates before she appointed the *(a)* Chairman and *(b)* non-executive directors of the West Gloucestershire Primary Care Trust prior to that date; [73221]

(2) whether the NHS Appointments Commission will appoint all the chairmen and board members of the new primary care trusts; what criteria will be used to make those appointments; and what timetable will be followed. [72754]

Ms Rosie Winterton: *[holding answers 24 May 2006 and 23 May 2006]:* The NHS Appointments Commission was established in April 2001 and began making appointments to the national health service bodies in 2002. I can confirm that the NHS Appointments Commission will be appointing all the chairmen and non-executive board members of the new primary care trusts (PCTs). I have asked the Commission's chairman to write to the hon. Member setting out the criteria that have been used to make PCT appointments, those used for the new PCTs and the timetable for the appointments.

NHS Finances

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 18 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1175W, on NHS finances, what responsibility the Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire strategic health authority has with regard to the financial management of the Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. [73743]

Caroline Flint: Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire strategic health authority (SHA) has no formal responsibility over financial management of national health service foundation trusts (NHSFTs). SHAs no longer performance-manage NHSFTs. As independently regulated organisations, the board of directors of a NHSFT is responsible for the organisation's performance.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 18 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1175W, on NHS finances, whether the Department of Health requires the Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire strategic health authority to achieve financial balance in 2006-07, including clearing accumulated deficits from prior years. [73744]

Caroline Flint: The new strategic health authority (SHA) boundaries were announced on 12 April 2006. From 1 July 2006, the Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA will form part of the South West SHA.

The Department is currently in discussion with the constituent parts of the new South West SHA about their 2006-07 financial plan which will contribute to financial balance across the national health service in 2006-07.

NHS Supplies Market

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the supplies market within the NHS will be controlled and regulated; and if she will make a statement. [49249]

Andy Burnham: The Department's policy on the procurement of goods and services in or on behalf of the national health service is based on value for money, having due regard to propriety and regularity and ensuring full compliance with the European Union public procurement directive and other regulatory requirements. The directive promotes equal treatment, transparency and competitive procurement.

Owing to the complexity and variety of products and services within the NHS supplies market detailed management is ultimately based on a case by case basis against the background of the specific category market.

However the structure of the Department and of the NHS means that the relevant bodies will work together to ensure that key purchasing and supply performance measures are integrated into the overall management of NHS performance.

NHS Treatment (Scottish Residents)

Anne Moffat: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people normally resident in Scotland received NHS treatment in England in 2005. [72608]

Andy Burnham: Approximately 5,314[1] people normally resident in Scotland received national health service treatment in England in 2004-05.

[1] *Source:*
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), The Information Centre for health and social care.

Over-the-Counter Medicines Initiative

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the progress of the "Better regulation for over-the-counter medicines" initiative. [67797]

Andy Burnham: I refer my hon. Friend to the written ministerial statement published in the House on 23 May 2006.

Oxycodone Hydrochloride

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the market share distribution for the supply of oxycodone hydrochloride; what steps are being taken to increase the number of suppliers; and when she expects more suppliers to enter the market. [73505]

Andy Burnham: Napp is currently the only company marketing oxycodone hydrochloride products in the United Kingdom. It is a commercial decision for any company to enter a particular market. The Department has no information regarding new suppliers entering the market.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the debt of those hospitals which are in deficit and those hospitals which have been in deficit over the last two complete years for which figures are available is accounted for by the annual private finance initiative charge. [72361]

Andy Burnham: The table provides details of unitary payments and deficits from the audited accounts for private finance initiative (PFI) schemes for the last two complete years.

There is no direct correlation between a trust meeting its PFI unitary charge and incurring a deficit, as the following table shows. Unitary payments—paid for from a trust's general revenue allocations—include elements for hard and soft facilities management services, financing costs as well as ensuring the availability of the facility, and are just one component of a trust's total expenditure.

		2003-04		2004-05	
Commissioning body	*Capital value (£ million)*	*Unitary payment (£ million)*	*Surplus/deficit (£000)*	*Unitary payment (£ million)*	*Surplus/deficit (£000)*
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals	54	20.686	-4,398.000	21.203	0
Berkshire Healthcare National Health Service Trust	30	4.206	-851.000	4.311	1
Buckinghamshire Hospitals	45	10.813	-5,237.000	11.083	2,518
Dartford and Gravesham Hospital	94	19.059	61.000	19.535	-1,146
Hereford Hospitals NHS Trust	64	11.092	-18.000	11.370	20
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals[1]	22	2.000	17.000	2.050	-5,461
King's College Hospital NHS Trust	76	17.501	182.000	18.374	-2,734
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust[1]	14	—	-309.000	0.646	178
North Cumbria Acute Hospitals	67	13.353	-4,133.000	13.687	13
Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	96	19.455	917.000	19.941	-9,186
Queen Mary's Hospital Sidcup	15	1.938	41.000	1.987	-4,608
Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust	26	—	-1,593.000	0.263	-7,806
South Tees Acute Hospital	122	26.170	-1,712.000	26.824	-8,898
St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	46	7.327	-650.000	7.629	-21,656
The Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals	13	0.140	-7,612.000	3.106	-9,016
West Middlesex University Hospital	60	9.700	137.000	10.500	-3,991
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals	87	18.739	-12,801.000	19.207	2

[1] Hard facilities management only therefore lower unitary payments compared to the rest of the table.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what she expects the impact on primary care trust finances to be of the move to payment by results in areas where acute trusts are most efficient; and if she will make a statement. [73344]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 24 May 2006]*: Primary care trusts (PCTs) that have historically paid less than the national average cost will pay more for activity covered by payment by results, whereas PCTs that have been paying above national average cost will pay less. In 2006-07, allocations to PCTs have been adjusted to help smooth the impact of this change in expenditure.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the expected costs are of the implementation of the new configuration of primary care trusts in Bedfordshire; and if she will make a statement. [72959]

Andy Burnham: Total costs are dependent on a number of factors, including the number of new organisations, the number of people in the new organisations, new pay ranges for very senior managers, as well as changes in estate costs following reconfiguration.

For these reasons, it is not possible to give definite costs.

We anticipate, however, that the reconfiguration of strategic health authorities and primary care trusts in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire will save £7 million.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received about the impact of the new configuration of primary care trusts in Bedfordshire on the financial deficit of Bedfordshire Heartlands; what impact she expects the new configuration to have on the deficit; and if she will make a statement. [72960]

Andy Burnham: Ministers have received a range of representations about primary care trust (PCT) reconfiguration in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire. However, no representations have been received about the impact of PCT reconfiguration on the financial deficit of Bedfordshire Heartlands.

We anticipate that the reconfiguration of strategic health authorities (SHAs) and PCTs in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire will save £7 million.

SHAs and PCTs are currently drawing up plans to achieve financial balance and these will be reviewed by the Department in June.

Runaway Children

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department is taking to safeguard the health of children and young people who run away or go missing from home or care. [73349]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The "Every child matters: change for children" programme, a joint programme between the Department and the Department for Education and Skills, sets out the national framework for local change programmes to build services around the needs of children and young people. "Change for children" is particularly concerned with targeting support on children most at risk of negative outcomes, such as those associated with running away or going missing. As part of this programme, the Children Act 2004 reforms place a duty on a range of health bodies to have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to co-operate with local authorities to improve integrated working arrangements so that key people and bodies are working towards shared outcomes.

The national service framework for children, young people and maternity services published in September 2004 is a 10-year programme also intended to stimulate long-term and substantial improvement in children's health and in the better outcomes that are the result of better health. The Department will be seeking to make health an integral part of the everyday services that young people use.

It is possible for any child or young person to access national health service primary medical services by registering as a patient with a local general practitioner practice. Where a child is being registered, an application may be made on their behalf by a parent or other person who has parental responsibility for them. It is also possible to access primary care services through a NHS walk-in centre or NHS Direct where there is no need to register.

Services in all primary care trust areas, including primary, community, specialist and acute services, need to take account of young people's needs. By creating services centred around the needs of children and families and ensuring that every child achieves their potential, these reforms will close the gap between those who do well and those who do not, including, for example, children and young people who run away or go missing from home or care.

Section 64 Grants

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what basis the decision was made to withhold the full payment of section 64 awards to charities in Loughborough; and when charities with two or three-year grants will receive full payment. [73293]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Voluntary and community sector organisations with continuing section 64 grants will receive quarterly instalments during 2006-07 providing they have complied with the terms and conditions of the award. Full payment in 2006-07 will not be made until the final quarterly instalment is paid in January 2007.

Payment of the first quarterly instalment due in April 2006 was delayed while a departmental central budget review took place. This has now concluded and outstanding payments made. Interim payments were offered to minimise financial risk.

A decision to withhold full payments for an individual organisation would be made on a case by case basis.

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations her Department has received from grant applicants based in Leicestershire about the time taken for section 64 grant decisions to be made. [73331]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: There is no record of any direct representation from either of the two grant applicants based in Leicestershire about the time taken for grant decisions to be made.

Sexual Health

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to reduce *(a)* unplanned pregnancies and *(b)* sexually transmitted diseases; and if she will make a statement. [72446]

Caroline Flint: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 250W.

Measures to reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) were set out in the "National Strategy for Sexual Health and HIV" (2001) and the public health White Papers "Choosing Health" (November 2004) and "Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services" (January 2006), which are available in the Library and on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk.

Sexual health and access to genito-urinary medicine clinics is one of the six top priorities for the NHS in 2006-07. By 2008 everyone should be offered an appointment within 48 hours of contacting a genito-urinary medicine clinic. Strategic health authorities have all submitted plans to meet this target.

In addition to these national measures, primary care trusts are responsible for providing sexual health services which meet the needs of their local populations. To support them in this role, the Department, working with professional bodies, has published recommended standards for sexual health service a toolkit of best practice for sexual health promotion, and guidance on commissioning.

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of the impact of the use of condoms on the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases; and if she will make a statement. [72447]

Caroline Flint: We have assessed the domestic and international evidence for the impact of condom use on the incidence of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). For example, in the early 1990s, the Thai Government implemented a 100 per cent. condom programme to encourage sex workers to increase their use of condoms in commercial sex facilities. Rojanapithayakorn and Hanenberg (1996) reported that there was a substantial increase in the proportion of reported commercial sex acts in which condoms were used, i.e. from 25 per cent. in 1989 to 94 per cent. in 1995. During this period, the incidence of curable STIs reported in Government clinics decreased dramatically, which was coupled with a decrease in the prevalence of HIV among Thai military recruits.

Evidence such as this, has been used to guide the brief for the forthcoming sexual health campaign, which will focus on the risks of unprotected sex and the benefits of using condoms to avoid the risk of STIs or unintended pregnancies.

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent in each year since 1997 on free contraception in areas with high rates of sexually transmitted diseases and unplanned pregnancy; and if she will make a statement. [72448]

Caroline Flint: This information is not held centrally.

We have asked primary care trusts (PCTs) to complete the first ever national questionnaire of contraceptive services. This has provided PCT sexual health leads and commissioners of contraceptive services with an audit tool to map their current service provision and to highlight gaps in local services so that they can develop contraceptive services that meet their local population needs. To support them in this role, the Department is investing £40 million over the next two years (£20 million in both 2006-07 and 2007-08) to improve access to contraceptive services and to the full range of methods.

Improving access to free contraception, including condoms, to avoid the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or unplanned pregnancies is one of the key aims of the Government's White Paper "Choosing health: making healthy choices easier". Reducing the rate of value added tax on condoms and emergency hormonal contraception from 1 July 2006 will also make the costs of these items more affordable to those who choose not to access free services.

Waiting Times

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the specialities where waiting times have increased to the maximum target waiting time since waiting times were last reviewed, broken down by NHS trust. [65781]

Andy Burnham: The information requested is available on the Department's website at www.performance.doh.gov.uk/waitingtimes/index.html, where waiting time data is available broken down by both speciality and national health service trust.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 15 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 758W, on waiting times, what definition of "very few" she uses; and whether "very few" means *(a)* less than 10, *(b)* less than 50, *(c)* less than 100 or *(d)* another amount. [72559]

Andy Burnham: Of the 771,100 patients waiting for treatment at the end of March 2006, 199 people had been waiting for longer than six months. This was three patients for every 10,000 waiting for treatment—a figure I would describe as very few.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer to question 70897, on waiting times, what the maximum period between initial GP diagnosis and operation could be without breaches of the six month target. [72560]

Andy Burnham: The waiting time standard is now a maximum of 13 weeks from referral by a general practitioner (GP) to a first out-patient appointment. That consultation may lead to further out-patient appointments and diagnostic tests and currently, these are not subject to waiting time targets. If the hospital consultant then considers that the patient needs to be admitted for treatment, there would be a maximum wait of six months from that point. The target for 2008 will transform this into a maximum wait of 18 weeks from GP referral to the start of treatment.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animal Experimentation

Lyn Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department is taking to encourage the development and validation of alternative methods of scientific experimentation to replace and reduce the use of animal experiments. [72392]

Joan Ryan: The Home Office is fully committed to encouraging the development of alternatives to animal experimentation where this is possible. Indeed, under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, we will not license the use of animals in scientific procedures if alternative non-animal techniques are available.

In addition, the Home Office contributes £250,000 annually to the National Centre for the Replacement, Reduction and Refinement of Animals in Research (NC3Rs) which was established by the Government in May 2004 to co-ordinate and stimulate research and practice in the 3Rs. The NC3Rs funds high-quality 3Rs research and facilitates the exchange of information and ideas, the identification of knowledge gaps, and the translation of research findings into practice to benefit both animals and science. The Centre submits an annual report to the Minister for Science and Innovation on its activities, the first of which was published in January 2006 and is available on their website at:

www.nc3rs.org.

Internationally, the United Kingdom Government continues to support the European Centre for the Validation of Alternative Methods (ECVAM) through contributions to the European Union. We take a lead in formulating European policies, standards and targets which neither disadvantage the United Kingdom nor drive work abroad to countries where lower standards apply.

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers in Suffolk have *(a)* had their application refused and *(b)* been removed from the UK in each of the past five years. [72532]

Mr. Byrne: The number of asylum seekers supported by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) are published on a quarterly and annual basis, broken down by Local Authority. The next publication covering the first quarter of 2006 was published on 23 May 2006, and will be available on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics website at:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Data on asylum seekers supported by NASS broken down by parliamentary constituency are also available from the Library of the House.

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers there were in West Suffolk constituency in each year since 1997. [72534]

Mr. Byrne: The National Asylum Support Service (NASS) assumed responsibility for the support of asylum seekers on 3 April 2000. The following table shows the numbers of asylum seekers (including dependants) supported by NASS in West Suffolk constituency as at the end of each year (available from December 2003).The number of asylum seekers supported by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) are published on a quarterly and annual basis, broken down by local authority.

Number of asylum seekers (including dependants) supported by NASS in West Suffolk constituency as at the end of each year from December 2003

As at December each year:	*In NASS accommodation*	*In receipt of subsistence only*
2003	—	5
2004	—	*
2005	—	—

* = 1 or 2.

Note:

Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers there are in *(a)* West Suffolk and *(b)* the East of England region. [72536]

Mr. Byrne: The number of asylum seekers supported by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) are published on a quarterly and annual basis, broken down by Government Office Region and Local Authority. The next publication covering the first quarter of 2006 will be published on the 23 May 2006, and will be available on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics website at:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Correspondence

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Minister for Immigration will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, of 4 April 2006, on behalf of Sakineh Soltan Malek-Mohammadi, wife of Rahmatollah Farahmand (Home Office Reference G1091885, acknowledgement reference B9197/6). [71365]

Mr. Byrne: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood on 19 May 2006.

Drug-related Crime

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents of drug-related crime there were in each police authority area in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [71840]

Mr. McNulty: There are no figures available specifically on drug-related crime. The available information relates to recorded drug offences only and is given in the following tables.

Recorded crime—drug offences

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Avon and Somerset	1,990	1,860	2,308	2,457	2,739
Bedfordshire	896	1,009	1,069	1,130	1,131
Cambridgeshire	829	798	904	1,047	1,174
Cheshire	1,644	1,591	1,717	1,695	1,546
Cleveland	952	1,109	1,685	1,368	1,451
Cumbria	949	925	1,038	1,189	1,321
Derbyshire	1,374	1,635	1,877	1,932	2,023
Devon and Cornwall	3,374	4,079	4,516	4,826	4,356
Dorset	1,237	1,390	1,371	1,455	1,577
Durham	1,207	1,317	1,289	1,205	1,062
Dyfed-Powys	1,690	2,407	2,978	2,420	2,327
Essex	2,208	2,212	2,377	2,295	2,328
Gloucestershire	1,293	1,223	1,311	1,288	1,218
Greater Manchester	4,932	4,698	5,667	5,981	6,703
Gwent	2,196	1,729	1,585	1,422	1,332
Hampshire	3,464	3,449	3,938	3,967	3,773
Hertfordshire	1,441	1,350	1,553	1,678	1,754
Humberside	1,342	1,513	1,883	1,874	2,048
Kent	2,940	3,051	3,236	2,795	2,170
Lancashire	3,124	3,169	4,084	3,640	3,411
Leicestershire	1,395	1,705	1,629	1,821	1,942
Lincolnshire	906	1,116	1,060	1,061	951
London, City of	296	469	790	744	876
Merseyside	4,421	4,390	5,419	5,497	5,649
Metropolitan Police	23,626	26,204	33,311	32,332	33,011
Norfolk	1,160	1,211	1,392	1,508	1,602
Northamptonshire	967	958	979	971	1,477
Northumbria	4,238	4,804	6,040	5,414	4,636
North Wales	1,427	1,382	1,830	1,830	1,834
North Yorkshire	1,259	1,491	1,582	1,624	1,690
Nottinghamshire	2,028	2,070	2,352	2,830	2,667
South Wales	3,038	3,907	3,872	3,837	3,705
South Yorkshire	3,521	3,408	3,448	3,191	3,013
Staffordshire	1,623	2,186	2,264	2,586	2,689
Suffolk	1,178	1,292	1,689	1,923	1,974
Surrey	1,858	1,872	1,934	1,689	1,904
Sussex	2,002	2,602	2,665	3,050	3,343
Thames Valley	3,364	4,093	4,903	5,404	6,167
Warwickshire	629	659	751	944	914
West Mercia	2,073	2,109	2,053	2,218	2,278
West Midlands	7,519	7,578	8,828	6,656	7,840
West Yorkshire	4,820	4,297	5,015	5,295	5,666
Wiltshire	1,028	1,076	898	971	1,066
	113,458	121,393	141,090	141,080	142,338

[1] Numbers affected by the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standards which came into effect in 2002-03. Data not comparable with earlier years

Embarkation Controls

Mr. Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the commitment given by his predecessor to reintroduce embarkation controls will be implemented. [72945]

Joan Ryan: The five year immigration strategy for asylum and immigration, published in February 2005, contains details of our plans, through the e-Borders programme, to strengthen and modernise our border control including providing an electronic record of all those entering and leaving the UK. This is scheduled to commence in 2008.

Entry Visas

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to identify the persons granted entry visas to the UK in the last five years who have subsequently *(a)* applied for asylum on entry and *(b)* overstayed the time allowed by the visa; and if he will make a statement. [70864]

Mr. Byrne: The Government are already committed to detecting those who fail to comply with their conditions of entry, including overstayers. Key initiatives to tackle such immigration abuse include: sharing information with other Government agencies and acting upon any intelligence we receive where appropriate; and targeting embarkation controls at major UK ports to detect immigration offenders who are leaving the UK.

Roll-out of a programme to capture biometrics details of visa applicants will be completed by 2008. This will enable IND to identify those who applied for a visa and subsequently claim asylum in the UK without documentation. UK Visas' Central Reference System is used to access further details when someone applying for asylum has retained their original documentation and identity.

Foreign Prisoners

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what offences each of the 1,023 foreign national offenders released from prison without consideration for deportation were originally imprisoned. [68788]

John Reid: I refer to the written ministerial statement I made on 15 May.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the crimes committed by those foreign prisoners released into the community without proper application of the deportation review process. [71448]

Mr. Byrne: I refer to the written ministerial statement made by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary on 15 May 2006.

IND Contracts

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were employed by the immigration and nationality directorate on temporary contracts in each of the last five years. [68721]

John Reid: The number of people employed on temporary contracts by the immigration and

nationality directorate is recorded in the following table. Additionally, the directorate has contracts with employment agencies for the provision of temporary workers and these figures have also been included in order to provide a full picture.

The figures in the following table show the average numbers of temporary workers in the organisation beginning with the financial year 2002-03. The earliest date for which figures are available is 2002. The final figure relates to 31 March 2006 and represents the latest actual position.

	Casual	*Agency*	*Total*
2002-03	60	1,232	1,292
2003-04	135	1,170	1,305
2004-05	196	1,002	1,198
2005-06	220	1,303	1,523
2006	239	1,623	1,862

Leave to Remain

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been refused leave to remain in the UK because they did not fulfil the criteria for international protection since the policy came into effect, broken down by ethnic origin; and if he will make a statement. [72161]

Mr. Byrne: Where a person is excluded from international protection, we would normally seek to remove them from the United Kingdom, unless to do so would breach our obligations under the European convention on human rights. Under published policy, an excluded person who cannot be removed for legal reasons may either be granted six months' discretionary leave or placed on temporary admission or granted temporary release. Home Office records show that since 30 August 2005, the policy has been applied in a total of 10 cases to keep the individuals concerned on temporary admission or temporary release. Of those cases, nine were Afghan nationals and one was a national of Burundi.

This information is based on internal management information and as such is not published within the official statistics.

Passports

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of British passports were issued to foreign-born British citizens in each of the last five years. [72383]

Joan Ryan: The Identity and Passport Service does not hold readily accessible data about numbers of foreign-born British passport holders.

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many British passports have been issued to *(a)* asylum seekers and *(b)* those granted indefinite leave to remain in each of the last eight years. [72384]

Joan Ryan: British passports cannot be issued to asylum seekers because they do not hold British nationality. The grant of indefinite leave to remain does not qualify a person to hold a British passport.

A person granted indefinite leave to remain may in due course qualify to apply for naturalisation as a British citizen after meeting the residence and other requirements. Persons granted naturalisation may then apply for British passports. The Identity and Passport Service does not hold readily accessible data about numbers of passports issued to people who have been naturalised and does not hold information on whether such applicants have previously been asylum seekers.

Police

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the annual cost is of employing *(a)* a police officer and *(b)* a probation officer in each police authority area; and what the equivalent figure was in each of the last five years. [71842]

Mr. McNulty: The answers are given in the following tables.

Constable salaries in England and Wales

September	*Non-London minimum salary (£)*	*Non-London maximum salary (£)*	*London minimum salary (£)*	*London maximum salary (£)*	*Employment costs (Percentage)*	*Total cost (non-London) of minimum salary (£)*	*Total cost (non-London) of maximum salary (£)*	*Total cost (London) of minimum salary (£)*	*Total cost (London) of maximum salary (£)*
2001	17,733	28,062	23,844	34,173	24.6	22,095	34,965	29,710	42,580
2002	18,264	28,905	24,429	35,070	24.6	22,757	36,016	30,439	43,697
2003	19,227	30,186	25,446	36,405	24.6	23,957	37,612	31,706	45,361
2004	19,803	31,092	26,079	37,368	24.6	24,675	38,741	32,494	46,561
2005	20,397	32,025	26,730	38,358	24.6	25,415	39,903	33,306	47,794

Sergeant salaries in England and Wales

September	Non-London minimum salary (£)	Non-London maximum salary (£)	London minimum salary (£)	London maximum salary (£)	Employment costs (Percentage)	Total cost (non-London) of minimum salary (£)	Total cost (non-London) of maximum salary (£)	Total cost (London) of minimum salary (£)	Total Cost (London) of Maximum Salary (£)
2001	27,084	31,950	33,195	37,701	24.6	33,747	39,810	41,361	46,975
2002	27,897	32,538	34,062	38,703	24.6	34,760	40,542	42,441	48,224
2003	30,186	33,927	36,405	40,146	24.6	37,612	42,273	45,361	50,022
2004	31,092	34,944	37,368	41,220	24.6	38,741	43,540	46,561	51,360
2005	32,025	35,991	38,358	42,324	24.6	39,903	44,845	47,794	52,736

Inspector salaries in England and Wales

September	Non-London minimum salary(£)	Non-London maximum salary (£)	London minimum salary (£)	London maximum salary (£)	Employment costs (percentage)	Total cost (Non-London) of minimum salary (£)	Total cost (non-London) of maximum salary (£)	Total cost (London) of minimum salary (£)	Total cost (London) of maximum salary (£)
2001	35,034	39,153	42,747	45,840	24.6	43,652	48,785	53,263	57,117
2002	36,084	40,329	43,899	48,150	24.6	44,961	50,250	54,698	59,995
2003	38,639	41,952	46,593	49,878	24.6	48,144	52,272	58,055	62,148
2004	39,840	43,212	47,862	51,246	24.6	49,641	53,842	59,636	63,853
2005	41,034	44,508	49,167	52,653	24.6	51,128	55,457	61,262	65,606

Notes:
1. South-east England allowance: This was introduced on 1 April 2001 for all officers appointed on or after 1 September 1994 and has been paid since 1 April 2001 at the following rate:
Essex, Herts, Kent, Surrey, Thames Valley-£2,000 p.a.
Bedfordshire, Hampshire, Sussex-£1,000 p.a.
2. Officers in all three ranks are eligible for a competence-related threshold payment when they have been at the top of the salary scale for 12 months. This payment was worth £1,002 (2003), £1,032 (2004) and £1,062 (2005).
3. Please note the figures in the table do not include the figures above.

Probation officer pay in England and Wales

	Non-London minimum basic salary (£)	Non-London maximum basic salary (£)	London weighting (£)	London minimum basic salary (£)	London maximum basic salary (£)	Employment costs (%)	Total cost (not London) of minimum salary (£)	Total cost (not London) of maximum salary (£)	Total cost (London) of minimum salary (£)	Total cost (London) of maximum salary (£)
2001-02	18,786	25,338	2,652	21,438	27,990	22.92	23,092	31,145	26,352	34,405
2002-03	19,443	26,226	2,745	22,188	28,971	22.92	23,899	32,237	27,273	35,611
2003-04	20,257	27,238	3,000	23,257	30,238	22.92	24,900	33,481	28,588	37,169
2004-05	20,804	27,973	3,081	23,885	31,054	22.92	25,572	34,384	29,359	38,172
2005-06	21,324	28,673	3,420	24,744	32,093	22.92	26,211	35,245	30,415	39,449

Notes:
1. Salaries quoted are for qualified probation officers and exclude allowances.
2. Probation officer pay is determined by national negotiations.
3. Spine point range for probation officers is 107-137.
4. London weighting added where appropriate.
5. Pay in 2001-02 was part of a two year deal from April 2000.
6. Employment costs are 22.92 per cent. of salaries.

Prisons

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of providing *(a)* educational facilities, *(b)* dental services, *(c)* medical services, including costs involved in transporting inmates to and from hospital, *(d)* clothing and *(e)* food has been in each prison in England and Wales in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [37538]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Prison Service does not collect information separately on the costs of providing education facilities in English public prisons and the information sought could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Such information is also not available for the Welsh public prisons.

The Department of Health received £118 million from the Home Office for prison health care costs, including for dentistry, in 2002-03. Some £139.7 million was spent in 2003-04 and £158 million was spent in 2004-05 on medical and psychiatric care for prisoners in England. The allocation for 2005-06 is £175.7 million. The current comparable amount for health care in the Welsh public prisons is £3,395,000. The cost of providing prisoners with escorts for hospital appointments is not available.

As the cost of providing clothing is included in the overall figure for prisoners' consumables it is not possible immediately to disaggregate it for the English or Welsh public prisons.

The cost of food for the public prisons in England was £28.625 million for 2003, £36.807 million for 2003-04 and £38.322 million for 2004-05. The 2005-06 budget for food for the Welsh public prisons is £756,000.

Comparable information for the contracted prisons is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Probation Service

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many throughcare cases held by the probation service in England and Wales *(a)* have not been allocated to a named probation officer and *(b)* are held nominally by a senior probation officer. [63081]

Mr. Sutcliffe: National Standards 2005 state:

"GS3—Sentenced cases will be allocated to an offender manager.

SS3.1—Following sentence each case will be assigned to a tier within the National Offender Management Model, be recorded as such and will be allocated to an offender manager. The tiering decision will be based on an OASys assessment where available. For offenders sentenced to custody, allocation should be made within five working days of sentence.

SS3.2—Probation areas will ensure that:

Tier four and tier three cases are allocated within one working day of sentence.

Tier two and tier one cases are allocated within a maximum of three working days after sentence.

Requirements which require commencement before three working days are allocated accordingly.

Data against this national standard are available from October 2005. Between October 2005 and February 2006, 86 per cent. of cases were allocated an offender manager in accordance with national standards. Data by probation area and region showing the proportion of cases in which the standard was met between October 2005 and February 2006 are shown in the following table.

October 2005 to February 2006

Region/area	*Percentage of cases meeting the national standard*
West Midlands	
Staffordshire	89
Warwickshire	100
West Mercia	90
West Midlands	66
West Midlands total	74
North East	
County Durham	100
Northumbria	98
Teesside	88
North East total	96
East	
Bedfordshire	38
Cambridgeshire	79
Essex	—
Hertfordshire	89
Norfolk	88
Suffolk	93
East total	80
North West	
Cheshire	96
Cumbria	93
Greater Manchester	91
Lancashire	97
Merseyside	97
North West total	94
East Midlands	
Derbyshire	90
Leicestershire and Rutland	94
Lincolnshire	100
Nottinghamshire	83
Northamptonshire	90
East Midlands total	92
Yorkshire and Humberside	
Humberside	88
North Yorkshire	99
South Yorkshire	94
West Yorkshire	81
Yorkshire and Humberside total	89
South East	
Hampshire	91
Kent	95
Surrey	94
Sussex	92
Thames Valley	84
South East total	90
South West	
Avon and Somerset	95
Devon/Cornwall	85
Dorset	82
Gloucestershire	77
Wiltshire	100
South West total	88
London	
London East	70
London North	67
London South	81
London West	68
London total	72
Wales	
Dyfed/Powys	97

October 2005 to February 2006

Region/area	*Percentage of cases meeting the national standard*
Gwent	93
North Wales	90
South Wales	84
Wales total	89
England and Wales	86

Note:
CJA orders only
Was the case allocated to an offender manager within the required time scale, i.e.
—within one working day of sentence for offenders on tier 3 and tier 4, or who pose a high or very high risk of serious harm to the public, or whose sentence includes a DRR where the first contact will take place within one working day of sentence; or
—within three working days of sentence for tier 1 and tier 2? (SS3.2)

Racial Abuse

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many complaints of racial abuse in his Department have been *(a)* investigated and *(b)* upheld in each of the last five years. [72878]

Mr. Byrne: The figures available for the Department are set out in the table at annex A.

	Complaints of racial abuse	*Up-held*
1 April 2001 to 31 March 2002	2	1
1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003	0	0
1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004	0	0
1 April 2004 to 31 December 2005	1	0
1 January 2005 to 31 March 2005[1]	8	1
1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006[2]	10	1

[1] Data is categorised as three cases of racial harassment, one of which was upheld and five cases of racial discrimination.
[2] Data is categorised as three racial harassment cases, one of which was upheld, and seven racial discrimination cases include one which was not upheld and six which still ongoing.

Recidivism

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many crimes were committed by people who had previously been *(a)* convicted of a crime and *(b)* cautioned in each of the last five years, broken down by police authority area; and if he will make a statement. [71843]

Mr. McNulty: The information requested is not available.

Information on the criminal histories of offenders is published annually for offenders convicted in courts of indictable offences. The criminal histories are counts of previous convictions, and not cautions. The data are available for England and Wales as a whole, and are not broken down by police authority area.

The most recent data on the previous convictions of those sentenced in court are available in chapter 6 of Sentencing Statistics 2004, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 15/05, a copy of which is available in the House Library and is available online at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hosbpubs1.html
Information is presented in the bulletin going back to 1994.

Refugees

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria determine the exclusion of an individual from international protection under the UN Refugee Convention 1951 resulting in that individual receiving temporary admission instead of leave to remain; and if he will make a statement. [71839]

Mr. Byrne: Article 1F of the Refugee Convention excludes any individual from being a refugee where there are serious reasons for considering that they have: committed a crime against peace, a war crime, or a crime against humanity; committed a serious non-political crime prior to arrival in the country of refuge; or been guilty of acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 33(2) of the Refugee Convention allows an asylum seeker or recognised refugee to be removed even if they have a well founded fear of persecution where they represent a threat to national security or where having been convicted of a particularly serious crime they constitute a danger to the community. Section 72 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 provides an interpretation of Article 33(2) of the 1951 Convention and defines the term "particularly serious crime" for the purposes of Article 33(2).

Zimbabwe

Mr. Benyon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applicants from Zimbabwe for indefinite leave to remain in the UK under the ancestral visa route have *(a)* been refused because their application was proved to be fraudulent and *(b)* had their application delayed because of an inquiry into fraud in the last 12 months. [72085]

Mr. Byrne: In the last 12 months to 30 April 2006, 12 applicants from Zimbabwe for Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) under the UK ancestral visa route have been refused. Detailed data which give the reason for the refusals are not held. Some 87 ILR applicants from Zimbabwe have had their application delayed while inquiries proceed. Of these, 77 remain under consideration while documents are checked and other inquiries made.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Access to Work

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the budget of the access to work scheme for his Department to meet its target of getting one million more disabled people into work over the next 10 years. [68316]

Mrs. McGuire: Access to work spend has increased from £14.6 million in 1997-98 to £59.5 million in 2004-05 and I am pleased that this programme is now helping some 32,000 disabled people to move into or retain jobs. However, the vast majority of the 2.6 million disabled people who are working do not need the kind of support available from access to work.

We will continue to review the balance between the different types of support and to ensure that the Pathways to Work Pilots continue to achieve impressive results by using a range of provision, including Access to work, to meet individual needs.

Affordable Credit

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on progress on implementation of the Affordable Credit Deductions Scheme. [65674]

Mr. Plaskitt: As part of the Government's strategy to increase access to Affordable Credit for people on low income, we intend to introduce arrangements which, under certain circumstances, will enable lenders to apply for deductions from benefits to repay loans where re-payment arrangements have broken down. We intend to bring forward legislation in the autumn to enable the scheme to come into effect by the end of 2006.

Attendance Allowance

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will change the attendance allowance qualifying period from six months to three months; and if he will make a statement. [72845]

Mrs. McGuire: Attendance allowance provides a contribution towards the extra costs faced by severely disabled people aged 65 or over as a result of long-term disability. The purpose of the six-month qualifying period is to establish that disability and the care needs arising from it are long-term, rather than the result of short-term or transient conditions, and we have no plans to change it. However, the decision maker will always look at how long care has been required when a disabled person claims the allowance and will consider whether some or all of the qualifying period has already been completed.

Benefit Claimants

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in *(a)* Devon and *(b)* Torbay claimed (i) income support, (ii) incapacity benefit and (iii) jobseeker's allowance for the most recent month for which figures are available. [73163]

Mr. Plaskitt: The available information is in the following table.

Income support, incapacity benefit, severe disablement allowance and jobseeker's allowance claimants in Devon and Torbay: November 2005

	Devon	*Torbay parliamentary constituency*
Income support	17,100	4,400
Incapacity benefit or severe disablement allowance	26,900	5,830
Jobseeker's allowance	5,153	1,458

Notes:
1. Income support and incapacity benefit severe disablement allowance figures are rounded to the nearest 10. Jobseeker's allowance figures are un-rounded.
2. Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance claimant figures include incapacity benefit credits only cases.
3. Jobseeker's allowance figures are not seasonally adjusted.

Source:
Income Support, Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance-DWP Information Directorate, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study, 100 per cent. data; Jobseeker's Allowance-Count of unemployment-related benefits, Jobcentre Plus computer systems (including clerically held cases).

Natascha Engel: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the period between claimants' first contact and first issue of payment between April 2005 and March 2006. [68456]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of jobcentre plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking for an estimate of the period between claimants' first contact and the issue of payment between April 2005 and March 2006. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as chief executive of jobcentre plus.

The specific information you have requested is not available. The jobcentre plus measure of the time taken to process a claim for jobseeker's allowance, income support and incapacity benefit is the actual average clearance time. The standard required for 2005-06 is 12 working days for jobseeker's allowance and income support, and 19 days for incapacity benefit.

The actual average clearance time for the three benefits is measured in different ways. Jobseeker's allowance is measured from the date of first contact. The clearance time start date for incapacity benefit is the date that the properly completed claim is received at any location within the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), and for income support it is the date on which a claim form containing all the evidence required is received. A case is treated as cleared when a decision on the person's entitlement to benefit is made or the claim is referred for payment.

The following table shows the cumulative actual average clearance times for income support, jobseeker's allowance and incapacity benefit for the period April 2005 to March 2006. We have action plans in place to address clearance times where they do not meet the standard.

	Actual average clearance times
Incapacity benefit	16.3
Income support	11.3
Jobseeker's allowance	14.5

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the future of the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate. [71479]

Mr. Plaskitt: As part of the Government's strategy for reducing inspection costs and burdens, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate's inspection remit, in relation to housing benefit and council tax benefit in England, will merge with the Audit Commission's in April 2008.

The Department for Work and Pensions, in conjunction with the devolved Administrations, is looking at the feasibility of the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate's inspection work in Scotland and Wales being undertaken by the relevant audit bodies there from April 2008.

Other work currently performed by the inspectorate, such as the direct consultancy support it provides to local authorities across Great Britain, is expected to remain with the Department.

Benefits System

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take to simplify the benefits system; what recent representations he has received on simplifying the system; and if he will make a statement. [73350]

Mr. Plaskitt: We have set up a dedicated Benefit Simplification Unit to act as a catalyst in driving forward simplification across the benefits system.

The Government set out their long-term vision of a simpler, single system of benefits for people of working age in the Green Paper "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work". Copies are available in the Library.

The formal consultation period ended on 21 April 2006 and we are now preparing a report which will summarise the responses we have received. The report will be published in the early summer.

Car Park Barriers

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps are being taken to prepare guidance on safety for those companies which operate car park barriers. [68865]

Mrs. McGuire: Some guidance on gates and barriers already exists within Health and Safety Executive publications, in particular "Workplace Transport Safety, An employers' guide (HSG136)". This guidance applies to barriers in car parks and workplaces generally. There is also a British Standard relating to car park barriers.

In response to recent concerns, HSE will be providing guidance on the safe operation of horizontal swinging barriers through its website within the next week.

Independent of the concerns regarding car park barriers, a research project has been proposed on the operation and design of retail car parks and delivery areas. The aim of this project, which is subject to approval, is to produce guidance on car park safety including barriers where relevant.

Child Support

Mr. Devine: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Livingston have had their cases migrated from the old Child Support Agency system to the new system. [72258]

Anne Moffat: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Child Support Agency cases of constituents in East Lothian have migrated from the old system to the new system. [72607]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information requested is not currently available at the geographical level requested.

Customer Management Systems

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of benefit claims is operated by the full customer management system, broken down by regional centres. [69445]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking what proportion of benefit claims are operated by the full customer management system broken down by regional centres. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as chief executive of jobcentre plus.

We currently have 23 contact centre sites located throughout the UK that provide the first contact service for customers wishing to make new claims to working age benefits. The contact centre sites do not necessarily respond to customer calls made from the geographical location in which they are sited, and therefore we cannot provide information broken down to 'regional level'.

Whilst I am unable to provide the proportion of benefit claims made using the customer management system (CMS), I can confirm that there are currently 16 sites operating full CMS process and 7 sites that are operating some adjusted processes to respond to customer calls.

Departmental International Work

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the international work of his Department, with particular reference to *(a)* co-ordination of information and labour market policies and *(b)* mutual recognition and administrative simplification in relation to benefits. [72235]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department for Work and Pensions works closely with a large number of countries on labour market issues, for example, other EU member states, in particular the new member states to help them and to learn from them. DWP Ministers and Officials participate in meetings of a wide variety of international institutions such as the Council of Europe, EU, UN, ILO and other international organisations such as the OECD to develop best practice and share information. This work is underpinned by national contributions to international labour market statistics. DWP promotes

the UK reform agenda through the ministerial EU Employment and Social Policy Council and the EU Employment Committee and Social Protection Committee.

Within the EU, legislation coordinates member states' social security schemes so that people who move from one state to another are not adversely affected by the application of different national legislations. For example, contributions paid in one member state can, in some cases, count towards satisfying conditions for another state's benefit. The Council of Ministers has agreed a modernised revision of the relevant regulation and work has begun on revising the provisions for administering that regulation. This will include development of electronic exchanges of information between member states to replace the current paper-based system.

The United Kingdom also has bilateral social security agreements with a number of countries outside the EU and these have broadly similar provisions to the EC coordination regulation.

Departmental Relocation

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 11 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 469-70W, on departmental relocation, how many of these sites his Department *(a)* is paying rent on, *(b)* still owns and *(c)* has sold on. [73165]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department does not own or rent any of these sites. They were transferred, for value, to Land Securities Trillium under a PFI deal known as the PRIME contract. Under the terms of the PRIME contract, the Department receives fully serviced accommodation in return for the payment of a unitary charge. This charge ceases once we have vacated the accommodation.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of the staff in his Department is *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* disabled, broken down by grade. [68996]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the following table.

Grade	*Percentage male*	*Percentage female*	*Percentage declared disabled*
SCS	66.54	33.46	3.54
Grade 6/7	56.05	43.95	3.24
SEO/HEO	42.05	57.95	4.97
EO	31.26	68.74	6.38
AA/AO	28.42	71.59	4.34
Total	30.83	69.17	5.03

Notes:
1. Figures are as at 31 December 2005
2. Figures given are for the Department for Work and Pensions excluding the Health and Safety Executive.
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest 0.01 per cent.
4. The calculation of percentages is based on the number of people who have declared their disability. There is no requirement for DWP staff to declare their disability.

Disability Benefits

Dr. Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the average annual cost to public funds of maintaining a claimant on disability benefits. [71113]

Mrs. McGuire: The available information is in the following table.

Disability benefits (disability living allowance, attendance allowance and industrial injuries disablement benefit): (i) estimated average annual amount of benefit paid per recipient[1]; and (ii) estimated average annual administrative cost per recipient[2]

Benefit	*Disability living allowance*	*Attendance allowance*	*Industrial injuries disablement benefit*
Average annual amount paid per recipient (£)	3,130.00	2,650.00	2,200.00
Average annual administrative cost per recipient (£)	35.60	8.00	n/a

[1] Figures are for 2005-06 and are rounded to the nearest 10. For disability living allowance they are based on payments data from statistical extracts for 100 per cent. of cases in payment in the quarter to November 2005; for attendance allowance they are based on payments data from statistical extracts for 5 per cent. of cases in payment in the quarter to November 2005; and for industrial injuries disability benefit they are based on payments data from statistical extracts for 100 per cent. of cases in payment in the quarter to September 2005.

[2] Figures are the estimated cost in 2004-05 of maintaining a case where benefit is in payment. They do not include the administrative costs of deciding claims to benefit.

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what assessment his Department has made of the appropriateness and accessibility of disability living allowance application forms for under 16-year-olds; [64712]

(2) what progress is being made in simplifying the disability living allowance claim form for under 16-year-olds. [64713]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of disability living allowance is a matter for the Chief Executive of the Disability and Carers Service, Mr. Terry Moran. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Terry Moran:

In reply to two of your recent Parliamentary Questions about the Disability Living Allowance claim pack for under 16 year olds, the Minister for Disabled People, Anne McGuire MP, on behalf of the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, promised you a substantive reply from the Chief Executive of the Disability and Carers Service.

You asked what assessment his Department has made of the appropriateness and accessibility of Disability Living Allowance application forms for under 16 year olds and also what progress was being made in simplifying the Disability Living Allowance claim form for under 16 year olds.

The Department is committed to improving citizens' accessibility to all its services, including the application forms for Disability Living Allowance for children and adults. The recent launch of on-line electronic claim services for Disability Living Allowance has provided a new option of immediate access

through electronic channels for those who prefer that means of making a claim. This option can be used for claims in respect of children.

The Department, specifically the Disability and Carers Service, continues to work to monitor and improve the Disability Living Allowance claim forms and will continue to take account of the different needs of people with particular disabilities where this is practicable. Consultation about the claim forms is ongoing with the Disability and Carers Service Advisory Forum, which includes representatives of a range of disabled people, this consultation includes the appropriateness and accessibility of the forms.

I hope this is helpful.

Employment Targets

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what studies he has *(a)* commissioned, *(b)* evaluated and *(c)* collated on the impact of labour market trends on achieving his Department's employment targets. [72251]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Department's Public Service Agreement (PSA) employment target is to demonstrate progress on increasing the employment rate between spring 2005 and spring 2008. We are on course to achieve this.

Latest data shows the GB employment rate at 74.8 per cent (January-March 2006).

Progress towards PSA targets is set out in the annual departmental report. The report for 2005-06 was published in May and is available in the Library. We have not commissioned, evaluated or collated any separate studies on the impact of labour market trends on achieving our PSA target.

Gas Safety (Prosecutions)

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will instruct the Health and Safety Executive to seek to prosecute all unregistered gas-fitters where there is evidence of a breach of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. [71534]

Mrs. McGuire: The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has taken a number of prosecutions against unregistered gas fitters and will continue to do so where prosecution is appropriate. HSE prosecutions, including those against unregistered gas fitters, are based on the standards in the Health and Safety Commission's Enforcement Policy Statement and the Code for Crown Prosecutors.

The Enforcement Policy Statement includes a requirement that all action, including prosecution must be proportionate to the seriousness of the breach of the law, and any risks to health and safety arising from the particular breach. Consequently, it would not be appropriate for every breach of a given kind to result in prosecution.

Gershon Review

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what account he took of undertakings made in response to the Gershon review's conclusions on target headcount when making the staffing projections set out on page 154 of his Department's Annual Report for 2006. [72239]

Mr. Jim Murphy: As set out in the Gershon review the Department is planning to reduce staff numbers by 30,000 full-time equivalents by the agreed date of 31 March 2008 from a baseline of 132,537 as at 1 March 2004.

The figures shown in Table 6 of Annex A on page 154 of the departmental report reflect these plans but are presented as average staff numbers over each financial year rather than as an end of year point in time. This is in line with agreed reporting conventions.

Health and Safety

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent guidance has been issued to the Health and Safety Executive on improving safety standards in the handling of hazardous cargoes at ports and terminals. [72496]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 22 May 2006]:* The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has not recently issued or received any new guidance on safety standards for handling of hazardous cargoes at ports and terminals.

The legal and guidance framework that HSE works to in relation to Liquid Natural Gas terminals is set out in the note "LNG Terminals—planning and consent issues", which is available on HSE's website at http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/supply/ingterminals.pdf.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking in conjunction with the Health and Safety Executive to improve *(a)* the accuracy of accident books kept by employers and *(b)* their compliance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences directions. [71267]

Mrs. McGuire: A new version of the accident book was produced in conjunction with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in 2003 to comply with the Data Protection Act and this was further amended in 2004. The book captures all the information required by the Social Security (Claims and Payments) Regulations 1979.

The Health and Safety Executive introduced in 2001 simplified notification methods such as telephone reporting directly to the HSE Incident Contact Centre. The Accident Book contains brief guidance to the employer on what they are required to do to comply with RIDDOR.

The Health and Safety Executive are currently conducting a fundamental review of RIDDOR aiming to simplify the current requirements, which should aid compliance. A formal consultation exercise should take place in early 2007.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether businesses which are open to the public have a responsibility to provide first aid facilities to customers who are hurt on their premises; what discussions he has had with businesses on this issue; and if he will make a statement. [72588]

Mrs. McGuire: The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 require employers to assess their first aid needs in their workplace for their employees, but not members of the public. However, many businesses that provide a service to members of the public will include them in their first aid needs assessment.

In August 2003, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) consulted industry about extending first aid provision to the public through a discussion document. In September 2004, the Health and Safety Commission concluded that there was already a good voluntary response to the provision of first aid to the public and that changes to the law were not necessary.

HSE strongly encourages businesses which are open to the public to include the needs of the public and others on their premises when assessing their first-aid needs.

Jobcentre Service (Kent)

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many complaints have been made about the jobcentre service in North and West Kent since 1 October 2005. [68559]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 8 May 2005]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking how many complaints have been made about the Jobcentre service in North and West Kent since October 2005. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

We have received 62 complaints about Jobcentre Plus services in North and West Kent from October 2005 to May 2006, the majority of which concerned delays in processing Working Age benefits at Canterbury Benefits Delivery Centre.

As part of our transformation programme, we are reducing the number of offices where benefit processing is undertaken, and creating larger Benefit Delivery Centres. Claims for Income Support, Incapacity Benefit and Jobseeker's Allowance for customers living in the Medway and West Kent areas are processed at Canterbury Benefit Delivery Centre. Unfortunately, backlogs of benefit claims have developed as these significant changes bed in.

A recovery plan is in operation to reduce the volume of outstanding work. This includes the temporary transfer of work to other sites where additional highly experienced staff are available such as Gillingham, Tunbridge Wells and Sittingbourne. As a safeguard, any customer experiencing financial hardship while awaiting benefit can request an interim payment.

Pathways to Work

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many individuals in *(a)* Peterborough constituency and *(b)* Cambridgeshire are participating in the Pathways to Work programme; and if he will make a statement. [72094]

Mrs. McGuire: Our successful Pathways to Work pilots have been acknowledged internationally as the best way of helping people on incapacity benefits back into work quickly. They have resulted in 21,400 Pathways job entries, including over 3,360 from voluntary customers.

Peterborough and Cambridgeshire are currently not covered by the programme, but our Welfare Reform Green Paper, "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work", sets out our plans to roll out the programme across the whole country by 2008.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he plans to extend the Pathways to Work programme to Greater Manchester. [73134]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Our successful Pathways to Work pilots have been acknowledged internationally as the best way of helping people on incapacity benefits back into work quickly. They have resulted in 21,400 Pathways job entries, including over 3,360 from voluntary customers.

Pathways to Work was rolled out in Greater Manchester Central District on 24 April 2006 and is now operational in all sites. The first customers are scheduled for work focused interviews in the week commencing 12 June 2006. Manchester East and Manchester West Districts will form part of the national roll-out of Pathways to Work as set out in the Green Paper—"A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work".

Pension Credit Helpline

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many telephone calls were made to the pension credit helpline in each month from September 2005 to February 2006; how many of these calls *(a)* were handled, *(b)* received an engaged tone and *(c)* were abandoned; and if he will make a statement. [61500]

James Purnell: The administration of The Pension Service is a matter for the chief executive, Ms Alexis Cleveland. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Alexis Cleveland, dated 25 May 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State how many calls made to the Pension Credit Application Line in each month from September 2005 to February 2006 were (a) handled (b) engaged (c) abandoned; and if he will make a statement. I have been asked to respond as this matter falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as the Chief Executive of The Pension Service.

Firstly, please accept my apologies for the delay in response. The table below shows the information, as requested, with

additional information covering the period March and April. The number of calls received by the Pension Credit Application Line (PCAL) during November and December 2005 was exceptionally high due to the response to a marketing campaign The Pension Credit Application Line uses an automated filter, the Auto Attendant, when experiencing high volumes of calls. At times when this is required, customers who wish to make a claim for Pension Credit are advised by the Auto Attendant that they will be put through to the call queue. The automated message advises all other callers of the high call volumes and they are given the option to call again (during opening hours) or to contact their local Pension Centre, for which the correct telephone number is provided. When the auto attendant is not operating, callers receive a standard greeting message, during which they may abandon their call (for instance if they have dialled a wrong number).

Month	*(i) Inbound calls*	*(ii) Receiving engaged tone*	*(iii) Calls filtered to the queue by the auto attendant (when in use)*	*(iv) Of (iii), Calls abandoned*	*(v) Of (iii) Calls answered*
September	104,181	0	102,879	5,491	102,101
October	523,023	2	131,887	28,940	102,876
November	393,746	0	207,303	55,321	152,159
December	93,885	0	88,422	11,981	76,441
January	202,493	0	139,213	36,837	102,326
February	152,372	0	78,560	3,276	75,186
March	221,421	10	153,422	9,746	143,627
April	132,604	6	89,884	5,029	88,837

Note:
There is a discrepancy in the calls answered total due to missing calls. This arises due to a small number of calls not registering on the IT system correctly.

During September 2005 the system that records the number of inbound calls and calls available to be answered did not accurately record data on two days. This resulted in the calls in columns (i) and (iii) to be under recorded, because of missing data.

In April 2006 we improved the recording process. We can now record the point at which a call is abandoned, of the total 5,029 calls abandoned in April, 1,043 reached the point where they could have been answered i.e. in the adviser queue.

I hope this information is helpful.

Post Office Card Accounts

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 15 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 2187W, on Post Office card accounts, what conclusions his Department has drawn from its recent pilot studies testing approaches to moving people from Post Office card accounts to bank accounts as to *(a)* the number of current Post Office card account users who will continue to use the post office and *(b)* the impact that the termination of the Post Office card account will have on rural post offices; and if he will make a statement. [73575]

Mr. Plaskitt: The pilots ran between 13 February and 10 March 2006. We have just finished evaluating the results and are in the process of sharing the results with the Post Office. I will place a summary report of the findings in the Library shortly.

Single Room Rent Restrictions

Natascha Engel: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will commission research into the barriers vulnerable young people face in accessing privately rented shared accommodation at a rent at or below the local single room rent restriction. [68453]

Mr. Plaskitt: We published research on the single room rent last year as DWP research report 243 "Research into the Single Room Rent Regulations". A copy is available in the Library. There are currently no plans to commission any further research. The current evaluation of the local housing allowance pathfinders in the private rented sector will be completed later this year and will inform our plans for the further reform of housing benefit in the private rented sector.

Staff Surveys

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff surveys have been conducted in his Department in each of the last three years. [72865]

Mrs. McGuire: A corporate departmental survey has been conducted in DWP annually for the last three years. In addition, smaller interim surveys were conducted in 2004 and 2005. The annual surveys are censuses; the interim surveys are random samples.

In addition to these surveys, different parts of DWP have used ad hoc staff surveys to gauge opinion on specific issues as part of continuous improvement work.

Television Sets

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many television sets are in operation in the Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Ministers' private offices and *(c)* in each office building in the Department; and how many television licences are held by the Department. [62801]

Mrs. McGuire: There are 589 television sets in operation in the Department for Work and Pensions of which 12 are in Ministers' private offices.

We are not able to provide an accurate figure on how many television sets are in each office building as the information is not recorded in the format requested. To provide that would incur disproportionate cost.

The Department is covered by 444 television licences.

In establishing this answer the Department has also consulted the Health and Safety Executive and the Rent Service, both Executive Agencies for which the Department is responsible across the country.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Antisocial Behaviour

John Mann: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which councils have not prosecuted any tenants for antisocial behaviour. [65161]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

There are a wide range of powers available to local authorities to tackle the antisocial behaviour of both tenants and residents. We do not have full data on the use of these powers.

We are taking steps to improve data on uptake of housing related powers. For example, my department has asked that local authorities collect data on use of possession and demotion from last year (2005-06), which will be available in the summer.

Arm's Length Management Organisations

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many arm's length management organisations which have been inspected have achieved *(a)* no stars, *(b)* one star, *(c)* two stars and *(d)* three stars. [70997]

Yvette Cooper: Some 45 arm's length management organisations have had at least one inspection. Based on the most recent inspection for each of those ALMOs, one has achieved no stars, five have achieved one star, 29 have achieved two stars and 10 have achieved three stars.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many applications she has received from councils to set up *(a)* stock-transfers and *(b)* arm's length management organisations in the next round. [71005]

Yvette Cooper: We have yet to invite applications. We will open the bidding round shortly.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what housing stock has been transferred from local authority control to arm's length management organisations; and how many transfers were based on *(a)* a ballot of tenants and *(b)* other methods of seeking tenant approval. [71006]

Yvette Cooper: Local authorities do not transfer their housing stock to arms length management organisations (ALMOs). The stock and the ALMO remain wholly owned by the local authorities. ALMOs are set up by local authorities to manage all or part of their housing stock.

The Department for Communities and Local Government does not prescribe how a local authority should demonstrate tenant approval for the transfer of the management of the authority's housing functions to an ALMO. However, a local authority must demonstrate that tenants have been fully involved in the process in order to be successful in their ALMO application. They should also show that tenants will continue to be consulted about the ALMO's operation and performance.

The following table lists which ALMOs have held ballots and which have used other methods.

Held a ballot	*Used other method to test opinion*
ALMO round 1	
Derby	Ashfield
Hounslow	Westminster
Kirklees	Wigan
Rochdale	
Stockton-on-Tees	
ALMO round 2	
Carrick	Barnsley
Colchester	Blyth Valley
Leeds—East	Bolton
Leeds—North East	Brent
Leeds—North West	Cheltenham
Leeds—South	Hillingdon
Leeds—South East	Kensington and Chelsea
Leeds—West	Oldham
Waltham Forest	
ALMO round 3	
Camden	Barnet
Harrow	Newcastle
High Peak	Poole
Islington	Solihull
Sheffield: Brightside and Shiregreen	Warrington
Sheffield: Central Area	Gateshead
South Lakeland	Easington
ALMO round 4	
Bassetlaw	Ealing
Hammersmith and Fulham	Newark and Sherwood
Manchester (partial)	Sandwell
Nottingham	Bury
Sheffield: Hillsborough, Nether Thorpe	Rotherham
Sheffield: Parson Cross, Foxhill, Longley	Eastbourne
Sheffield: Westfield, Hackenthorpe	
Slough	
Wolverhampton	
ALMO round 5	
Sheffield: North	Doncaster
Sheffield: Bard Street, Richmond/Spinkhill, Sky Edge and Upper Manor	Stockport

Held a ballot	*Used other method to test opinion*
Sheffield: Gleadless	Gloucester
Sheffield: South	Newham
Sheffield: Darnall, Tinsley and Burngreave	Hackney
	South Tyneside
	Wear Valley
	Southend
	Lambeth

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will list transfers to arm's length management organisations since 1999; and what the estimated value is of each item of stock. [71016]

Yvette Cooper: Local authorities do not transfer their housing stock to arm's length management organisations (ALMOs). The stock and the ALMO remain wholly owned by the local authorities. ALMOs are set up by local authorities to manage all or part of their housing stock.

The ALMO programme has been running since 2001-02. Since then, 57 local authorities have transferred their housing management functions to an arm's length management organisation (ALMO). They are listed as follows. Because this is a management contract between the ALMO and the local authority, the Department for Communities and Local Government does not estimate the value of the individual items of housing stock.

Arm's length management organisations:

Local authority:

ALMO round 1-announced 29 November 2001

Ashfield
Derby
Hounslow
Kirklees
Rochdale
Stockton-on-Tees
Westminster
Wigan

ALMO round 2-announced 29 May 2002

Barnsley
Blyth Valley
Bolton
Brent
Carrick
Cheltenham
Colchester
Hillingdon
Kensington and Chelsea
Leeds?East
Leeds?North East
Leeds?North West
Leeds?South
Leeds?South East
Leeds?West
Oldham
Salford (withdrawn)
Waltham Forest (withdrawn)

ALMO round 3-announced 28 July 2003

Barnet
Camden (withdrawn)
Easington
Gateshead
Harrow (withdrawn)
High Peak
Islington
Newcastle
Poole
Sheffield (partial)
Solihull
South Lakeland
Warrington

ALMO round 4-announced on 5 May 2004

Bassetlaw
Brent (partial)
Bury
Ealing
Eastbourne
Hammersmith and Fulham
Manchester (partial)
Newark and Sherwood
Nottingham
Rotherham
Sandwell
Sheffield (partial)
Slough
Wolverhampton

ALMO round 5-announced on 23 June 2005

Doncaster
Gloucester
Hackney
Lambeth (partial)
Newham
Sheffield (partial)
South Tyneside
Southend
Stockport
Wear Valley

Cabinet Committees

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many Cabinet committees he will be chairing in his new role; and how frequently he expects them to meet. [69880]

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many Cabinet committees he is scheduled to chair in the week commencing *(a)* 15 May, *(b)* 22 May and *(c)* 29 May; [69857]

(2) which Cabinet committees he chairs; and how frequently each such committee has met in the past month. [69860]

Mrs. May: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the Cabinet committees he chairs; and which he chaired at 10 April 2006. [71070]

Hilary Armstrong *[holding answer 11 May 2006]:* I have been asked to reply.

My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has asked my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister to chair nine Cabinet Committees and to act as his deputy on a further seven Committees. An updated list of all Cabinet Committees, and of who chairs them, was placed in the Library by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister on 17 May 2006. Previous lists contain information on the number of Committees chaired by my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister prior to that date. Information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees, including when and how often they meet, is generally not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Cambridge Local Plan

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the ruling by the inspector on the Cambridge Local Plan that the proportion of affordable housing to be required on qualifying sites should be reduced. [66333]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The inspector who conducted the inquiry into the Cambridge Local Plan submitted his report to Cambridge city council at the beginning of April. It is for the city council to consider the report before adopting its local plan. It would not be appropriate at present for the First Secretary of State to comment on the report in view of the Secretary of State's powers under the planning legislation.

Departmental Bills (Amendments)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will list the occasions when an amendment has been moved by *(a)* a Labour Back Bencher, *(b)* an Opposition Back Bencher and *(c)* an Opposition Front Bench spokesman to a Bill sponsored by her Department and its predecessors that has been accepted by her Department during the 2005-06 session; and if she will make a statement. [72126]

Angela E. Smith: The Department for Communities and Local Government is sponsoring The Housing Corporation (Delegations) Etc. Bill during the current session.

Information on amendments moved and accepted during the Committee and Report stage on this Bill is published in the *Official Report*.

Departmental Responsibilities

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will list responsibilities which her Department and its predecessors have lost since 1997; what the *(a)* date and *(b)* destination Department was in each case; what responsibilities the Department and its predecessors have taken on since 1997; and what the (i) date and (ii) source Department was in each case. [71137]

Angela E. Smith *[holding answer 15 May 2006]:* Ministerial responsibilities are set out in the "List of Ministerial Responsibilities", which is updated regularly. A revised version will be published shortly. Copies of previous versions are available in the Library.

Electromagnetic Fields

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what discussions she has had with electricity supply companies on the routing of high voltage power lines underground in areas of high density housing. [71622]

Yvette Cooper: Ministers for the Department for Communities and Local Government have not had any discussions with electricity supply companies on the matter of routing high voltage power lines underground in areas of high density housing.

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what *(a)* guidance she issues and *(b)* restrictions she places on electricity companies on the siting of electricity sub-stations in areas of high population density. [71650]

Yvette Cooper: New substations or major extensions to existing substations may require planning permission from local planning authorities. However, the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 does allow certain development to take place within existing substations and on operational land without the need to apply for planning permission.

The Secretary of State has not issued any guidelines to electricity companies on the siting of electricity substations.

Flood Plains

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what action he plans to take against those councils ignoring advice from the Environment Agency not to build on flood plains. [52253]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Local authorities are responsible for the planning decisions they take. They must take all relevant factors into account to strike an appropriate balance between the needs of the local community and flood risk, and can be challenged in the courts on whether they have exercised their judgment in a lawful manner. The Environment Agency has succeeded in a judicial review, where it considered an authority had not given sufficient weight to its views of flood risk in a planning decision. To support authorities in making these decisions the Government recently consulted on a package of measures to strengthen the application of planning policy for development and flood risk. Responding to figures in the Environment Agency's High Level Target 5 report for 2004-05, published in February, on permissions for major development permitted against its sustained objection on flood risk grounds, my officials have contacted the authorities on whose cases the Agency still had concerns about, and we are currently seeking the Agency's views on the authorities" detailed responses.

Home Information Packs

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether the *(a)* police and *(b)* security services will have access to the Register of Home Condition Reports. [70647]

Yvette Cooper: The regulations to be made under part V of the Housing Act 2004 setting out who has access to the register, will not specify automatic access for the police and security services. As with other public and private databases, if the police or security services believe access to information on the register is needed these bodies would be able to gain a warrant from the courts to view certain information, for example, where a criminal offence had taken place. The regulations setting out access to the register are expected to be made later in the year, following the summer parliamentary recess.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what assessment she has made of the likely effect of the introduction of home information packs on the number of homes on which surveys will be conducted. [71036]

Yvette Cooper: Currently, around 30 per cent. of home sales involve a mid-range survey, such as the Homebuyer's Survey. A further 45 per cent. involve surveys done by mortgage valuers, which involve a limited inspection to determine the security of the loan.

Once Home Information Packs become mandatory, it is estimated that 90 per cent. of sales will require a Home Condition Report to be prepared. New homes with an approved warranty will not require a Home Condition Report. The Home Condition Report will include energy efficiency information on each house, which is not provided in current surveys.

Home Ownership

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of people in each electoral ward in *(a)* Cleethorpes, *(b)* Great Grimsby, *(c)* Scunthorpe and *(d)* Brigg and Goole constituencies own their own homes. [67054]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The following data are derived from the 2001 Census, and show the percentage of households that own their own home in each ward.

(a) Cleethorpes

Ward	*Percentage*
Barton	73
Croft Baker	67
Ferry	79
Haverstoe	88
Humberston and New Waltham	91
Immingham	72
Sidney Sussex	74
Waltham	86
Wolds	87

(b) Great Grimsby

Ward	*Percentage*
East Marsh	42
Freshney	75
Heneage	76
Park	77
Scartho	88
South	48
West Marsh	62
Yarborough	77

(c) Scunthorpe

Ward	*Percentage*
Ashby	68
Bottesford	93
Brumby	53
Crosby and Park	64
Frodingham	59
Kingsway with Lincoln Gardens	72
Ridge	78
Town	61

(d) Brigg and Goole

Ward	*Percentage*
Axholme Central	81
Axholme North	73
Axholme South	85
Brigg and Wolds	72
Broughton and Appleby	81
Burringham and Gunness	71
Burton upon Stather and Winterton	81
Goole North	75
Goole South	64
Ridge	80
Snaith, Airmyn, Rawcliffe and Marshland	80

Homelessness

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what action the Government are taking to reduce homelessness, with particular reference to Greater London. [67010]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Our strategy "Sustainable Communities: settled homes; changing lives" sets out our aims to reduce homelessness and halve the number of households in temporary accommodation by 2010.

We are working with London boroughs the Government office for London, the Greater London Authority, Association of Local Government and other organisations in London to deliver the strategy and further reduce levels of rough sleeping in the capital.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homeless people there were in London in each of the last eight years. [67108]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Information is collected by the Department, since 1998, on the number of people who sleep rough, that is, those who are literally roofless on a single night.

Figures for London were:

	Number of people sleeping rough
1998	621
1999	635
2000	546
2001	357
2002	321
2003	267
2004	265
2005	221

Information about local authorities' actions under homelessness legislation, which is collected in respect of households rather than persons, is summarised from 1997 onwards in a quarterly Statistical Release, the latest of which was published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on 13 March.

Table 3 provides a regional breakdown of households accepted as owed a main homelessness duty, and Table 7 similarly presents those in temporary accommodation arranged by local authorities at the end of each quarter.

Copies are available in the Library, and from the ODPM website at: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id==1002882&PressNoticeID=2Q95.

The duty owed to a person accepted as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need is to secure suitable accommodation. If a settled home is not immediately available, the authority may secure temporary accommodation until a settled home becomes available. As an alternative to the provision of temporary accommodation some authorities arrange for households to remain in their current accommodation (homeless at home), until a settled solution becomes available.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funds his Department has allocated to reducing homelessness in each of the last eight years. [67109]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The following table shows the amounts of grant that were allocated by ODPM to local authorities and voluntary organisations in England in each of the last eight years for reducing homelessness.

£ million

	Local authorities	*Voluntary organisations*	*Total*
2005-06	44.5	15.0	59.5
2004-05	45.8	14.8	60.6
2003-04	50.6	20.3	70.9
2002-03	48.2	25.0	73.2
2001-02	3.5	36.6	40.1
2000-01	2.9	28.6	31.5
1999-2000	3.1	22.6	25.7
1998-99	0.00	19.6	19.6
Total	198.6	182.5	381.1

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what recent estimate she has made of the number of black and minority ethnic young people who are homeless. [71245]

Yvette Cooper: This specific information is not collected centrally and no estimates are currently available.

In 2005, there were some 20,700 identified black and minority ethnic households accepted as homeless and in a priority need category (21 per cent. of all accepted households), but a corresponding breakdown by age is not available. In the same period, there were nearly 9,000 households consisting of young people in priority need that is, those aged 16 or 17, or those care—leavers aged under 21 (9 per cent. of all accepted households)—but a corresponding breakdown by ethnicity is not available.

Recognising the disproportionate risk of homelessness for ethnic minorities, ODPM commissioned research in 2003 to find out more about the causes of statutory homelessness among these households in England. Findings were published last September, and at the same time a £3 million Ethnic Minorities Innovation Fund was launched to provide money for new, innovative projects to reduce and prevent homelessness among ethnic minority communities and to support the delivery of good practice more widely.

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many people were registered homeless in each London borough in each of the last 5 years. [72420]

Yvette Cooper: Information collected about local authorities' actions under homelessness legislation is in respect of households rather than persons. A table presenting reported information on the number of households accepted by each local authority in England, including London Boroughs, as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need in each year from 1999-2000 to 2004-05 was provided in an answer to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) in October 2005, and is available in the Library.

Homelessness information for the January-March quarter 2006, including summary data at local authority level, will be published in a Statistical Release on 12 June 2006.

Housing

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister from what budget the £970 million announced in the 2006 Budget for housing will be funded; and whether it is additional expenditure above previously announced spending plans. [66255]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for St. Ives (Andrew George) on 22 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1401W.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many individuals resided in Government-subsidised housing in *(a)* Romford, *(b)* Havering and *(c)* Greater London in each of the last eight years. [67011]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Information on the number of individuals in Government subsidised housing is not available centrally. Information on the number of council homes and registered social landlord units and bedspaces is published on the ODPM website. Table 115 gives the RSL rented stock by local authority from 1997 and is available at: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/21/Table115Excel96Kb_id1156021.xls.

Table 116 gives the local authority rented stock by district from 1994 and is available at: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/22/Table116Excel127Kb_id1156022.xls.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what estimate she has made of the average fees charged by local authorities for mandatory licensing of houses in multiple occupation. [70571]

Yvette Cooper: The regulatory impact assessment (RIA) for licensing of houses in multiple occupation which was published in February 2006 estimated that the average fee for mandatory licensing would be approximately £500. When this cost is averaged out over the five-year life of a licence, this would result in an annual cost of around £100. The estimate was based on a sample survey of local housing authorities carried out in December 2005.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the Answer of 15 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 805W, on housing, what the average subsidy was to a key worker in *(a)* Barnet and *(b)* London in each employment sector under (i) the Starter Home Initiative and (ii) Key Worker Living between 2004 and 2006; what the total cost was of each scheme in *(A)* Barnet and *(B)* London in that period, broken down by employment sector; and if she will make a statement. [72311]

Yvette Cooper: The Starter Home Initiative (SHI) was delivered mainly through equity loans. Table 1 details the total and average subsidy provided by employment sector under SHI in Barnet and across London between 2001-02 and 2003-04.

Starter Home Initiative

Key worker	*Average subsidy (£)*	*Total Social Housing Grant (£)*	*Units*
Barnet			
Health	38,226	1,681,950	44
Teachers	34,686	2,011,800	58
Police	31,507	472,600	15
Others	24,600	24,600	1
Total	35,517	4,190,950	118
London			
Health	34,411	62,661,804	1821
Teachers	33,911	47,508,727	1401
Police	35,776	23,683,665	662
Others	40,009	6,681,456	167
Total	34,692	140,535,652	4051

Key Worker Living (KWL) funding is divided between Open Market HomeBuy (equity loans) and new build products such as shared ownership and intermediate rent. For new build products it is not possible to provide average subsidy by sector. Table 2 details the total and average subsidy provided by employment sector under KWL Open Market HomeBuy in Barnet and across London between 2004-05 and 2005-06. Some £40 million has so far been provided in London to provide 932 units. None of these units have been developed in Barnet.

Key Worker Living Open Market HomeBuy

Key worker	*Average subsidy (£)*	*Total Social Housing Grant (£)*	*Units*
Barnet			
Health	35,975	935,337	26
Education	44,697	1,385,620	31
Police	35,367	247,570	7
Prison	38,300	76,600	2
Probation	45,700	45,700	1
Local Authority	43,003	160,011	4
Total	40,153	2,850,838	71
London Challenge Teachers	87,981	2,287,505	26
London			
Health	40,751	51,142,055	1,255
Education	42,321	51,631,570	1,220
Police	41,728	25,245,176	605
Prison	44,828	3,541,398	79
Probation	46,800	1,450,787	31
Local Authority	41,681	5,043,434	121
Total	41,696	138,054,420	3,311
London Challenge Teachers	87,751	73,710,560	840

Teachers who qualify for London Challenge Teacher funding can receive up to £100,000 as an equity loan instead of £50,000 for all other key workers, which is why the average subsidy per unit is higher for this group.

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many new homes have been built in Taunton constituency in each year since 1997. [64067]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The number of new house building completions in Taunton Deane local authority district, as reported by the local authority and the National House Building Council are tabled as follows. Figures are not collected by constituency.

	New house building completions
1997	377
1998	323
1999	659
2000	532
2001	532
2002	462
2003	262
2004	317
2005	276

Source:
Building control completions—local authority and National House Building Council

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what plans she has to increase the supply of affordable housing in Bolton. [72423]

Yvette Cooper: The housing corporation's 2006-08 programme allocates £4,883,609 for social housing schemes in Bolton. This contrasts with £961,694 in 2004-06. In addition, Bolton's unitary development plan states that the council will negotiate with developers to provide an element of affordable houses in new schemes.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the role of electoral service organisations in overseeing ballots on council house sales to ensure propriety. [66342]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

None. Stock transfer ballots are carried out by independent organisations who have their own rules and procedures in place to ensure that the ballot is conducted properly.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister under what circumstances a member of the armed forces is considered to have local connections for the purposes of obtaining social housing on discharge. [55977]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 6 March 2006]:* I have been asked to reply.

The allocation legislation (part 6 of the Housing Act 1996) allows, but does not require, local authorities to take into account whether a person has a local connection with the district in determining priorities between applicants for social housing. For these purposes "local connection" is defined by s.199 of the 1996 Act which provides that a local connection may be established through residence of choice (either now or in the past), employment, family associations or special circumstances. However, s.199 provides that:

"a person is not employed in the district if he is serving in the armed forces there, and

residence in a district is not of a person's choice if he (or someone he lives with) is serving in the armed forces there".

This is intended to safeguard local authorities in areas with large military bases.

We are reviewing the position with the Ministry of Defence.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total income was of the local authority housing revenue account in each authority in England that retains its own council housing, in the last period for which figures are available; how much of that was *(a)* spent on repairs and administration of council housing, *(b)* used for other purposes by councils and *(c)* taken by central Government for (i) redistribution and (ii) debt repayment. [40351]

Mr. Woolas: The following table shows 2004-05 total income, management and maintenance expenditure, other expenditure (within the housing revenue account), subsidy paid to the authority and "negative subsidy" (i.e. amounts paid by the authority to Government) and total expenditure in 2004-05 for each of the 235 housing revenue accounts which were open on 1 April 2005.

The "negative subsidy" payments made by authorities to Government are used to help fund the subsidy payments required by authorities with deficits. In total the subsidies paid to authorities exceeded the amount paid to Government by some £75 million.

Housing revenue accounts' income and expenditure 2004-05

£

	Total income	Management and maintenance expenditure	Other expenditure	Negative subsidy transfer to ODPM	Total expenditure
Adur	10,709,903	4,540,349	3,629,680	1,420,820	9,590,849
Alnwick	5,487,685	2,182,816	2,186,437	682,119	5,051,372
Arun	16,068,106	7,994,196	2,769,205	1,996,982	12,760,383
Ashfield	24,261,830	10,253,960	9,853,357	0	20,107,317
Ashford	19,864,820	7,779,746	7,099,753	4,465,918	19,345,417
Aylesbury	43,143,906	11,135,660	21,656,649	9,700,287	42,492,596
Babergh	14,671,857	5,231,058	4,428,781	3,439,353	13,099,192
Barking	72,765,930	39,595,830	22,589,129	7,406,543	69,591,502
Barnet	56,519,588	28,669,215	14,420,601	7,489,375	50,579,191
Barnsley	57,493,804	26,166,536	22,711,720	0	48,878,256
Barrow	9,444,202	4,481,935	2,736,983	501,300	7,720,218
Basildon	45,069,926	21,067,071	22,338,404	0	43,405,475
Bassetlaw	20,787,004	11,301,261	8,126,174	1,846,916	21,274,351
Berwick	5,730,791	2,115,059	1,472,711	1,652,799	5,240,569
Birmingham	226,699,616	120,326,014	89,491,302	0	209,817,316

Housing revenue accounts' income and expenditure 2004-05

£

	Total income	Management and maintenance expenditure	Other expenditure	Negative subsidy transfer to ODPM	Total expenditure
Blaby	6,948,641	3,015,387	2,053,299	1,656,434	6,725,120
Blackpool	16,666,219	10,315,570	5,777,605	0	16,093,175
Blyth Valley	15,781,373	8,187,967	6,781,975	0	14,969,942
Bolsover	12,903,299	5,620,836	3,549,539	2,858,369	12,028,744
Bolton	49,251,100	25,069,100	22,273,500	0	47,342,600
Bournemouth	17,856,891	6,566,842	5,368,973	2,839,879	14,775,694
Bracknell	28,246,815	10,015,594	8,979,659	8,066,322	27,061,575
Braintree	33,292,786	11,937,776	8,622,355	7,114,686	27,674,817
Brent	66,620,000	22,609,000	43,498,000	0	66,107,000
Brentwood	13,437,000	4,653,000	5,149,000	2,862,000	12,664,000
Bridgnorth	10,549,870	3,359,342	4,381,247	2,396,190	10,136,779
Brighton and Hove	49,269,825	21,931,175	23,995,907	0	45,927,082
Bristol	129,541,558	45,493,253	43,224,311	18,823,646	107,541,210
Bromsgrove	395,955	39,371	0	0	39,371
Broxbourne	15,180,389	7,323,508	2,865,861	4,006,115	14,195,484
Broxtowe	16,046,235	5,897,303	7,423,486	0	13,320,789
Bury	27,403,844	13,372,327	6,968,325	3,363,230	23,703,882
Cambridge	37,780,888	10,791,761	9,387,053	8,904,930	29,083,744
Camden	233,419,645	87,888,459	65,269,265	0	153,157,724
Cannock Chase	16,557,215	6,561,881	7,174,584	1,952,602	15,689,067
Canterbury	18,262,974	8,165,087	6,251,568	3,179,832	17,596,487
Caradon	11,408,404	5,435,089	2,905,544	2,379,755	10,720,388
Carrick	12,461,824	5,550,300	26,368,733	1,445,988	33,465,021
Castle Morpeth	5,910,405	2,864,520	5,679,424	756,469	9,300,413
Castle Point	6,908,515	3,170,329	1,751,962	1,495,731	6,418,022
Charnwood	19,175,208	8,192,334	10,283,657	0	18,475,991
Cheltenham	16,933,685	8,388,797	4,573,445	2,445,940	15,408,182
Chester-le-St	13,495,420	5,085,111	5,475,628	1,857,906	12,418,645
Chesterfield	28,618,246	12,818,503	9,040,318	3,557,636	25,416,457
Chorley	7,682,611	3,533,083	2,244,185	1,462,495	7,239,763
City of London	18,211,506	9,591,091	2,805,492	12,745	12,409,328
City of York	31,547,171	11,147,416	10,535,439	5,009,616	26,692,471
Colchester	24,745,271	10,492,447	10,545,946	1,069,049	22,107,442
Copeland	1,994,430	947,226	506,719	400,838	1,854,783
Corby	16,476,937	8,581,592	3,419,782	0	12,001,374
Crawley	39,383,187	14,389,445	11,332,835	10,726,401	36,448,681
Croydon	61,230,161	29,246,142	18,611,540	9,075,638	56,933,320
Dacorum	49,623,620	14,436,434	15,453,801	17,813,382	47,703,617
Darlington	14,965,981	8,189,387	5,099,150	1,200,235	14,488,772
Dartford	25,668,196	7,238,652	13,385,340	4,117,318	24,741,310
Daventry	10,050,493	3,109,466	3,187,782	3,219,500	9,516,748
Derby	49,391,575	22,522,189	20,377,597	0	42,899,786
Derwentside	23,852,996	8,999,713	12,366,163	1,293,483	22,659,359
Doncaster	57,860,273	30,403,420	18,799,608	2,693,262	51,896,290
Dover	19,895,207	7,252,741	4,144,279	3,835,156	15,232,176
Dudley	69,759,710	34,175,588	20,430,569	12,309,260	66,915,417
Durham	15,934,506	7,561,981	6,133,260	0	13,695,241
Ealing	79,204,400	41,928,500	46,633,500	0	88,562,000
Easington	34,683,000	12,835,000	18,773,000	694,000	32,302,000
East Devon	10,986,312	4,305,367	2,589,990	4,090,955	10,986,312
East Riding	35,140,034	13,622,820	8,722,952	8,713,411	31,059,183
Eastbourne	14,025,183	5,937,297	6,307,913	0	12,245,210
Ellesmere Port	14,592,817	6,591,530	4,425,957	2,237,007	13,254,494
Enfield	56,294,897	29,716,003	18,499,285	0	48,215,288
Epping Forest	32,904,447	10,860,629	9,653,467	7,556,081	28,070,177
Exeter	15,285,259	6,350,578	2,982,059	3,554,695	12,887,332
Fareham	10,068,575	4,900,946	3,103,860	919,660	8,924,466
Fenland	12,633,476	5,299,232	4,604,791	1,958,699	11,862,722
Forest Heath	5,199,926	2,048,209	1,599,897	1,205,576	4,853,682

Housing revenue accounts' income and expenditure 2004-05

£

	Total income	Management and maintenance expenditure	Other expenditure	Negative subsidy transfer to ODPM	Total expenditure
Gateshead	70,600,637	31,234,000	34,671,000	3,172,000	69,077,000
Gedling	12,290,304	4,703,686	3,040,079	3,741,871	11,485,636
Gloucester	14,631,110	8,272,700	4,223,176	710,086	13,205,962
Gosport	10,558,660	4,744,005	2,773,679	1,960,090	9,477,774
Gravesham	21,092,834	10,728,285	4,899,691	3,770,223	19,398,199
Great Yarmouth	16,740,208	8,696,931	4,972,397	1,286,410	14,955,738
Greenwich	132,558,902	59,778,039	54,112,308	0	113,890,347
Guildford	30,497,585	9,697,541	12,471,474	7,228,570	29,397,585
Hackney	170,085,289	80,851,838	68,305,190	0	149,157,028
Halton	17,310,218	8,873,186	4,852,142	3,146,023	16,871,351
Hammersmith	101,762,286	68,285,330	29,302,239	0	97,587,569
Harborough	8,439,067	3,121,400	1,789,540	2,694,708	7,605,648
Haringey	105,107,200	50,042,000	48,106,400	0	98,148,400
Harlow	82,919,410	15,578,669	56,850,566	8,792,697	81,221,932
Harrogate	13,544,129	6,056,406	2,814,288	2,203,008	11,073,702
Harrow	22,329,594	11,930,388	5,594,857	4,108,267	21,633,512
Havering	39,498,994	19,756,576	11,148,608	6,066,145	36,971,329
High Peak	13,012,873	6,442,181	3,417,941	2,139,703	11,999,825
Hillingdon	62,140,447	22,872,135	18,087,651	8,167,650	49,127,436
Hinckley	11,648,172	4,364,867	3,721,105	2,646,829	10,732,801
Hounslow	65,609,883	38,229,721	24,769,208	0	62,998,929
Hyndburn	8,573,248	4,623,582	3,802,164	0	8,425,746
Ipswich	29,646,176	9,352,156	11,517,375	4,273,645	25,143,176
Isles of Scilly	410,326	153,499	97,160	38,563	289,222
Islington	206,596,548	71,932,690	126,522,823	0	198,455,513
Kensington	49,556,978	28,170,252	18,688,484	0	46,858,736
Kettering	10,714,243	5,783,360	2,561,109	1,846,413	10,190,882
Kings Lynn	19,355,424	10,245,215	5,437,438	0	15,682,653
Kingston Upon Hull	87,278,467	36,972,225	33,601,475	0	70,573,700
Kingston upon Thames	24,758,311	14,199,849	5,820,683	4,033,000	24,053,532
Kirklees	85,732,651	34,447,340	25,347,067	0	59,794,407
Lambeth	213,975,000	97,331,000	115,123,000	0	212,454,000
Lancaster	12,174,132	5,770,639	4,615,296	755,195	11,141,130
Leeds	169,485,007	90,488,414	74,390,737	0	164,879,151
Leicester	65,674,168	37,199,380	23,979,926	0	61,179,306
Lewes	13,086,201	4,875,978	4,357,766	1,473,836	10,707,580
Lewisham	160,840,000	73,084,000	79,582,000	0	152,666,000
Lincoln	21,738,044	11,699,227	8,389,761	0	20,088,988
Liverpool	92,330,442	32,729,060	58,055,992	0	90,785,052
Luton	31,560,316	16,380,223	8,392,874	3,414,488	28,187,585
Macclesfield	15,964,501	7,653,705	3,301,134	4,371,187	15,326,026
Manchester	225,312,372	96,967,450	120,550,462	0	217,517,912
Mansfield	24,157,447	15,589,534	7,656,913	0	23,246,447
Medway Towns	10,647,518	4,968,319	6,033,402	851,823	11,853,544
Melton	5,431,867	2,620,031	1,608,763	1,037,454	5,266,248
Merton	29,703,598	17,397,924	7,716,917	3,850,186	28,965,027
Mid Devon	9,857,736	4,212,369	1,846,333	3,032,217	9,090,919
Mid Suffolk	11,601,909	4,781,279	3,806,362	2,408,883	10,996,524
Middlesbrough	26,192,000	12,836,000	10,315,000	856,000	24,007,000
Milton Keynes	50,492,291	16,698,613	15,519,531	12,295,205	44,513,349
Mole Valley	14,327,281	7,321,679	2,784,127	2,383,029	12,488,835
NE Derbyshire	23,700,163	9,144,675	7,209,372	3,964,515	20,318,562
New Forest	22,105,416	8,428,675	4,754,066	5,317,744	18,500,485
Newark	15,986,034	7,057,456	5,451,817	1,596,510	14,105,783
Newcastle upon Tyne	128,251,445	57,543,579	65,526,797	0	123,070,376
Newham	149,383,758	52,699,085	85,147,220	0	137,846,305
North Cornwall	10,571,455	4,953,310	2,328,866	2,324,194	9,606,370
North East Lincoln	19,912,557	8,710,538	9,303,527	527,136	18,541,201
North Kesteven	10,822,584	4,849,643	3,985,580	1,330,224	10,165,447

Housing revenue accounts' income and expenditure 2004-05

£

	Total income	*Management and maintenance expenditure*	*Other expenditure*	*Negative subsidy transfer to ODPM*	*Total expenditure*
North Lincoln	25,477,289	12,582,779	11,072,855	1,698,178	25,353,812
North Norfolk	13,480,702	5,503,367	3,804,285	3,377,034	12,684,686
North Shropshire	6,568,503	2,438,425	1,550,990	1,893,862	5,883,277
North Somerset	24,699,436	9,989,753	6,186,631	4,469,715	20,646,099
North Tyneside	60,040,787	22,501,166	28,958,687	262,377	51,722,230
North Warwick	8,952,654	2,989,189	2,242,474	3,081,673	8,313,336
Northampton	44,227,922	18,429,800	14,139,299	8,104,127	40,673,226
Norwich	56,774,944	25,216,273	19,996,425	5,838,249	51,050,947
Nottingham	87,098,378	50,348,926	35,165,944	0	85,514,870
Nuneaton	22,619,699	9,369,200	4,586,512	6,634,828	20,590,540
NW Leicester	12,760,932	5,422,406	3,212,473	3,309,089	11,943,968
Oadby and Wigston	4,406,546	1,557,215	1,463,240	748,013	3,768,468
Oldham	52,504,742	25,828,260	25,143,051	318,714	51,290,025
Oswestry	5,574,293	2,807,817	1,442,326	943,658	5,193,801
Oxford City	43,156,569	12,344,275	19,629,743	6,579,835	38,553,853
Pendle	10,530,316	4,205,179	3,081,361	1,178,541	8,465,081
Peterborough	16,686,768	10,618,936	3,328,304	998,322	14,945,562
Plymouth	49,109,754	24,645,234	22,756,767	0	47,402,001
Poole	15,851,000	7,375,000	3,560,000	3,822,000	14,757,000
Portsmouth	66,023,901	30,210,917	31,135,379	0	61,346,296
Preston	17,950,046	10,373,038	6,969,870	0	17,342,908
Purbeck	2,040,932	866,941	249,573	690,599	1,807,113
Reading	40,266,153	19,350,229	9,365,834	8,923,020	37,639,083
Redbridge	22,113,000	12,352,000	5,188,000	2,362,000	19,902,000
Redcar and Clev	344,039	4,056	374,030	0	378,086
Redditch	17,648,518	7,677,884	5,095,323	4,629,875	17,403,082
Ribble Valley	3,979,899	1,520,408	1,612,080	527,104	3,659,592
Richmondshire	5,191,752	2,584,320	1,179,490	1,027,942	4,791,752
Rochdale	51,495,825	24,701,409	21,753,616	0	46,455,025
Rochford	6,448,857	2,823,420	2,175,712	476,357	5,475,489
Rossendale	10,304,073	4,959,254	4,010,065	964,742	9,934,061
Rotherham	75,736,087	28,549,508	24,271,239	16,645,054	69,465,801
Rugby	12,092,460	4,980,310	4,916,090	2,206,600	12,103,000
Runnymede	14,838,508	4,459,378	7,595,502	0	12,054,880
Rutland	4,231,926	2,078,662	1,015,456	980,593	4,074,711
Salford	91,014,388	47,183,931	39,858,465	0	87,042,396
Salisbury	29,561,686	7,783,113	12,321,836	5,784,745	25,889,694
Sandwell	107,157	64,307	28,640	1,683	94,630
Sedgefield	26,921,982	12,805,518	7,330,176	3,325,992	23,461,686
Sedgemoor	15,282,681	8,674,989	2,688,843	2,818,635	14,182,467
Sefton	43,122,693	18,953,119	11,715,804	10,318,498	40,987,421
Selby	11,906,751	4,014,268	4,513,093	2,652,500	11,179,861
Sheffield	151,540,511	78,612,175	68,139,302	0	146,751,477
Shepway	17,117,000	6,546,000	6,784,000	1,531,000	14,861,000
Slough	28,721,633	12,720,109	6,173,936	5,142,952	24,036,997
Solihull	48,602,744	17,973,237	21,814,090	3,848,852	43,636,179
South Beds	20,013,435	7,778,562	5,282,639	6,111,676	19,172,877
South Cambridge	22,741,446	8,265,942	3,677,469	8,741,944	20,685,355
South Derby	10,513,763	4,333,961	2,974,743	1,854,139	9,162,843
South Glouc	37,262,465	12,051,315	17,011,933	6,452,032	35,515,280
South Holland	12,338,154	5,555,341	2,674,802	2,265,203	10,495,346
South Kesteven	22,655,682	8,973,468	10,369,589	0	19,343,057
South Lakeland	11,639,894	5,307,981	2,948,693	3,560,276	11,816,950
South Norfolk	179,678	0	138,836	0	138,836
South Northants	11,378,162	3,804,735	2,819,133	3,738,059	10,361,927
South Tyneside	54,948,633	22,094,672	25,855,895	3,600,720	51,551,287
Southampton	51,316,118	26,503,926	22,871,262	0	49,375,188
Southend-on-Sea	33,123,000	13,679,864	6,808,000	309,136	20,797,000
Southwark	311,200,000	151,587,000	132,083,000	0	283,670,000

Housing revenue accounts' income and expenditure 2004-05

£

	Total income	Management and maintenance expenditure	Other expenditure	Negative subsidy transfer to ODPM	Total expenditure
St. Albans	21,610,336	7,678,453	6,169,509	7,029,484	20,877,446
Stafford	16,011,212	8,655,544	4,353,212	2,484,817	15,493,573
Stevenage	34,431,181	12,518,614	7,438,732	12,235,893	32,193,239
Stockport	33,596,180	18,350,704	39,198,854	602,302	58,151,860
Stockton	33,090,997	15,314,313	16,570,261	0	31,884,574
Stoke-on-Trent	51,593,233	25,285,238	19,811,262	4,429,212	49,525,712
Stroud	21,583,127	7,321,894	6,867,120	4,843,028	19,032,042
Sutton	0	0	0	0	0
Swindon	35,028,510	15,851,560	10,527,468	6,430,831	32,809,859
Tamworth	15,213,387	8,162,560	5,049,726	1,201,696	14,413,982
Tandridge	13,127,073	4,390,262	5,849,388	2,635,997	12,875,647
Taunton Deane	19,588,250	8,570,298	4,468,113	4,264,208	17,302,619
Teesdale	2,382,715	1,195,357	675,438	315,134	2,185,929
Tendring	12,439,331	4,863,400	4,341,077	770,093	9,974,570
Thanet	9,634,347	5,743,408	3,476,242	58,609	9,278,259
Three Rivers	18,058,061	6,471,753	4,855,684	4,508,252	15,835,689
Thurrock	36,834,300	18,093,000	9,491,200	5,810,800	33,395,000
Torridge	5,817,680	2,262,512	1,609,458	1,071,209	4,943,179
Tower Hamlets	164,285,136	87,233,780	70,031,347	0	157,265,127
Trafford	34,523,270	14,929,073	6,926,421	9,053,487	30,908,981
Uttlesford	19,527,000	3,508,000	11,755,000	3,764,000	19,027,000
Wakefield	0	0	0	0	0
Waltham Forest	67,793,005	21,553,808	44,808,614	0	66,362,422
Wandsworth	95,162,697	55,211,256	25,554,763	0	80,766,019
Wansbeck	13,575,630	10,496,776	1,193,764	0	11,690,540
Warrington	24,867,651	11,347,326	7,531,627	4,991,123	23,870,076
Warwick	19,490,073	7,222,075	6,581,657	4,484,211	18,287,943
Watford	18,758,657	7,814,753	4,781,339	5,114,334	17,710,426
Waveney	17,060,277	6,167,771	4,396,590	4,896,479	15,460,840
Waverley	21,181,551	7,549,570	5,463,808	6,962,900	19,976,278
Wealden	11,272,572	4,468,994	4,044,549	1,361,164	9,874,707
Wear Valley	11,375,000	4,840,000	5,241,000	733,000	10,814,000
Wellingborough	13,975,554	5,191,404	5,138,239	2,637,778	12,967,421
Welwyn Hatfield	38,836,709	14,791,694	8,393,369	10,559,546	33,744,609
West Lancashire	19,586,814	10,524,020	14,068,190	3,481,348	28,073,558
Westminster	115,747,320	48,956,500	90,427,321	0	139,383,821
Wigan	73,653,815	28,099,727	34,785,931	0	62,885,658
Winchester	20,227,402	9,278,713	4,299,768	5,703,174	19,281,655
Wirral	35,758,000	16,236,000	11,084,000	2,906,000	30,226,000
Woking	14,438,267	7,316,384	3,561,177	3,033,756	13,911,317
Wokingham	11,227,592	4,510,530	5,970,998	0	10,481,528
Wolverhampton	70,194,558	42,351,194	24,329,068	0	66,680,262
Wycombe	26,335,966	10,212,008	6,216,598	8,319,558	24,748,164

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of migration as a factor in the demand for new housing development in *(a)* England and Wales and *(b)* South East England; and what proportion of future household growth over the next 20 years he anticipates will be attributed to migration. [63819]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 823W to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) that provides an estimate in relation to England. Estimates are not available for South East England.

Margaret Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what allocations have been made to registered social landlords who provide housing specifically for black and minority ethnic people in Luton in each of the last five years. [72500]

Yvette Cooper: The following table shows the allocations made in Luton to black, minority and ethnic (BME) registered social landlords (RSLs) through the Housing Corporation's Affordable Housing Programme (AHP) and Local Authority Social Housing Grant (LASHG) in each year from 2001-02 to 2005-06.

£

	ADP		LASHG	
	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect
2001-02	691,385	514,754	0	0
2002-03	0	0	252,828	0
2003-04	9,532,440	0	0	0
2004-05	0	0	0	0
2005-06	0	0	0	0
Total	10,223,825	514,754	252,828	0

Notes
Direct—indicates where an allocation has been made directly to a BME RSL
Indirect—indicates that the allocation has been made to another RSL to develop the scheme but once completed the ownership of the property has passed to a BME RSL.
Source
Housing Corporation

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (1) what estimate she has made of the likely number of people living in social rented accommodation by 2020 and the likely demand for social rented housing in each year between 2006 and 2016; [72508]

(2) what estimate she has made of the likely demand for social rented housing in each year between 2006 and 2016. [72509]

Yvette Cooper: The number of people living in social rented accommodation by 2020 will depend on a number of factors such as net additions to the stock, take-up of intermediate housing products, and the levels of occupation and vacancies.

The likely demand for social rented housing will also depend on a number of variables such as the size, quality, location and rent of properties made available.

The Government are considering research on the future need for social housing and shared equity housing as part of the comprehensive review.

Leased Land

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what *(a)* land and *(b)* property her Department and its predecessors (i) leases and (ii) leased in (A) 1979, (B) 1983, (C) 1987, (D) 1992 and (E) 1997 in (1) the Southend West constituency, (2) Essex, (3) Hertfordshire and (4) the Metropolitan police area of London. [72125]

Angela E. Smith: The Department for Communities and Local Government was established on 5 May 2006.

(i) The Department currently leases the following land and property:

Location	Land	Property
(1) Southend West constituency	None	None
(2) Essex	None	None
(3) Hertfordshire	None	Hempstead House, Hemel Hempstead Building 3, BRE, Garston, Watford Sheffield House, Stevenage
(4) Metropolitan Police Area	None	Eland House, Bressenden Place, SW1 Ashdown House, Victoria Street, SW1

(ii) Of the dates requested in the question, information is only readily available for 1997, and this relates to land and property leased by the former Department of the Environment, a predecessor Department. The information on land and property held for the functions of the former Department of the Environment that have passed on to the Department for Communities and Local Government is as follows:

Location	Land	Property
(1) Southend West constituency	None	None
(2) Essex	None	None
(3) Hertfordshire	None	Sheffield House, Stevenage Seymour House, Hemel Hempstead
(4) Metropolitan Police Area	None	Eland House, Bressenden Place, SW1 Ashdown House, Victoria Street, SW1 Portland House, Victoria, SW1

Property records related to the other dates are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

This answer does not include buildings occupied by Government offices, which carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* ring-fenced and *(b)* other funding he provides to local authorities to enable them to carry out work on bringing empty homes back into use. [66274]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Local housing authorities receive Housing Revenue Account subsidy which is ring- fenced for expenditure on their own housing stock and general funding (which constitutes revenue support grant, redistributed business rates and police grant) which is not ring-fenced.

We do not hold centrally information on the proportion of Housing Revenue Grant or general funding spent by individual local authorities on

bringing empty homes back into use. It is a matter for local authorities to set their budgets in accordance with local priorities which may include bringing empty homes back into use.

Ministerial Visits (Accommodation)

David Simpson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what the total cost was of his overnight accommodation on foreign visits in each of the last three years; [69049]

(2) what the total cost was of overnight accommodation for Ministers of State in his Department on foreign visits in each of the last three years. [69050]

Angela E. Smith: I have been asked to reply.

Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year and total costs of all ministerial overseas travel, this information includes accommodation costs.

Copies are available in the Library of the House.

New Schools

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many planning applications for new schools to be built on former landfill sites have been submitted to local authorities in England since 2000; and how many of these have been successful. [73135]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Outdoor Advertising

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to her answer of 2 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 1517W, on outdoor advertising, what the terms of reference will be of the consultation on new draft regulations on control of outdoor advertisements; and if she will make a statement. [71721]

Yvette Cooper: The aim of the consultation is to invite the views of local planning authorities and the advertising industry on the new draft Control of Advertisements Regulations and draft circular.

The new regulations will update and improve the current arrangements for controlling outdoor advertisements and make the legislation more responsive to the rapidly changing forms of advertising. The draft circular will clarify the legislation and provide guidance to help ensure that the system operates effectively.

Planning

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the answer of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1218W, on planning, if she will *(a)* include drug addiction treatment centres in the proposed new planning class C2A and *(b)* create a new class separate from existing C2 consent. [72551]

Yvette Cooper: The use class C2A includes secure residential institutions. Whether a particular use falls within the C2A use class will be a matter for the local authority to determine in the first instance, on a case-by-case basis.

We have no plans for any further changes to the Use Classes Order.

Mr. Ian Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how many and what proportion of appeals to the planning inspectorate have been upheld for developments in *(a)* England and *(b)* Surrey in each year since 2000. [72071]

Yvette Cooper: The table below shows how many and what proportion of planning appeals have been upheld nationally and in Surrey for the last five calendar years.

	Upheld national		*Upheld Surrey*	
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
2000	3,188	35	162	35
2001	5,022	36	258	36
2002	5,110	37	245	35
2003	6,013	33	267	31
2004	5,405	33	274	34
2005	7,136	32	336	31

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when she will publish the results of the Government's consultation on draft Planning Policy Statement 3. [71876]

Yvette Cooper: We will publish Planning Policy Statement 3: "Housing" in its final form, and a summary of the responses received following the consultation exercise on the draft policy which closed on 27 February, later in the year.

Private Member's Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will list those private Member's Bills in respect of which her Department or its predecessors adopted a policy of neutrality in each session since 2001-02; and if she will make a statement. [72124]

Angela E. Smith: The Department for Communities and Local Government was formed on 5 May 2006.

Our position in response to private Member's Bills is normally set out by Ministers during the Second Reading debate.

Property Market

Michael Gove: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the reasons for the failure of property transactions in the residential market; and what assessment he has made of the reasons for the failure to complete transactions after an offer was accepted. [64961]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Department's 1998 research study, "Key research on easier home buying and selling", reported that 28 per cent. of transactions fail between offer acceptance and completion. The research study also described the reasons why transactions fail, according to buyers and sellers. For example, the report indicated that 43 per cent. of transaction failures were attributable to an unfavourable survey report. The remaining or failed transactions were due to a seller deciding to sell elsewhere, unacceptable delays, chain breakdown and the property being taken off the market. The key findings of the research study indicated that many of the problems associated with the current system are down to information emerging later in the process and that buyers, sellers and the professionals all agreed that sellers should offer more information up front. This research will be updated during the second half of 2006.

Regional Administration

Mr. Syms: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what the annual income has been of each of the regional chambers in each year since their creation; [64955]

(2) what the annual expenditure has been of each of the regional chambers in each year since their creation; [64956]

(3) if he will list the *(a)* sources of income and *(b)* percentage of income derived from each source for each of the regional chambers for each year since their creation. [64958]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Regional assemblies are independent bodies that may obtain funding support from a number of sources including local authorities and other regional bodies. Since 2001 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has also paid grant to assemblies in support of their scrutiny, planning regional activities. Details of ODPM grant made is as follows:

	£
2001-02	5,000,000
2002-03	5,000,000
2003-04	14,075,000
2004-05	17,987,000
2005-06	17,987,000

Details of total income and expenditure for assemblies is not kept centrally, but can be obtained from assemblies annual accounts, copies of which are available on individual assembly websites.

Regional Funding

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* timetable and *(b)* purpose is of regional funding allocations; and if he will make a statement. [66263]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The purpose of regional funding allocations (RFAs) is to enable regions better to align their strategies across the inter-related areas of transport, housing and economic development and to provide them with enhanced input into government policy development and future public spending decisions.

Advice on priorities within indicative RFAs was invited by the end of January 2006. The Government provided an initial response to the advice in the 2006 Budget. The Government are now considering the advice provided by the regions and will set out in due course how it will be utilised and developed in the comprehensive spending review.

Residence Change

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the percentage of the UK population that changed residence in the last year for which figures are available. [66037]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Using results from the Survey of English Housing for 2004-05, it is estimated that 11 per cent. of the population of England had changed residence within the preceding 12 months.

Shared Ownership/Key Worker Schemes

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what figures the Government collects in relation to participation in shared ownership and key worker schemes funded by *(a)* central Government and *(b)* the Housing Corporation. [66268]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Government collect data on the number and type of completed sales through shared ownership and key worker schemes funded by the Housing Corporation. Information is also collected on the market value of the property involved, the initial equity stake purchased, the amount of mortgage, the deposit provided and where appropriate, the rent and service charges payable. In addition, data are collected on the previous housing tenure and household characteristics of purchasers, including their gross and net income and savings. The same information has been collected for a small number of sales to key workers who purchased through the previous Starter Home Initiative, which was funded by central government.

From 1 April 2006, HomeBuy Agents, who are appointed housing associations providing a "one-stop-shop" and point of contact for affordable housing options in a given area in England, will additionally supply information on expressions of interest from potential applicants and the number of applications received for HomeBuy schemes. The level of detail will vary depending on the individual scheme but figures on the progress of sales for all grant-funded Open Market HomeBuy schemes will be provided.

Sustainable Communities Plan

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether water companies were consulted on the Sustainable Communities Plan. [60198]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Sustainable Communities Plan sets out the Government's vision for thriving communities. Water companies have been involved in various aspects of the Plan's implementation including being part of the regional planning process and planning for growth areas. In addition, Baroness Andrews met the water companies, the Environment Agency and OFWAT on 7 March this year at a seminar organised by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister at which these issues were discussed.

Trees

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was spent on tree preservation orders in *(a)* Romford, *(b)* Havering and *(c)* Greater London in each of the past eight years. [67028]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested is not collected centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Unauthorised Camps

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the *(a)* terms of reference and *(b)* membership are of her Department's task group on the enforcement of the law on unauthorised camps. [70921]

Yvette Cooper: The first meeting of the Department's task group on enforcement in relation to Gypsies and Travellers took place today and I am pleased to announce that the group is being chaired by Sir Brian Briscoe.

a) The group will examine variations in the use of enforcement powers across the country and the causes of such variations, and take evidence as necessary. The group will also ensure that existing powers are used effectively, underlining the importance of adequate site provision as the key to effective enforcement. They will also act as a sounding board on potential new measures to strengthen enforcement powers.

b) The group consists of representatives of the local government association, the commission for racial equality, the association of chief police officers, the Home Office, the environment agency, the Royal town planning institute, the planning officers' society and the Department's Gypsy and Traveller unit.

Urban Regeneration

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funding his Department allocated for urban regeneration in *(a)* Romford, *(b)* Havering and *(c)* Greater London in each of the last 10 years. [67111]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

My Department now primarily funds urban regeneration in London through the London Development Agency, which was established in 2000 as a functional body of the Mayor of London. The LDA is free to determine its own expenditure priorities, and the table below shows its yearly expenditure in the borough of Havering and Greater London. No figures are available below borough level.

£ million

	Havering	*Greater London*
2000-01	6.3	277.1
2001-02	27.5	309.1
2002-03	21.4	289.4
2003-04	7.1	336.0
2004-05	4.5	390.6
2005-06	3.0	415.5
Total	69.8	2,017.7

My Department's Thames Gateway programme has also committed a further £12.1 million funding direct to regeneration projects in the borough of Havering since 2004. This includes £220,000 and £634,000 in 2004-05 and 2005-06 respectively, with a further £11.25 million allocated but not yet spent.

In addition, the Government office for London has allocated £154 million from the European Regional Development Fund in selected London boroughs from 1997 to the present. Romford and Havering are not within the eligible area for ERDF funding.

Wind Turbines

Robert Key: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether it is his policy to include small wind turbines on domestic property as permitted development; and if he will make a statement. [66974]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Government want to make it easier for householders to adopt alternative energy technologies including wind turbines by removing any regulatory barriers that impose unnecessary costs or delays to householders wanting to install them.

The planning system also needs to take account of the amenity of neighbours and the wider community. We are therefore now examining how to amend the permitted development rights for householders to install all categories of microgeneration equipment, in a way that will help promote the technologies while safeguarding amenity.

We shall be reporting to Parliament with proposals as we have committed to do under the Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Bill.